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Introduction

Pragasit SITTHITIKUL
Thammasat University, Thailand

Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) is pleased to launch its 3rd special issue on CALL. As a guest editor for this special issue, I am sure that this issue is very appropriate because there has been an immense increase of research studies on the effects of CALL on SLA in recent years. It is undeniable that the advent of technology has changed the language learning scenarios where English is taught or learned as a foreign language. The application of technology has been reported to play a pivotal and potential role in foreign language classrooms and can help improve language learning significantly.

During the last two decades, the use of technology particularly for foreign language instruction, especially English, has expanded rapidly around the world. Technology provides opportunities and resources for language learners so that they can access a warehouse of information worldwide. That is, English language learners can learn and practice all skills of English using online tools at any time, and they can even communicate with other people using web-based tools and media. The modern learning scenario, then, enables students to apply linguistic strategies in their practice and become more exposed to real-world, cross-cultural situations. That’s why I believe that this special issue is very appropriate to publish research articles that are related to CALL.

It is my great pleasure to inform you that we have received interesting and high-quality research articles related to technology and language learning for this issue. Thus, I am confident that these articles will provide a lot of new insight based on the research findings into the roles of technology in language learning to many researchers and teachers. Finally, I would like to extend my appreciation to the authors of the published research articles for their great work that makes valuable contributions to the ELT field.

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Impact of Google Earth and ePals Models on Perceptions, Research and Oral Presentation Skills

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Abstract  
The article reports the findings of a study that investigated the relative effectiveness of the Google Earth and ePals tools in enhancing geographical research and speaking skills of learners enrolled in Study Skills class in a university in Lebanon and on increasing their levels of motivation for conducting research and delivering presentations. The study is based on the assumptions that the integration of Google Earth and ePals provides an excellent opportunity for teachers to improve students’ presentation and research skills. Another assumption is that female learners will report a more significant progress than their male counterparts. The study used the pretest-posttest control design. Descriptive statistics were computed, and a series of independent sample and paired samples t-tests and a content analysis of the qualitative data reporting the participants’ perceptions of their Google Earth and ePals experience were undertaken. The results of the study indicated that the use of Google Earth and ePals significantly improved the geographical research and oral presentation skills as well as their perceptions towards learning.

However, no significant difference in the achievements of males and females was indicated. Implications and further research to examine the interaction of the treatment effects with other contextual variables were reported.

Keywords: ePals, Google Earth, presentation proficiency, technology
1. Introduction

The Sociocultural Theory of Learning of Vygotsky (1978) and the Situated Learning Theory of Lave and Wenger (1991) endorse the basic principles of online learning as the social experiences determine people’s ways of thinking about the world, and education is considered as a sociocultural activity. Social constructivism theory (Von Glaserfeld, 1995) as well as Vygotsky’s Theory of Language Development (Vygotsky, 1934/1986) form another theoretical background of the study since knowledge is vigorously acquired through social interaction, and thinking individuals construct knowledge when they interact with others. The Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory indicates that the technology-supported learning environment is determined by the sociocultural context of the classroom and a communicative framework based on achieving higher-order learning outcomes using computers (McLoughlin & Olive, 1998).

Telecollaboration is defined as an online medium of communication comprising tools which connect language learners in many countries for the development of collaborative project work and intercultural interchange (O’Dowd & Ritter, 2006, p. 623). E-mail exchanges are significant as they enhance the skills of the learners (O’Dowd, 2003). ePals are vital for language teachers, for they help learners improve writing skills (Kern, 2006). Furthermore, Patterson (2007) asserts that Google Earth can improve teaching geography and help learners enhance their geographic information through using visuals and other methods. Google Earth increases students’ geographic awareness while developing critical thinking, problem-solving and inquiry skills (Patterson, 2007).

DiScipio (2008), co-founder of ePals, demonstrates that there should be a thorough needs analysis determining the curriculum-based activities that can be improved through the use of social networking tools. In alignment with the theory of Social Constructivism, ePals ensure that academic content standards will be met. DiScipio (2008, p.10) underscores that a social learning network includes creative pedagogy through internet-connected communities, digital means, and information communication technology (ICT) tools that allow students to master the curriculum and to learn subjects beyond the classroom.

On the other hand, Nozawa (2002) notes that unsatisfactory findings were reported upon the implementation of a keypal exchange as a supplementary activity, where some students (66%) could not sustain the engagement in regular correspondence for the whole semester, and 63.9% of the students couldn’t carry on their key pal relationship since students were dissatisfied with the difficulty of the project and/or keeping a key pal. However, as for the gender variable, Awada and Ghaith (2014) report that the results of a study which investigated the effect of using WebQuest technological tool on enhancing the Business writing skills of the participants, underscore that “…the female participants outperformed their male counterparts on writing achievement F (1, 36) = 15.90, P = 0.00, η2 = 0.30” (p.11).

1.1 The Present Study

The present study was conducted at a private university in the Middle East where English is used as the medium of instruction. Studying English as a foreign language (EFL) in the context of this study is significant due to the fact that English is deemed as an international language used extensively in different domains including communications. At present, there are no previous studies which examined the effect of the Google Earth and ePals combined treatment...
in improving geographical research and speaking proficiency of learners enrolled in a class in a university in the Middle East and on increasing their levels of motivation for delivering presentations. The study is based on the rationale that there is a scarcity or non-existence of research on the use and integration of Google Earth and ePals in EFL classes.

Specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What is the relative effect of using Google Earth and ePals educational tools in comparison with traditional research paper on improving the research skills of university learners of EFL?

2. What is the relative effect of using Google Earth and ePals educational tools in comparison with traditional research paper on improving the oral presentation of university learners of EFL?

3. Is there a significant progress difference in favor of university female learners of EFL versus male learners using the Google Earth and ePals to improve the research skills and oral presentation proficiency?

4. What are the perceptions of the participants in the experimental group of their experience in using the Google Earth and ePals technological models in their class?

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in order to address the questions raised in the study:

Ho 1: There is no statistically significant difference in the posttest research skills scores of the experimental and control group at the \( p \leq 0.05 \) alpha level.

Ho 2: There is no statistically significant difference in the posttest oral presentation scores of the experimental and control group at the \( p \leq 0.05 \) alpha level.

Ho 3: There is no statistically significant difference in the posttest of research skills and oral presentation scores of the females versus males in the experimental group at the \( p \leq 0.05 \) alpha level.

Ho 4: There is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the participants in the experimental group of their experience in using the Google Earth and ePals technological models in their class.

2. Literature Review

Technology may contribute to promoting learners’ autonomy. Instruction given through machines and devices is extremely significant as it provides each learner with the opportunity to work at his/her pace; subsequently, it will be developing learners’ autonomy (Bello, 2014, Skinner, 1968).

An ePal exchange between Japanese university students and Danish high school students showed a high level of interest from the students as well as an increased motivation for writing (Fedderholdt, 2001). In the same vein, Van Lier (2000) states that students “…can learn best from negotiating with a native speaker or a more competent interlocutor, presumably because knowledge has to come from one who knows or can do more” (p. 248).

Unlike behaviorism, constructivism, as humanistic model, proposes that learning is a process by which learners build new ideas or perceptions by making use of each other’s knowledge and experiences. The learners would have greater control and accountability over what they learn and depend on schema to choose and convert information, generate hypotheses and make decisions (Beatty, 2003, p. 91). In alignment with Levy (1997), Beatty (2003) states, “It is
important that, in a restricted time frame, learners do not abrogate the task of thinking and take advantage of a software program’s willingness to supply default answers” (p. 89). E-mail, bulletin boards, discussion threads and chat rooms are technology enhanced language learning tools that allow learners to reveal critically and to scaffold ideas (Wiesenberg, 1999). The computer-assisted language learning tools may result in increased collaboration and inquiry-based learning (Brush & Uden, 2000). E-mail is one technological application that has been used creatively in the language classroom to create online communities. Email can motivate learners to utilize the computers in authentic situations in order to improve communicative and cognitive abilities (Duncan & Leander, 2001).

Warschauer (1996) and Kannan & Macknish (2000) assert that online communication increases motivation. Computer-mediated communication could result in the improvement of writing (Warschauer, Turbee & Robert, 1996; Brush & Uden, 2000; Karyan & Crowe, 1997; and Harasim, 1994). Epals would facilitate the enhancement of the cultural, language and computer knowledge and would help learners to know their own culture and the culture of others (Lave & Wenger, 1991). An increasingly bizarre world means more prospects for multicultural experience. Online experiences improve face-to-face involvements, and vice versa (Branzburg, 2002, p. 3).

In agreement with the abovementioned researchers, Green and Bauer (2001) add that communities around the world which were remote in the past are becoming contributors in the International crossroads; the need for international capability is developing in unforeseen spaces (p. 16). More importantly, Leu (2000a) asserts the significance of technology as the mainstream of problem-solving and inquiry-based tools required to address the future literacy needs in our society and the subsequent relationship to technology. Leu (2002) and Morrow & Gambrell (2001) have reported the significance of electronic communication and Electronic discourse communities which increase learners’ motivation and facilitate written language tasks. Similarly, Nielsen (1998) notes the significance of high school pen pal program which improves literacy and promotes problem-solving learning. Charron (2005) also asserts that learners problem solve in written-language activities while participating in the Internet pen pal program especially when lack of comprehension occurs, and they write back asking questions for clarification. As such, pen pal’s comprehension of their writing urges learners to write, inquire, evaluate, judge and revise their writing. Above all, Lankshear, Snyder, and Green (2000) report the significance of the social nature of learning in enhancing the written-language acquisition. Burniske and Monke (2001) also corroborate the significance of the tellecollaborative projects as “….a forum for student expression, a forum that nurtures exploratory discourse rather than the recitation of homogenized thought” (p. 57). In the same vein, Harp and Brewer (2005) assert the significance of having constructive feedback from different audiences for learners who seek the improvement of their writing.

On the other hand, Nicholson (2005) asserts the importance of using Google Maps and Google Earth as being efficient tools which enable people to think, learn, and work with geographic information. Nicholson (2005) highlights the huge assistance of Google Earth in providing users with access to spatial and cultural information required for understanding their world and their communities. Google Earth provides the customizable map features and dynamic presentation tools which improve presentation skills and provide easy access to information. One
more appealing feature of Google Earth applications is the tremendous ability to share projects, create customized Keyhole Markup Language (KML) files, and to report findings in a geographic context. With Google Earth’s ease of use and visualization capabilities, geographic information will be integrated into all subject matters.

Google Earth is a geography discovery tool which provides visualization features and valuable learning opportunities for teaching in a 3D space. The implementation of Geographic Information Science (GIScience) applications is useful for teaching fundamental geographic concepts (Patterson, 2007). The use of Google Earth supports spatial thinking and develops critical analytical skills (Committee on the Support for the Thinking Spatially 2006, xiii). “Google Earth has limited capabilities and tools to support true spatial analytical operations. The tool does not have a query capability or the functionality to perform complex spatial operations—even in the non-freeware versions” (Patterson, 2007, p.147).

Meyer et al. (1999) assert that Google Earth helps strengthen and remedy the weaknesses in geography curriculum. Educators are also urged to incorporate the use of Google Earth in the teaching and learning processes so that they use Google Earth to prepare authentic materials and to provide sufficient time for students to learn how to use software and incorporate the tool in their learning experiences.

Google Earth helps learners work independently on an interactive basis while also collaborating with others. Google Earth is an Internet-based resource which can be incorporated into the learning environment to provide learners with interesting knowledge. Technology might widen learners’ knowledge and improve their thinking and analytical skills, for technology can enable learners apply external learning to situations presented within the classroom (Leamnson, 1999).

The use of Google Earth facilitates learning inside and outside the classroom (Cates et al. 2003:155) as it allows students to explore the geographic location they are seeking to describe what they identify and evaluate the interpretations of what they are learning. The applications and features of Google Earth facilitate the dynamic and interactive exploration of earth. Solem and Gersmehl (2005) report the usefulness of the online resources which helped to improve student comprehension of concepts and skills and to increase learners’ confidence in their knowledge of geographic issues.

However, the use of Google Earth is hindered by some constraints. Google Earth is a freeware tool which requires a strong Internet access with fast connection. As such, the insufficient Internet access and power would hinder the usefulness of Google Earth in the classroom as learners might lose interest in the tool should Google Earth become non-responsive to the user’s requests. It is also imperative for learners to use the application of Google Earth and its related sites to create their own accounts to search for data not included in Google Earth and then to be able access the dataset once a desirable dataset is found.

Patterson (2007) notes many advantages of the use of Google Earth, for Google Earth increases learners’ motivation as it provides them with entertainment while learning. Moreover, Google Earth is accessible for everyone for it has a free downloadable version.
provides learners with appealing visuals and images “…thus allowing students to utilize the application outside the educational atmosphere and not be subject to licensing requirements many commercial off-the-shelf Geographic Information System (GIS) applications impose(Patterson,2007,p.148). More importantly, Google Earth provides applications such as the Google Earth Community and Google’s Keyhole mapping services which display a diversity of data layers consisting of supplementary readings and supporting photos and videos. Patterson(2007) adds:

There are also increasingly more services available to Google Earth with streaming media…..Keyhole BBS not only provides data but it also serves as a collaborative discussion forum for users to discuss data implications and evolution, as well as peripheral ideas (p.148).

Thomas et al. (1998) also notes, “Atlases have long provided people with a visual representation of their world and have encompassed a wide variety of topics”(p. 202). Google Earth provides the learners with the uses of Atlases in addition to extending the interactive components in apparently endless dimensions. However, unlike Atlases, Google Earth provides collaborative forum through the Keyhole Bulletin Board System (BBS). Google Earth provides the user with information related to a place, increases the level of interactivity and enhances the user’s experience as a novice explorer. Patterson(2007) explains that Google Earth “…is not a true GIS, users do not need to learn the interfaces or particular nuances of desktop GIS applications that may require special skills”(p.149). Patterson(2007) adds that Google Earth’s interface is simpler than Atlases due to the limited variety of functions. The application is directed:

Toward more point-and click operations without complex menus and tools; non freeware versions provide a relatively powerful capability to develop and enhance functionality. With a simpler interface, Google Earth also has less complex functionality and cartographic capabilities than true GIS applications, which should require significantly less time for teacher training (p.150).

Using Google Earth, the teachers can plan lessons which help learners understand the natural and cultural phenomena while using an interactive tool with vital applications and features critically explaining the place, movement, and regions (Natoli et al. 1984).

Awada and Ghaith( 2014) add, “…. the results of the study suggested that female learners outperformed their male counterparts in writing achievement” (p.14). Peterson &- Kennedy (2006) assert that female learners outperformed in writing their male counterparts as shown in teacher’s feedback to females versus males. Haswell & Haswell(1995) indicate that there were no significant differences in the writing achievement of female and male learners although teachers gave more comments about syntactic changes to males than to females. The Michigan Department of Education (2006) also asserts that female learners outperformed their male counterparts in reading and writing at grades 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8,and the U.S. Department of Education (NCES, 2006b) pointed out that female learners outperformed male learners in language arts. However, the research of Jones and Myhill (2004) shows no significant evidence at skills level between female and male learners.
3. Methodology

The study used a pretest-posttest control design. Two intact classes were randomly assigned to control and experimental conditions and the treatment continued for six weeks of instruction at the rate of 4 class periods per week to teach the geographical research and communication and presentation skills aiming at raising cultural awareness and developing critical thinking abilities.

3.1 Participants

The study was conducted in a private leading university in the Middle East. A convenient sample total of 48 EFL learners participated in the study. The participants were randomly assigned to control and experimental conditions, and the experimental group sample included a total of 19 males and 8 females whereas the control group samples included 15 males and six females. All the participants are native speakers of Arabic and came from similar socio-economic backgrounds. The participants were studying study skills including research and communication skills at a rate of four hours per week in accordance with the curriculum requirements proclaimed by the university program. A total of 48 students had been assigned the successful fulfillment of the Study Skills course as one of the four-course program. The two fundamental requirements of the course are delivering oral presentation and conducting a research paper aiming at developing the cultural awareness and the cognitive skills of the learners. The participants are students whose GPA is low and only upon the completion of the requirements of the four courses, they will be eligible to get back to the regular program of the university. Finally, there were 21 students in the control group and 27 in the experimental group, and the age of the participants ranged from 19-23 years.

3.2 Research Context

As indicated earlier, the research context of the present study is a private university in Lebanon. This context is characterized by enrolling students from different socio-economic background with good opportunities to use English for communication in daily life and outside of university. However, the importance of studying English is emphasized in the context of the present study, as a language of instruction in which all other university subjects are taught. This is because English is considered an important international language in Lebanon to be studied starting with kindergarten and up to postgraduate studies due to its recognized value in communication and education. Above all, it should be noted that the majority of students in this study context, as well as in other private university contexts, can be considered largely as good English proficient learners with much access to computers and modern technology, especially computers are available and used in all the classes of many private universities including the site of the present study.

3.3 Instruments

Three instruments were used to collect data and measure the variables of geographical research, oral presentation proficiency, gender, and perception under investigation. These included an oral presentation, research rubrics and reflection logs. The oral presentation and research rubrics were used to measure the pre- and post-tests of oral presentation proficiency and research skills level of the participants in the control and experimental groups. Finally, reflection logs investigated the participants’ perceptions of their experience in using the Google Earth and ePals.
3.4 Treatment

The treatment lasted for six weeks at the rate of four contact hours of instruction per week. The study participants of both the control and experimental group were asked to conduct and present a project which required conducting research pertinent to the touristic sites found in the South and the North regions of Lebanon. The project writing and presentation instructional components of the control group consisted of traditional research writing and PowerPoint presentation practices which required instruction in the different steps of the project and presentation processes. Specifically, the geographical research and PowerPoint presentation stages focused on guiding the learners to explore their topics in order to generate ideas in addition to learning how to write up and present their ideas after revising their written and presentation products. Meanwhile, the experimental group participants received instruction integrating the use of ePals and Google Earth in conducting the geographical research and delivering the presentation conveying cultural awareness. The experimental group participants were taught how to create ePals accounts and Google Earth technological models using Googleearth.com. Participants were given directions to use Google Earth and ePals. The experimental group learners practiced project writing through using the Google Earth and ePals procedures which involved using computers to incorporate land masses, bodies of water, and other physical features of Earth on maps and globes, pictures, visual effects, and the design they like. The participants were given directions to obtaining a Gmail account, accessing Google Earth, navigating in Google Earth and to using the Dashboard. The Tours included audio podcasts and pictures. Experimental group participants were able to research the important features and characteristics of the touristic sites found in the South and the North of Lebanon, locate on Google Earth the home cities, buildings or establishments, countries of each, create Google Earth tours exploring the local community, state, or world. The participants were also able to create ePals to learn about the culture and the historical sites of the community through class discussions, collaborate with a neighboring community classroom by exchanging the identified historical sites and the problems encountering tourism inside the two countries and create a solution to that neighboring classrooms tourism problems through three digital, written, collaboration with community members. The participants were asked to use a rubric for evaluating their Google Earth findings.

The experimental group participants were also given directives to using 'Google.com”, accessing ePals.com, starting collaborative projects, and using forums and learning resources to exchange information and to raise their cultural awareness while exploring the touristic sites found in the South and the North regions of Lebanon. Participants were encouraged to use rubric for assessing and evaluating their ePals Projects. It is worth noting that the experimental group participants were in turn divided into two groups; one representing the South regions consisting of 14 members and one representing the North regions consisting of 13 members, and they were exchanging ePlas e-mails inside and outside the classroom. Each group had a leader who also represented one of the two University campuses; Beirut and Byblos ones. The instructor of the class acted as a facilitator for both groups.

The addressed Technology (ISTE) Standards for Students were as follows:

1. Creativity and Innovation: Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
2. Communication and Collaboration: Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

3. Research and information fluency: Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.

4. Critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making: Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions.

3.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) were calculated on the pre-test and post-test performance scores of participants in the control and experimental groups, following which two independent sample t-tests and two paired samples t-tests were conducted to investigate the differences in geographical research skills, oral presentation proficiency and gender prior to and subsequent to the intervention between the groups of learners in the control and experimental groups. The treatment conditions (control vs experimental) were used as an independent variable and geographical research, oral presentation proficiency and gender as dependent variables.

Additionally, content analysis was employed as the method of data analysis of the qualitative data collected from learners’ written reflection logs about their perceptions of the Google Earth and ePals experiences. The reflection logs were employed to write up the study results regarding participants’ perceptions.

4. Results

4.1 Findings on geographical research skills, oral presentation proficiency and gender progress

We found that, prior to intervention; there was no significant difference in the geographical research proficiency of the participants in the control and the experimental groups. Conversely, after the intervention, the experimental group outperformed the control group, which suggests a very significant improvement in geographical research proficiency from an educational point of view. Therefore, the first null hypothesis of the study concerning difference in the posttest geographical research–performance of the control and experimental group was rejected (see Table 1, Table 2).

<table>
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<td>Treatment Conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
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</table>

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Prettest Research Project = 11.0000.

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of research project posttest scores of the control group ($M=11.156^a$, $SD=.349$) and the experimental group ($M=14.073^a$, $SD=.301$). An independent-
samples $t$-test was conducted using an alpha level of .05 in order to examine whether the experimental group and the control group differed significantly in the pretest scores.

**Table 2 Pre and Posttests Research Project**

**Treatment Conditions * Gender**  
Dependent Variable: Posttests Research Project

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Treatment Conditions</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
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<th>Upper Bound</th>
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<td>10.265</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>11.293a</td>
<td>.585</td>
<td>10.113</td>
<td>12.474</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14.075a</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>13.048</td>
<td>15.101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values:

Pretest Research Project = 11.0000.

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics of research project posttest scores of the Males in control group ($M=11.018^a$, $SD=.374$) and the scores of the females in control group($M=11.293^a$, $SD=.585$) and the scores of the males in experimental group ($M=14.072^a$, $SD=.340$) and the scores of the females in experimental group($M=14.075^a$, $SD=.509$).

After the intervention, the experimental group outperformed the control group, which suggests a very significant improvement in oral presentation proficiency from an educational point of view. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study concerning difference in the posttest oral presentation proficiency of the control and experimental group was rejected (See Table3, Table 4 and Table 5).

**Table 3 Posttest Oral Presentation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment Conditions</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10.8667</td>
<td>1.84649</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10.1667</td>
<td>1.72240</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10.6667</td>
<td>1.79815</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13.9474</td>
<td>1.39338</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15.0000</td>
<td>.75593</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14.2593</td>
<td>1.31829</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12.5882</td>
<td>2.21726</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12.9286</td>
<td>2.75860</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.6875</td>
<td>2.36244</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows descriptive statistics of Oral presentation posttest scores of the Males in control group ($M=10.8667$, $SD=1.84649$) and the scores of the females in control group($M=11.293^a$, $SD=.585$) and the scores of the males in experimental group ($M=14.072^a$, $SD=.340$) and the scores of the females in experimental group($M=14.075^a$, $SD=.509$).
$SD=1.39338$) and the scores of the Males in experimental group ($M=13.9474, SD=1.39338$) and the scores of the females in experimental group ($M=15.0000, SD=.75593$).

**Table 4 Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12.518a</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>12.101 - 12.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12.353a</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>11.700 - 13.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Pretest Oral Presentation = 10.9375.

Table 4 shows descriptive statistics of oral Presentation posttest scores of the Males ($M=12.518a, SD=.206$) and the scores of the females ($M=12.353a, SD=.585$).

**Table 5 Pre and Posttest Oral Presentation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment Conditions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>10.548a</td>
<td>.287</td>
<td>9.969 - 11.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>14.323a</td>
<td>.252</td>
<td>13.814 - 14.831</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Pretest Oral Presentation = 10.9375.

Table 5 shows descriptive statistics of oral presentation posttest scores of the control group ($M=10.548a, SD=.287$) and the experimental group ($M=14.323a, SD=.252$).

There is no statistically significant difference in the posttest of research skills and oral presentation scores of the females versus males in the experimental group at the $p \leq 0.05$ alpha level (See Table 6).

**Table 6 Treatment Conditions and Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment Conditions</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11.063a</td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>10.439 - 11.687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10.033a</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>9.053 - 11.014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no statistically significant difference in the posttest of research skills and oral presentation scores of the females versus males in the experimental group at the $p \leq 0.05$ alpha level (See Table 6).
The experimental group participants learned how to employ Google Earth to explore the features of the historical sites found in the South and the North of Lebanon. Google Earth helped the participants to fly and explore any place on earth and any spot they wanted. Participants used remotely sensed images to recognize land use patterns of diverse areas in the world. They examined and interpreted the time-sequenced satellite data and aerial photographs. Participants used a Google Earth assessment rubric to critique their products.

Creating ePals helped participants to exchange information about the language and the cultures. Participants used the ePals to carry out the requirements of the project and accordingly prepared brochures about different tourist attractions in Lebanon. The participants employed the ePals products such as ePals Global Community, School Mail, Learning Space, and In2Books to prepare the brochures about the attractions in the South and North of Lebanon. With ePals Global Community, the participants could access the community to find collaborative projects, join discussions in the community forums, and search thousands of classroom profiles to engage with others in authentic exchanges in an online environment (See Figures 1, & 2). Using ePals, learners developed knowledge about the historical sites of their community through class discussion.

4.2 Findings on Perceptions of Google Earth and ePals Presentation Experience

We found that, prior to intervention, there was no significant difference in the oral presentation proficiency of the participants in the control group and the experimental group.

Conversely, after the intervention, the experimental group outperformed the control group, which suggests a significant improvement in proficiency from an educational point of view. Therefore, the first null hypotheses of the study regarding difference in the posttest oral performance and research skills of the control and experimental group were rejected. However, the null hypothesis of the study regarding difference in the posttest gender performance of the experimental group was accepted, for the female learners didn’t show more progress than that yielded by their male counterparts.

The results of the content analysis of qualitative data from reflective logs about learners’ experience with the Google Earth and ePals suggest three aspects of interest: 1) the importance of using Google Earth in conducting geographical research process, 2) the usefulness of ePals in exchanging information, raising cultural awareness and improving writing skills and 3) the significance of Google Earth and ePals educational tools in teaching EFL presentation skills, in general, and project presentations in particular. Specifically, the theme of the significance of the
Google Earth and ePals emerged from the data as many learners in the experimental group expressed their positive perception of this experience.

The eight female learners’ reflection logs were as follows: “Google Earth is an amazing application to have pictures of places.” Another female learner noted, “Google Earth provides us with accurate information related to different locations and it is easy to use.” A female learner noted, “ePals allowed us to access many projects and gave us access to useful material.”

The majority of the male and female learners were in favor of the use of Google Earth and ePals. A female learner noted, “Google Earth and ePals are fun to use and make things much easier for students. Google Earth and ePals have many good features that help us to get connected with many people who can give a lot of useful information.” A female learner added, “Google Earth is easy to access and it provides us with a lot of information about the various places of the world.” Another female learner added, “Google Earth made me discover the features of this useful application. Google Earth enabled us to have tours to many places and showed us that many people all over the world can use this application because the tours, travels and everything can be found in different languages and can be easily accessible without any trouble.” A male learner added, “Google Earth is a useful technological tool because it can show us anywhere we want to see and we don’t have to actually travel to anyplace.” Another male learner noted, “Exploring places, buildings, and information about many regions can be done in no time.” A learner noted, “Google Earth helped us do the project quickly and the tours were fun.” However, a male learner pointed out, “One needs much time to upload pictures on Google Earth; one can’t find updated information for some regions and downloading pictures is a trouble.”

Concerning ePals, a learner noted, “…ePals connects learners from all over the world through emails. Epals made us chat with each other and learn more about the touristic places and we could send each other a lot of information and pictures.” A second male learner noted, “Epals provide students with access to good projects, games, and rewards.” A learner added, “one should have an account and Internet to access ePals.” Another male learner noted, “ePals has many functions and useful features.” A learner pointed out, “Google Earth and ePals help us to find many places easily and we were quick to find the touristic sites and buildings. A learner added, “ePals improves communications and we could access resources and libraries.”

Some male learners mentioned some weaknesses for the use of Google Earth and ePals. “Google Earth exposes us to many locations at the same time, so one can easily get lost searching for a certain place in Lebanon.” Another learner added, “Google Earth doesn’t give information about all places.” A male learner wrote, “Google Earth, doesn’t give details about all the places we want.” A male learner also added, “Epals provide access to a library, games and writing center.” On the other hand, a learner wrote, “ePals are not easy to use.” Also, a male learner added, “Google Earth gives some inaccurate information. One can’t access Google Earth without Internet access.” A female learner said, “Google Earth doesn’t always give recent pictures because anyone can add pictures.”
5. Discussion

The present study examined the relative effectiveness of the Google Earth and ePals technological tools in improving EFL geographical research and oral presentation proficiency and perceptions. As discussed earlier, the results proved to be positive given that the learners who produced EFL presentations using the Google Earth and ePals outperformed their counterparts who produced the same content according to the dynamics of traditional research paper presentation. These findings corroborate those of Kern (2006), Lankshear, Snyder, and Green (2000), Burniske and Monke (2001), Harp and Brewer (2005) reported that ePals are vital for language teachers, for ePals help learners improve writing skills.

The findings of the study also corroborate those of Nicholson (2005), Thomas et al. (1998), Patterson (2007),and Solem and Gersmehl (2005) who assert the importance of using Google Maps and Google Earth as being efficient tools which enable people to think, learn, and work with geographic information. However, Patterson (2007) reports constraints of using the Google Earth as having limited capabilities and tools to support true spatial analytical operations.

A probable explanation of the effectiveness of the Google Earth and ePals and the positive attitudes towards the Google Earth and ePals projects and presentations could be attributed to the opportunities for students to conduct a geographical research and oral presentations with reference to land masses, bodies of water, and other physical features of Earth on maps and globes, pictures, and visual effects. The participants were also able to learn about the culture and the historical sites of the community through class discussions, collaborate with a neighboring community classroom by exchanging the identified historical sites three digital, written, collaboration with community members.

Google Earth and ePals facilitate the teacher’s preparation and save the time that can be tremendously shortened since many datasets are freely available through the “Keyhole BBS”, along with the discussion forums which can assist the learners to evaluate the data’s accuracy and applicability. As such, using Google Earth and ePals, the teachers can emphasize the basic concepts and key ideas of the lessons and not to spend much time on the mechanics of the application itself. Using Google Earth to collect, analyze, and interpret data, the learners critically and logically think to answer questions through scientific investigations. The use of Google Earth and ePals in the classroom provides the learners with the commonly posts data of the most current impact on its main Web page. The photos and the video posted by Google Earth can show the event, help students learn about the current event, view, and write analyses of its implications, which provide students with an implied understanding of spatial information while promoting the critical thinking, analysis, and writing skills.

However, future research should be conducted involving representative samples of different EFL populations and grade levels in order to determine to what extent the findings of the present study are generalizable as well as determine the effect of context-specific factors such as linguistic composition and levels of first and foreign language proficiency on the interface of technology and language proficiency and dispositions.

The present study revealed that university Study Skills learners were generally motivated about the Google Earth and ePals project and oral presentations. Students also responded that the
Google Earth and ePals project has raised their self-esteem, and they were more willing to express themselves using EFL.

6. Limitations
The present study used a comparatively subject-limited and convenient sample size, which has negative implications for the generalizability of the findings into other contexts. The generalizability of the findings requires further research and a larger, more representative sample size in order to examine the interaction of the treatment effects with other contextual variables such as students, level of language proficiency and technology apprehension.

7. Conclusion
This article reports the findings of an experimental study that investigated the relative effectiveness of the Google Earth and ePals as computer-assisted language learning tools versus traditional research paper in improving the EFL geographical research and oral presentation skills. The findings of the study revealed that the Google Earth and ePals tools as a combined treatment may boost students’ motivation and interest in project presentations as well as improve their oral proficiency. It is probable in the future, that Google Earth and ePals as Computer Assisted Language Learning tools will remain to be useful tools in teaching geographical research and presentation skills. The results of the study indicated that the use of Google Earth and ePals significantly improved the geographical research and oral presentation skills as well as their perceptions towards learning. However, no significant difference in the achievements of males and females was indicated. As such, language teachers should be cognizant of how the integration of technology and Google Earth and ePals into the classrooms can enhance language teaching and learning as well as increase learners’ motivation to learning.

About the Authors:
Dr. Hassan Diab has over 130 publications. His active encouragement and innovative use of ICT in education during his term as Minister of Education and Higher Education in the Lebanese Cabinet has led to the Government of Lebanon to be the winner of the GSMA 2014 Connected Government Award.

Dr. Ghada Awada is an author of textbooks and articles. Her research interests focus on teacher education, improving English language skills and on applications of technology in language teaching and learning.

References
Impact of Google Earth and ePals Models on Perceptions

Awada & Diab


Leu, D. J. (2000a). Literacy and technology: Deictic consequences for literacy education in an information age.


Appendixes should be the last section.

Appendix A

A Rubric for Evaluating Student Google Earth Findings

Adapted from “Google Earth Evaluation Rubric " by Dr. Cynthia Annett
https://sites.google.com/site/cynthiaannett/kacee-pre-conference-workshop#TOC-Evaluation-Rubrics

A Rubric for Evaluating Student ePals Projects
Adapted from “ePals Email Rubric: Reading, Writing, and? Thinking about Topics with an ePal” by ePals Global Community

Appendix II: Figures

![Image of Explore Experiences](https://www.epals.com/#!/exploreExperience)

Figure 1
Figure 2
Integration of Technology with Pedagogical Perspectives: an Evaluative Study of in-house CALL Professional Development

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Abstract
This study examines the impact of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge in-Action model based in-house professional development workshops on teachers’ practices of technology integration at a Saudi university. The study uses questionnaires to gather feedback on the participants’ pre and post training workshops, coupled by semi-structured interviews to highlight factors that determined the outcome of the training workshops. The findings show that despite the participants being qualified in pedagogy, they were unable to successfully use their expertise to beneficially incorporate technology in their teaching. The failure partly occurred due to apparent misunderstanding of confusing the knowledge of an application with the pedagogical skills of using the application, and partly due to the lack of concrete guidance by the administration on what and how to integrate technology in regular teaching. The study recommends to structure training workshops incorporating pedagogical handling of technology alongside technical training on how to use an application. The study also suggests that an institutional policy regarding the use of technology is inevitable to make such ventures successful. Such a policy needs to be devised and incorporated in regular syllabus, and should be clearly addressed in all training workshops on professional development.

Keywords: CALL, TPACK, Teacher development, Teacher training, Technology integration
1. Introduction

In order to face the growing challenges of educational institutions, teachers are expected to develop their pedagogical practices and approaches to meet the learners’ needs. For this, it is important to provide teachers with regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skills. To further support our view, Richards and Farrell (2005:1) state, “opportunities for in-service training are crucial to the long-term development of teachers as well as for the long-term success of the programs in which they work”. The impact of professional development is likely to be significant if the training is incorporated in the teaching practices. Moreover, these aspects of professional development are so much interrelated that any deviation can affect the teaching and learning process. In view of the rapidly growing needs of technological integration in education, it is essential to address the same in planning teacher development programmes in order to keep pace with the latest research in teacher education. In this respect, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) integration has been an important component of teacher education by a number of researchers (e.g. Hubbard & Levy, 2006; Kessler, 2006; Beatty, 2013).

With this theoretical framework, the present study investigates the impact of in-house CALL professional development workshops based on Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)-in-Action model on the EFL instructors at an English language institute in a Saudi university from two different viewpoints whether the in-house CALL workshops: (a) covered participants’ professional development goals; (b) met participants’ expectations in helping them integrate CALL in their classrooms. In this regard, literature was reviewed that focuses on the studies emphasizing teacher education in CAL/LL, TPACK and TPACK-in-Action model.

1.1 Literature review

The inclusion of technology in language teaching is by no means novel in its essence. However, it has been massively evolved into its current form where teachers have a wide range of computer/mobile device applications, and learning management systems available to them. Today, being digital natives (Prensky, 2008) students want to learn through technology (Ahmed, 2012), rather than through conventional methods of language teaching because technology is more convenient, more enjoyable and allows greater freedom to manipulate the learning material. A number of researchers (e.g. Hubbard, 2008; Kozma, 2003) observe that CALL is unavoidable in the current educational settings, hence its integration in teacher education is inevitable to meet the needs of the digital era (Mishra and Koehler, 2006). Reinders (2009) maintains that successful integration of technology depends on teacher’s ability to incorporate it not only for the delivery of content but also to improve learners’ skills in a language classroom. In other words, effective integration of CALL in the classrooms largely depends on the trainings offered to the teachers. Moreover, with the effective trainings, teachers’ knowledge and perception of CALL integration may play a crucial role in their technology integration and the degree of success (Atkins & Vasu, 2000; Lam, 2000; Liu, Theodore, & Lavelle, 2004; Milbrath & Kinzie, 2000). Therefore, a complex issue such as integration of technology in the classroom necessitates a thorough understanding of complicated amalgamation of various factors (Koehler, Mishra, & Yahya, 2007).

A number of studies (e.g. Kamhi-Stein, 2000 ; Lam, 2000) have focused on teachers’ beliefs, attitudes and efficacy about CALL, but there are a few of such studies that have focused
on the impact of CALL teacher education programs (Hegelheimer, 2006; Kessler, 2007; Kilickaya, 2009; Tai, 2015). With an aim to fill the gap of exploring the impact of CALL oriented teacher training plans, the focus of this study is to investigate whether the in-house professional development workshops have any impact on the EFL teachers’ integration of CALL in the classrooms at the English Language Institute (ELI).

1.2 CALL in Teacher Education

The field of CALL teacher education has been growing rapidly in both size and importance, yet there is a dearth of technologically advanced professionals. Research on CALL in the field of English language teaching shows the positive impact on teacher professional development (Hubbard & Levy, 2006; Guichon & Hauck, 2011; Thang & Gobel, 2012; White & Reinders 2009). Teachers should know how technology integration works in order to support language learning through dedicated courses and seminars: CALL course series, CALL certificates, and CALL graduate degrees (Hubbard & Levy, 2006). Teacher professional development should not be merely learning novel tools and skills; rather, it should meet the needs of the actual classroom in order to achieve maximum benefits.

Hubbard and Levy (2006) highlight that language teachers are not technologically well trained to meet the future needs. Hubbard (2008) further illustrates that teachers generally feel more comfortable with the teaching methods they have acquired during their experiences as students or teachers, and even in-service trainings assumingly do not change such fixture. Kessler (as cited in Hubbard & Levy, 2006) states that CALL requires right amount of knowledge of technology and its integration in pedagogy. In other words, the use of technology merely for technology sake is not beneficial unless it is effectively directed by pedagogical perspectives. Egbert, Paulus, and Nakamichi (as cited in Kessler, 2006) believe that teachers learn better in informal settings where they get an opportunity to benefit from their colleagues contrary to any formal form of technology training events. Notably, teachers are more prone to implement the materials learnt from the former setting as compared to the latter. They further believe that teachers do not supplement their use of technology with the newly acquired knowledge even they are adequately proficient to do so due to certain limits such as scheduled deadlines, curricula, organizational restraints and unavailability of resources. Wong and Benson (as cited in Hubbard and Levy, 2006) further criticize that short courses do not enable teachers to integrate technology in the classroom, as they are unable to change teachers’ strong pedagogical beliefs.

1.3 TPACK (Technology Pedagogy Content Knowledge)

The TPACK framework is designed on Shuman’s (1986, 1987) concept of Pedagogy Content Knowledge (PCK), which has been further stretched by adding another domain that is technology; to make an acronym, ‘A’ was added to call it TPACK. It gives enhanced understanding to the teachers to provide better learning environment.

Koehler and Mishra (2009) state that technology, pedagogy and content are interwoven and form an ideal learning environment. Many teachers assume that using technology only could suffice, disregarding content and pedagogy. Researchers (such as; Matherson, Wilson & Wright 2014; Carr, Jonassen, Litzinger, & Marra, 1998) also supplement this idea that technological skills alone cannot guarantee the effective integration of technology into the classroom. The
general impression of technology integration is merely substituting conventional material to digital form without considering the learning objectives. Some researchers (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Zhao & Frank, 2003) assert that knowledge of technology; content and pedagogy are pivotal to integrate technology. This notion suggests that technology has to be supported by content and pedagogy for effective learning and teaching process.

1.3.1 TPACK-in-Action model

The TPACK-in-Action model proposes that a workshop entails: a) Modelling; b) Analyzing; c) Demonstrating; d) Application; e) Reflection to achieve the goal of helping English teachers’ competency required to inculcate CALL into their classrooms (figure 1)

![Figure 1 TPACK-in-Action Model (Taken from Tai, 2013)](image)

The same TPACK-in-Action Model (Tai, 2013) was used to guide and design these in-house professional development CALL workshops. With this model in view, the present study investigates the impact, if any, on TPACK-in Action CALL workshops offered by the professional development unit (PDU) on the EFL instructors teaching English at a Saudi Arabian university, and investigates to what extent the series of workshops has helped the teachers to meet their professional development goals in their professional routine.

2. Methodology

This study used mixed methods design, adopting Convergence Model (Creswell and Clark, 2011), in order to collect and analyse different but complimentary data. Quantitative data were collected through survey questionnaires before and after the given workshops, triangulated by the qualitative data developed from semi-structured interviews and document analyses at pre and post workshop stages.

2.1 Settings and Participants

This study was conducted at an English language institute (ELI) at a university in Saudi Arabia. The participants of this study were fifteen EFL instructors teaching English in a Preparatory Year Programme (PYP). These teachers, with their consent, were selected for the study because they had previously mentioned technology integration in their teaching as their annual professional development goal for the academic year 2014-2015. Setting annual professional development goals prior to the start of the academic year are mandatory for all the language instructors at the ELI. The PDU organises the workshops for the instructors to help them achieve their stated goals every academic year. The participants attended in-house CALL
professional development program consisting of five workshops on the technology integration spread over five weeks.

Due to the gender segregation policy in Saudi Arabian education system, only male participants were selected for this study. Seven participants were aged 43 or more and six were between 37-42 whereas the rest were under 37 years of age. Eleven out of fifteen participants hold a Masters level qualification in ELT/TESOL or Applied Linguistics and three-held Bachelors level qualification, and one participant held a PhD in Linguistics. Their qualifications suggest sufficient content knowledge and command over the language.

2.2 In-house CALL professional development workshops at the ELI

A series of workshops was organized by the PDU over the period of one semester (four months). This program was shaped on the expectations that the trainees will use the learnt knowledge of technology integration in their classrooms and share their experiences for further improvement of such courses. The whole program was executed through the following five two-hour training workshops in five sessions: Audio-visual Interference in Language Teaching: A Practical Approach using TPACK, Interactive Videos: Getting the Most out of any Video, Socrative: Everything you Need to Know, Flipping the Classroom: the Nearpod Way, Planning and Organizing Writing using Mind Genius. It is worth mentioning that each earlier session gave a foundation to the coming sessions. Besides, teachers’ feedback helped the organizers to keep the track of teachers’ progress throughout the program. Apart from providing the foundation to properly understand the integration of all components of TPACK (technology, pedagogy and content knowledge), every in-house CALL PD workshop focused on the TPACK-in-Action Model (Tai, 2013) and followed the five proposed steps in that; (1) Modelling; (2) Analysing; (3) Demonstrating; (4) Application; (5) Reflection. (See figure.1).

Keeping the CALL integration goals of the trainees in mind, the workshops followed a standard structure of modelling a lesson with a sound pedagogical decision and a particular content objective. After completing each workshop, trainers aimed to rationalise and make the trainees understand the selection behind the design of the lesson by analysing it. The first two steps were modelled, followed by a rationale behind the way the lessons were designed. At the next stage, trainers demonstrated the features and usability of the integrated technology in the lessons. After demonstrating the affordances of the technology, participants were engaged to plan a CALL lesson corresponding technology with appropriate pedagogy and specific content and also imparted these lessons to their peers. Next, participants were asked to reflect on their learning. Participants played a pivotal role in the last two steps by developing their own knowledge and tying knowledge and practice together.

2.3 Data collection procedures

Data was collected over a period of four months from January 2015 to April 2015. Before the workshops, five-point Likert-type scale on TPACK Survey (adapted from Schmidt, Thompson, Koehler & Shin, 2009) was distributed to only those teachers who previously had mentioned ‘technology integration’ as their professional development goals for 2014-15 academic years. The questionnaire was divided into four parts with 12 questions; PCK, TPK, TCK and TPACK. The adapted version of the survey was carefully reviewed to ensure the context specifications. The questionnaire was piloted with six EFL teachers at the ELI to ensure validity and internal reliability. It was sent to the participants on Google Forms. The survey
aimed to investigate teachers’ perceived knowledge about the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK), Technological Content Knowledge (TCK), and TPACK.

The participants attended a series of workshops spread over a period of two months. After attending each workshop, participants were asked to complete a post-workshop survey to get their feedback on that particular training. They were given a course of two months to implement introduced technology in their classrooms. At the end of the four-month semester, individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed for data analyses. During the data analysis, pseudonyms have been used to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

2.4 Data analysis

This section discusses the data in three subsections. The first section presents the findings from the pre-workshop survey; the second section deals with the data gained from post workshop feedback; and the last section discusses the participants’ feedback gained through the semi-structured interviews.

2.5 Pre-workshop survey on TPACK

In the pre-workshop survey, while answering the question whether they could learn the technology easily, 14 respondents expressed a positive consent to the question whereas only one respondent remained neutral (Figure 2). A clearly vast majority of the respondents perceived themselves updated with the latest technological developments.

![Figure 2 Responses on TPACK survey](image)

Responding to the question about their teaching knowledge, all the respondents stated that they were pedagogically sound and familiar with the different teaching styles, approaches and methodologies. It was probably due to the fact that all of them are well qualified and experienced. In this respect, they claim to have the skills required to assess learners’ needs, and their learning styles in multiple ways. Moreover, they were familiar with technology integration...
into teaching, and all the respondents expressed that they could choose the technologies for the lesson content to enhance the teaching approaches to achieve their lesson objectives.

Their perceived knowledge of TPACK framework seemed to have immensely impacted on their perceptions about the technology influence on their teaching approaches as depicted from their feedback. Approximately 12 respondents were positive about using strategies that combine content, technologies and teaching approaches that they learned from their in-house professional development events in their classrooms (Figure 1 above).

2.6 Post-workshops feedback

Considering the impact of in-house professional development events, about nine respondents believed in the effectiveness of the events, representing an effective model of combining content, technologies and teaching approaches in their teaching (Figure 3 below) whereas only five respondents believed in the events being slightly less effective. Only one respondent fell under 25% of the effectiveness of the events as an effective model of combining content, technologies and teaching approaches in their teaching.

![Figure 3 Teachers’ responses on relevance of the workshops](image)

In order to analyse the data at micro level, all participating teachers were asked to give their feedback on each of the workshops. In the feedback on workshop “Audio-visual Interference in Language Teaching: A Practical Approach” eight teachers considered it helpful and six teachers marked it as moderately helpful. Only one teacher indicated that the workshop was extremely useful. In response to the question on how useful the workshop for the classroom teaching was, an overwhelming majority of twelve out of fifteen teachers marked it as very useful, two teachers considered it somewhat useful, and only one participant believed that it was of a little use.

Similar questions were asked about “Planning and Organizing Writing Using Mind Genius” workshop. In respond to first question two teachers think that it was extremely useful, five teachers graded it as very helpful, and only two teachers believed that the workshop was
slightly helpful, whereas one respondent considered it as not useful at all. Hence a significant segment deemed the utility of this workshop to their classroom practices.

The third workshop “Flipping the classroom: the NearPod Way” also got diverse feedback on both the questions. It is interesting that 3 teachers deemed it as extremely helpful on the first question, six teachers rated it as very helpful whereas six teachers valued it as moderately helpful. The second question also got interesting and similar feedback. Out of fifteen, seven teachers graded it as somewhat useful, four teachers considered it very useful, and the rest of the teachers marked it as useful.

The fourth workshop was on “Socrative”. In response to first question, six teachers ranked it as extremely helpful; seven teachers categorized it as very helpful whereas, only two teachers considered it as not useful at all. In response to second question, again six teachers marked it as very useful, five teachers found it useful, and the last four teachers deemed it as somewhat useful.

The last workshop was on “Interactive Videos”. Answering to the first question seven teachers graded it as extremely helpful and six teachers marked it as very helpful whereas only one teacher considered it as moderately helpful. While replying to the second question, eight teachers found it very useful and five teachers rated it as useful; only two teachers ranked it as somewhat useful.

Figure 3 shows that the workshops on Interactive Videos and Audio-visual Interference in Language Teaching have been more popular among the complete series of workshops whereas the workshop on MindGenius was somewhat least relevant in the series.

2.7 Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews

All participating teachers were interviewed at the end of the semester to gain further insight of application of these workshops in their teaching. About four teachers used a few of the introduced or taught technologies in the class. The frequency of using these technologies scale permeates as once a week, more than once a week, once or twice a module and never. As the figure 4) shows that only half of the teachers used it either once a week or once or more than once a week in their teaching.
About a quarter used it once or twice a module and the last quarter never used it. When asked about the impediments to applying these technologies in the class, four striking themes were sprouted which were: inadequately addressed required needs, pacing guide, technical problems, and students’ comfort whether it was positive and/or negative. Subsequently, most of the teachers were somewhat satisfied, whereas, only four teachers were satisfied with the workshops. Furthermore, when inquired what reasons of satisfaction and dissatisfaction were; two separate themes came into limelight. Almost all the teachers were of the view that they learnt new ideas about the integration of technology, and these workshops were engaging and motivating. However, about half of the participants believed that these workshops were not focused and the technologies learned were difficult to be merged in the prescribed pacing guide. It is noteworthy that one teacher deemed that these workshops were not designed specifically in the context of the ELI.

3. Discussion and recommendations

Referring back to our research question regarding the impact of in-house CALL PD workshops on the participants and the degree of professional development they acquired, the data analysis above seems to suggest that before the workshops were conducted, more than 90% respondents claimed their confidence in being updated on technological advances, and pedagogical knowledge of the subject with skills in assessing learners needs and identifying various learning styles, assumingly including assessment through technological learning materials. Likewise, in their feedback given right after the workshops, a vast majority of the respondents found every workshop useful and relevant to their teaching situations. However, when the same respondents were interviewed at the end of the modules, interestingly they did not demonstrate a high degree of technology integration. It was expected that these respondents
would be motivated to experiment with using newly acquired techniques, which was however resulted the otherwise. This confirms Kessler’s (2007) claim that teachers often tend to rely upon the skills and knowledge related to technology that they had acquired for their personal use. Despite being confident and capable with technologies, they are less likely to implement newly learned practices.

As figure 4 shows that apparently 10 teachers used three applications at various occasions, and 5 teachers never used any of the applications, there is a possibility that these 10 teachers might not be 10 different individuals but the same few teachers who tried to test the applications in class. Even if it is assumed that 10 different individual teachers tried three different applications, the frequency of using the application cannot be actually considered technology integration in daily teaching practice. As teachers did not have any record of such sessions, but only their reflective thoughts on what they did and how it went. Interestingly, teachers did not seem to have concrete evidence of how far the use of these applications was successful and whether they should continue them or not. This issue is likely to occur due to what Kessler (2007) calls teachers’ inability to identify when to use technology and when to rely on non-technical methodologies.

In their feedback during the interviews, the respondents gave various reasons for not using the applications systematically in their daily teaching routine. Out of 15, eight teachers mentioned that the pacing guide did not allow adequate time to incorporate other activities than the prescribed ones, a problem also identified by Hegelheimer (2006). The pacing guide is detailed document dividing the syllabus in weekly segments with all the reading and writing tasks, in addition to covering specific units from the textbook as well as conducting grammar and speaking quizzes and other continuous assessment tasks. Hence, the document is highly intensive with step-by-step guidance but no clear directions as well as policy to integrate technology in classroom teaching. Six respondents pointed out that they were unable to try the applications because of various technological problems including unavailability of the internet in classroom, non-functional electronic equipment and a lengthy procedure to get the instruments repaired which demotivates teachers and students to incorporate technology in lessons. It is also interesting that in immediate post workshop feedback (Figure 3) 13 teachers gave positive consent (ranging from extremely helpful to slightly helpful) on the utility of workshops on NearPod and Socrative, however, none of them used it in classroom, showing least level of satisfaction in their end of module feedback during the interviews. A major concern in this respect was referred to the pacing guide, which does not allow sufficient time to use the applications.

Discussing their overall satisfaction level regarding the workshops, 8 teachers in their interviews mentioned that using technology is motivating, enjoyable and it provides new ideas to integrate their learning material with technology. However, all the 15 teachers mentioned that their experience did not reach at satisfactory level partly because of squeezed pacing guide schedule and partly because of unfocused training on the use of integration of technology. This brings a serious note on the contents of the workshops, which were viewed positive in the immediate post-workshop feedback but eventually emerged as less beneficial in terms of focused training on technology integration. This response by the participants also highlights the significance of training not only on the operations of the application, but also on pedagogical
sides of using these applications in relation to the teaching and learning contexts, considering the syllabus, time available and the assessment of teaching conducted through technological mode. This finding confirms Kessler’s (2007) claim that teachers need to be trained in using technology that is pedagogically focused and informed by the literature. Though in the pre-workshop feedback, almost all the teachers asserted to have good knowledge of pedagogy and technological advances in education, it is evident that it was a superficial and too general self-assessment. At the end of the module, all the teachers realised that integration of technology does not mean merely knowing how an application works, rather how it involves complete knowledge of developing and adapting materials not only to suit the needs of their learners but also to skillfully adapt according to their specific teaching context.

The findings also offer recommendations to the administration to develop a clear policy of when, what and how to integrate technology in the learning materials and process. Such a policy should clearly allocate realistic time in the pacing guide alongside other guidelines. Furthermore, the professional development management also needs to re-consider their philosophy of structuring workshops not only to train on operating applications, but also training on the pedagogical aspects of using the application/s with the possible scenario in which a particular application is likely to be a success or a failure. It means that the workshops need to train teachers on assessing each application to make decision on whether or not it should be used in their lessons. Despite the training workshops clearly followed the TPACK-in-Action model (Figure 1), they did not seem to address the context specific factors due to which the participants were temporarily overwhelmed with excitement to have known something innovative and useful for their students, but eventually were disappointed when they actually tried to use the applications in real classroom.

Considering the limited time of six weeks allocated for each module, the professional development management may also consider selecting various applications and piloting them before introducing to the teachers. Last but not least, it is a mutual planning between the curriculum developers and professional developers to make informed decisions to draw policies on to what extent technology needs to be integrated and which modes of technology should be used. Without a clear policy with concrete guidelines regarding the use of technology in classroom, and without providing favourable environment as well as resources to the teachers, it is unrealistic to expect teachers having set their professional goals to integrate technology in their teaching. Teachers could voluntarily set these goals at personal level, but appraising teachers on such goals does not justify the decisions because teachers do not have sufficient opportunities to concretely demonstrate their expertise in the area.

4. Conclusion

This paper looks at the practice of implementing in-house CALL PD workshops based on TPACK-in-Action model at a Saudi university. The data shows that though the participants of the study initially expressed their motivation and knowledge in TPACK area and appreciated the worth of this in-house workshop; they faced difficulties in implementing taught courses on technology due to both lack of focused training and administrative constraints. The study also highlights that the concept of integrating technology in education needs to be clearly defined with full consideration of the contextual specifications. The study also brings into notice that integrating technology should not be taken for superficial knowledge of operating an application, as apparently misunderstood by the participants of this study, rather it involves thorough
understanding of material development to assess the application in hand in pedagogical as well as contextual perspectives.

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References


A Systematic Review on Informal Learning of English Language via Facebook

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Abstract
Methods of learning have changed in the 21st century as the use of social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Blog is becoming popular. This paper aims to critically analyse and discuss scientific research on the informal learning of English language through one of these sites. It is hoped that this systematic review will advance our understanding of the necessary typical conditions for effective informal learning through networking sites. Two research questions were formulated: (1) Is Facebook an efficient learning environment for students to facilitate informal learning of English?; and (2) What are the advantages and disadvantages of using Facebook for the informal learning? Three databases were explored and over 60 relevant academic journal articles were found. However, only 20 articles met the inclusion criteria of this systematic review. The analysis shows that there are still many disadvantages and challenges, such as privacy and miscommunication that may prevent a complete adoption of Facebook as a learning environment, yet it is a potential platform for students to facilitate their informal learning of English. It is recommended that language learners are made aware of all the advantages and disadvantages of informal learning through networking sites so that they can take appropriate actions to regulate their learning experience.

Keywords: Facebook, informal learning, language learning, social networking site, social learning, systematic review
Introduction
With the rapid development of information technology, we have entered into information- and knowledge-based society. The quick improvement and inventions of modern educational technology offer amplified chances for informal learning. Jokisalo and Riu (2009) point out that 80 per cent of the knowledge we gain comes from informal learning and only 20 per cent comes from formal learning.

In informal learning, learners have control over the learning procedure and its outcomes. The learning process is not only self-directed and self-regulated; it is also shared and collaborative (Rashid, Rahman & Rahman, 2016). Learners can exchange information with each other and make the information increasingly useful and significant to them through their co-operative endeavours (Yunus, Mohamad & Waelateh, 2016). Thereby, the importance of informal learning should not be ignored.

Informal learning can be defined as a lifelong process whereby individuals acquire information from daily experience and the educational influences and resources in his or her environment (Foley, 1999). It is commenced by the needs of the individual learner to secure new information and skills and improve the existing ones (Pozgaj & Vlahovic, 2010). Social networking sites (SNSs), such as Facebook and Twitter, make the Internet environment more interactive and easier to explore, and facilitate learners’ to learn informally as well as enable users to share information quickly, collaborate, and communicate with one another (Rashid and Rahman, 2014).

In the recent history of information and communication technologies, the proliferation of SNSs is most relevant phenomenon. Of the various online SNSs, Facebook is now the most popular, with one billion active users per month (Facebook, 2012). To date, Facebook has received significant attention from some research areas, ranging from social and behavioural sciences, economics and business marketing. Definitely, in the social sciences there is an enormous amount of research about the implications of social networking platform for identity and self-presentation (e.g. Rosenberg & Egbert, 2011; Rashid et al., 2016), friendship articulation (e.g. Rashid, 2016a; Wang, Moon, Kwon, Evans & Stefanone, 2010; Zwier, Araujo, Boukes & Willemsen, 2011) and privacy concerns (e.g. boyd & Hargittai, 2010; Waters & Ackerman, 2011), that recently resulted in a systematic review of the literature related to the networking sites (e.g. Wilson, Marin, Rhea, Wilson, Loenneke & Anderson, 2012).

Some studies suggest that SNSs are mainly used in education as tools to support existing social relationships and facilitating the maintenance of social capital (e.g. Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2011), but their value as an informal learning environment is still questioned. On the one hand, scholars have admonished against using Facebook for educational purposes (e.g. Selwyn, 2009). Since students seem to be unwilling to use it for academic purposes, it is proposed that the concentration should move away from its educational uses and ponder Facebook as a place for socialization (Madge, Meek, Wellens & Hooley, 2009). On the other hand, scholars have highlighted the potential of SNSs for informal learning in so far as they would support “the process of building networks of information, contacts and resources that are applied to real problems” (Anderson & Dron, 2011, p. 87). As pointed out by Siemens (2005), the shift of emphasis from the group to the network as the locus of learning depends on a concept of
education based on exploration, connection, creation and evaluation within networks that connect people, digital artefacts, and content. This review attempts (1) to examine whether Facebook is an efficient platform to facilitate informal learning of English and (2) to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of informal learning through the site.

**Review Framework**

This study aims to critically analyse and discuss scientific research on the informal learning of English through SNSs. For this purpose, Vygotsky’s (1978a) sociocultural theory was used as the framework in investigating the features of informal learning in the social media environment. Sociocultural theory proposes that human behaviours are affected by their social and cultural factors. Rooted in the sociocultural theory is the social perspective on learning, which emphasizes the collaborative context of learning and that learners can select for themselves what they need to learn. Vygotsky (1981a) puts forth that learning is situated in social activities. Individuals develop their knowledge by engaging in various types of social activities. John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) add that people can learn more through taking part in different kinds of joint activities as they can combine various influences into their new modes of understanding and involvement.

The main claim in sociocultural theory is that individual development, including higher mental functioning, originates in social sources. This is based on the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978b) and the genetic law of development (Vygotsky, 1981b). Vygotsky (1978a) defines the ZPD as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p.86).

Vygotsky's concept of the ZPD relates to the “assessment of intelligence” and the “organisation of instruction” (Wertsch, 1991, p.28). With regard to the assessment of intelligence, Vygotsky argues that the same emphasis should be placed on the level of potential development as the level of actual development. Vygotsky argues that instructions “should be tied more closely” to potential development than actual development (Wertsch, 1991, p.28). More capable peers can thus help other individuals to further develop their capabilities. This is because human development is the “product of a broader system than just the system of a person’s individual functions, specifically, systems of social connections and relations, of collected forms of behavior and social cooperation” (Vygotsky, 1999, p.41). Based on the concept of the ZPD, it is reasonable to suggest that the social interaction and collaboration afforded by Facebook Timelines provides an opportunity for learners to develop themselves. Their potential development can be enhanced with the guidance and support of Friends, hence enabling them to solve problems which could be difficult for them to solve independently.

As a form of social learning theory for the new digital age, Siemens (2004; 2005) and Downes (2007) have proposed the theory of connectivism. Connectivism emphasizes how social learning today is often integrated with social media technologies. With the rapid development of social media, learning is not an individual activity. Today, learners often gather information by connecting to other people using SNSs. One of the tenets in connectivism is that the capacity to learn is more important than what is currently known (Siemens, 2004). Teachers’ role, from the
perspective of connectivism, is not only to transmit knowledge to learners but also to form learning pathways and make connections with existing and new knowledge resources (Anderson & Dron, 2011).

**Material and methods**

The review process encompassed of the four phases described below.

*Formulation of inclusion and exclusion criteria*

Before searching for the literature, the following inclusion criteria were formulated. First, each journal article should be relevant, meaning that the publication should examine informal learning of English through SNSs within the scope of the conceptual review framework. Second, the academic journal articles are written only in English, as we can read and understand this language. Lastly, the time extent of the literature search was limited to 2005–2016 to give an overview of the most recent research in this area.

*Improvement of a search strategy*

To develop a search strategy appropriately to the main purpose of this review, various search terms were listed, such as informal learning, social learning, technology enhanced language learning, e-learning, and social networking site. After heedful contemplation of the consequences of removing potential search terms, the following search terms were identified as being the most informative: informal learning, learning environment, Facebook and social networking site. Quotation marks were also utilized to search for phrases.

*Identification of relevant publications*

Three databases were searched: the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) catalogue, the Web of Science (WoS), and the ScienceDirect. The abstracts of the academic journal articles resulting from the search strategy as mentioned above were screened for relevancy. If the abstract did not give adequate information, then the full text was scanned to determine whether or not the paper met the inclusion criteria.

*Critical analysis and exploration*

Following the careful reading, the critical analysis was carried out using a self-devised literature review form based on the examination framework adopted in this study. This provided the room for the explanation and evaluation of the found journal articles. The literature examination form also functioned to standardize the critical analysis. The procedure consisted of two parts: (a) questions aimed to provide acuteness into the research design features of the publications, thereby enabling the description of study into informal learning and (b) questions formulated to analyse the scientific research on the informal learning of English through Facebook.

**Results and Discussion**

*Explanation of scientific research on the informal learning of English language through Facebook*

The search resulted in 60 unique publications. Of these, 20 papers met the abovementioned criteria for inclusion. While two relevant publications reported on the same empirical study results, only the academic journal articles with the most extensive coverage were encompassed. Of those 20 relevant publications, 15 were empirical, and five were theoretical...
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studies. A total of 30 publications were not included as the papers describe individual faculty experiences, courses, curricula, or projects. Also excluded were five publications on a different topic. The majority of the reviewed journal articles were published in the twenty-first century and in the field of education.

Exploration of research questions

Is Facebook an efficient learning environment for students to facilitate informal learning of English?

Facebook is recently considered as the most popular platform for online social networking. It would be worthy to examine if there are activities that directly or indirectly lead to the learning of English. Students and teachers may use Facebook to upload files, photos, videos and other educational materials that are relevant to their course and learning (Rashid & Rahman, 2014). Given the widespread diffusion of Facebook among the students, many scholars outline the benefits of using the site for teaching and learning (e.g., Duffy, 2011; Greenhow, 2011; Halverson, 2011; Siemens & Weller, 2011). For instance, Greenhow (2011) and Siemens and Weller (2011) point out that Facebook is beneficial for learning as it facilitates discussion between learners who are geographically distributed.

Research has demonstrated that students use Facebook individually or in collaboration with their peers and instructors outside the classroom as an informal learning tool (Dogoriti & Pange, 2010; Smith, Caruso & Kim, 2010; Towner & Munoz, 2011). Students appear to make regular use of Facebook for course discussions much in the way they use the SNSs for social purposes (Estus, 2010).

Language learning is not limited to the formal learning setting of the classroom, and much language learning can occur informally, outside the classroom. SNSs offer an alternative informal, mobile environment with flexible teaching and learning that have no time constraints. Integrating Facebook in learning process may enhance students’ interest, motivation and encourage collaboration between English language learners (Shih, 2011; Harrison & Thomas, 2009; McBride, 2009; Karpati, 2009). We coincide with the view of Godwin-Jones (2008) that Facebook, which “enhances communication and human interaction can potentially be harnessed for language learning” (p. 7). Similarly, Blattner and Fiori (2009) also agreed that Facebook can provide opportunities to enhance the “development of socio-pragmatic competence in language learners” (p. 17).

Another recent study by Kabilan, Ahmad and Abidin (2010) found that, Facebook can be an online learning environment to facilitate students’ English language learning in terms of (1) students' improvement of language skills and, (2) students' motivation, confidence and attitudes towards English language learning. Students in Kabilan et al.’s (2010) study have positive views and opinions regarding Facebook as it provides rich interaction and communication that the students have not experienced before. Such positive experience leads to the “increased confidence in language acquisition and a sense of connectedness” among the students (Wang & Chen, 2007, p.6). The positive views of the students regarding SNSs can be explained by Lave and Wenger’s (1991) notion of learning that it is a form of participation in a social world. People learn better in social settings and through authentic and relevant social interactions (Rashid,
2016b). Social online communities can be linked to this concept, whereby as a networked environment it allows and facilitates the necessary interactions that improve learning (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002).

Learners need to read and write in order to communicate with their Friends on Facebook. Their confidence levels may increase as they write and read while they communicate on the site. As pointed by Hanlon (2007), the activities of reading and writing on networking sites may motivate and enhance students’ confidence to communicate in English. Nadzrah and Mickan (2003) reveal that students are positive about the social networking platform as an online learning environment because by participating in SNSs, they can use the language freely without worrying about making writing mistakes. As highlighted by Gannon-Leary and Fontainha (2007) students can demonstrate their ability to assimilate into the sociocultural practices of their respective Facebook communities, gain knowledge and skills from the native users of the English language and engage in authentic written dialogues and conversations with them via such interactions between the expert (native users of English) and the novice (non-native users of English). This is a “neo-apprenticeship style learning, similar to that proposed by Vygotsky” (Gannon-Leary & Fontainha, 2007, p.3).

The review above contributes to our understanding that Facebook can be utilized as an online environment to facilitate informal learning of English. As suggested by Prensky (1998), we need to allow students to learn by themselves. Through Facebook students can explore and manage their learning of English with the help of other users on the site.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of using Facebook as a platform for informal learning?

In general, the main benefit reported in several studies is that Facebook helps to create a learning environment which is: comfortable (Antenos-Conforti, 2009; Armstrong & Retterer, 2008), relaxing (Ducate & Lomicka, 2008), collaboration-oriented (Kessler, 2009; Lee, 2009, 2010; McCarty, 2009; Zorko, 2009), and community-based (Baten, Bouckaert & Kan 2009; Harrison & Thomas, 2009). A related benefit of social networking platform for language learning is the obvious potential it yields for increased student communication and cooperation as well as output in the target language (Baten, Bouckaert & Kan, 2009; Lee, 2009; Peterson, 2006). Some studies have indicated that learners tend to have favourable attitudes towards the pedagogical use of SNSs (Dippold, 2009; Ducate & Lomicka, 2008; Lord, 2008). Besides that, several studies also highlight that networking technologies improve students’ interest and enthusiasm in language learning (Liou & Peng, 2009; Kessler, 2009; McCarty, 2009; Pinkman, 2005; Román-Mendoza, 2009). Other benefits include increased awareness of participation in learning and increased cultural knowledge and communication competence of the participants (Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Jauregi & Banados, 2008; Lee, 2009).

In addition, Facebook helps to reduce stress and increase satisfaction among students. It allows each student to study at their own pace (Rashid and Rahman, 2014). Furthermore, it is easy to join bulletin board discussion at any time, or visiting classmates and instructors remotely in the chat room (Elola & Oskoz, 2008). The site allows the learner to follow-up online at any time and overcome the limitations of space and time in the educational process.
On the other hand, several researchers reported disadvantages of using Facebook for learning purpose. This is mainly related to users’ concerns of their privacy of personal information. Although a lot of information supplied on SNSs is facultative, users are comfortable with exposing a great deal of personal information online. Therefore, one of the main concerns for users who register on these sites is privacy. There are risks involved when people express inappropriate comments on social networking platforms (Butler, 2010), such as bullying (Catanzaro, 2011). Catanzaro reveals escalating problem of bullying among adolescents in the United Kingdom, Scandinavia and North America that occurs through social network interchanges, such as texting and Facebook postings.

A recent study by Vural (2015) reveals that there are some other disadvantages of using Facebook, such as distraction, remaining under the influence of the thoughts of others, and misunderstanding of an idea as well as addiction. Similarly, Couros (2008) states that Facebook has increasingly become the subject of horror stories, garnering much negative publicity. A recently renewed wave of fear concerning prevalent online dangers has been catalysed by scandals surrounding various social networking abuses. Holladay (2010) highlights that one-third to one-half of youth are targeted by cyberbullies, which leads to disadvantageous consequences, while Wihbey (2010) puts forth that there are too many unknown consequences and privacy issues involving students interaction on Facebook.

Informal learning often takes place in daily life, and it usually happens in an unplanned or planned manner. The learning goals are determined by the learners themselves depending on their current interests. The existence of networking technology facilitates the informal learning process. However, there are some disadvantages of using networking technology for informal learning, such as online bullying, the disclosure of personal information, access to inappropriate content, addiction and miscommunication.

Conclusion
This review has contributed to our understanding that informal learning of English through Facebook is feasible despite several disadvantages and challenges which may affect the learning process. The features that characterize SNSs provide opportunities for users to engage in meaningful language-based activities, even though their initial intention of joining the site is to socialize. To recap, Facebook can be an efficient platform for informal learning of English for several reasons. First, it encourages collaborative learning by enabling discussion between learners who are geographically distributed. Second, it enables flexible learning which takes place at anytime and anywhere as learners tend to spend most of their time on the site since it is easily accessible through mobile phones and other gadgets. This flexible learning helps to reduce stress and increase satisfaction among students since they can learn at their own pace. Third, Facebook provides the opportunities to develop learners’ socio-pragmatic competence and confidence as they use the language authentically in their daily postings on the site.

Despite the affordances of Facebook to engage language learners in informal learning process, the site has its own disadvantages. This is mainly related to the learners’ privacy as their personal information and postings on the site can easily leak to reach unintended users. In addition, learners might face the problem of cyber bullying. Research has shown that SNSs users tend to bully other users through their postings. Besides that, learners might be distracted in the...
learning process as there are many other postings unrelated to learning on the site. Some users have been reported to be addictive to Facebook that they spend many hours daily on the site to engage in activities unrelated to their educational needs. It is recommended that language learners are made aware of all the advantages and disadvantages of informal learning through networking sites so that they can take appropriate actions to regulate their learning experience.

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References


Using Laptops in the Writing Classroom: Applying Technology for Heuristic Learning

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Abstract
It has been argued that there are enormous advantages to integrating laptops into foreign language teaching to help teachers and students become capable of communicating and collaborating with native and nonnative speakers around the globe. This paper aims at underscoring the advantages of using laptops in Teaching English as a Second Language classrooms. It investigates and elucidates different methods and practices that can help English language learners enhance their learning skills through using this technology as well as makes English teachers aware of strategies they can use effectively. Through examining various primary studies and prominent case studies, the paper identifies the shortcomings and inadequacies of the existing conventional English language learning tools. It is necessary for second language teaching to adapt and renew itself in order to be compatible with the globalized world. The paper establishes that the application of laptops is beneficial in providing a wealth of resources that allow students to become active learners by creating content for a worldwide audience.

Keywords: computer laptops, instructional tool, collaborative, computing, technology
Introduction

Though I am what many would consider a “computer geek,” I have never been a strong advocate of using technology in the classroom. Many of my experiences with computers in the classroom have been tedious, with instructors utilizing technology simply because they can and not because they have a logical reason for doing so. For many teachers, any word or phrase involving computers is synonymous with progress. However, there is nothing progressive about sitting one’s students in front of rows of cathode-ray tubes for an hour with no direction. Computers should not be thought of as a replacement for well-planned and pedagogically sound teaching but rather as one tool out of many, which should be used when appropriate.

In the last two decades, the steep rise in technological development has inspired language teachers’ interest in employing laptops as an instructional tool to enhance student learning. We have abundant proof that using technology as a language teaching tool increases student learning and educational outcomes. Previous studies in this area suggest that, compared to their school friends who do not use laptops, learners who employ laptops in the classroom tend to work long hours doing multitasks in their language learning programs and engage in collaborative work. They also play a major part in doing project-based lessons. Moreover, it has been observed that learners who use laptops are able to write longer and better passages or essays than their counterparts who do not use laptops, as seen in their skill at gaining increased access to information, improving their research analysis skills, and spending more time doing homework on computers (Kolesinski, 2014). Subsequent studies on the subject have demonstrated that language learners who use laptops in the classroom develop self-confidence, are more goal oriented, employ active language learning strategies to a greater extent, develop remarkable problem-solving and critical thinking abilities, and are capable of using technology with a flexibility not found in traditional language teaching.

It is an established fact that computer proficiency has now become fundamentally important in language learning. With regard to language learning, certain computer functions like word processing, web browsing, and writing e-mails go a long way in teaching language learners how to type competently and learn fundamental computer operations such as word processing, which gives them a significant advantage over students who essentially have no computer literacy. Allowing laptops in the classroom underlines computer skills and can lead to learners developing the ability to use computers without taking any specific computer classes. Employing laptops for the purpose of note-taking can also be helpful as a good typist can take notes much faster than writing by hand, which can push students to learn to type quickly and accurately (Battro, 2010).

Another possible advantage of using laptops in the classroom is that it can generate entertainment in otherwise dull and dry language learning classes, which are typically guided by traditional classroom teaching. Using laptops is a pleasure for students because it can encourage them to interact and work independently rather than just sitting passively at their desks and listening to a lecture with their notebooks and pens. Laptops can provide a high level of interactivity between students, teachers, and the subject matter (Hamel, 2015). In a language classroom, a Teaching English as a Second Language instructor can assign learners the task of doing an error analysis of a written passage using their laptops online and ask them why they expect the answers they have discovered to be correct. This type of lesson may encourage
learners to discover for themselves the reasons for their answers by searching on their laptops. This activity can infuse in them a freedom to learn on their own with confidence and creativity, and to have fun in learning instead of listening passively to the teacher’s lectures on the subject or reluctantly turning the pages of their grammar books in a controlled atmosphere.

Moreover, using laptops in the classroom can help learners in a significant way to work systematically by themselves or with their classmates in the classroom. This approach can also jog, refresh, and strengthen their memory. Typically, worksheets and notebooks can be easily misplaced and homework assignments left unnoted. But the digital distribution of assignments and classwork can help students shore up their work in a file, to which they can return whenever they need to do so. In addition, it can also motivate them do their work neatly because they can edit it without destroying the text. Using laptops can be practical and effective for language instructors too. They can easily encourage learners to receive their tasks and assignments through e-mails or any of the digital functional units on their laptops for reading, writing, storing, and manipulating information, and send them feedback through the same sources without having to store stacks of notepads and worksheets. Moreover, digital assignments can become an interesting and relaxed via media for language learning as it gives the learners the freedom to send in their assignments remotely if they are forced by unexpected circumstances to miss their language class. As a result, the use of laptops prevents any unfairness on the part of language instructors, who in the past might have had to extend the assignment dates for the absent learner. Another issue is that sometimes, the instructor’s handwriting may be illegible, which can hinder the learner from doing assignments on time, or in contrast, the learner himself or herself oftentimes scrawls down his assignments in handwriting that is impossible for the instructor to read. Digital assignments can facilitate a comfortable and fast way of learning a language, eliminating situations that can impede the learning process.

The global and exponential use of information technology has made it pertinent and practical for language instructors and learners alike to explore its vast potential and adopt it as a basic and standard learning model, using its vast learning to formulate and improvise learning tasks pertaining to all necessary language skills. “Using multimedia to create a context to teach English has its unique advantages. Technology, when used appropriately, can help the English and language classroom a site of active learning and critical thinking” (Pandey, 2014 p. 1). Teachers can adopt technology resources to develop and tailor instructional materials to better meet individual student needs. In language teaching and learning, we have a lot of options to choose from in the world of technology: radio, television, CD-ROMs, computers, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), the Internet, electronic dictionaries, e-mail, blogs and audiocassettes, PowerPoint, videos, DVDs, or VCDs. As a result, technology plays a critical role in English teaching. Using multimedia to create a context for teaching English has unique advantages.

**Literature Review**
Instructors often take an extreme position when computers are mentioned. They are asked to be either for or against them, as if computers can simply be “completely good or completely heinous” (Duffelmeyer, 2002, p. 364). Supporters on both sides of the debate are frequently guilty of contributing to polarizing the discussion, though for different reasons. Those who
push for extreme use of computer-aided learning (CAI) often do so only to add variety to the classroom, or because it seems fashionable (Daiute, 1985; Healey, 2000). Ironically, CAI extremists tend to be those lacking a great deal of knowledge about technology, perhaps using computers in their classroom as a personal learning experience, often at the expense of their learners. Additionally, computing carries with it a sense of prestige. Extreme advocates of CAI may be commended, or in some cases encouraged to utilize computers despite the practicality of doing so, and those most likely to believe in the myths and absolute beneficence of computers are often those with the least experience using them (Brady, 1990; Chen, 1988; Herrmann, 1987; Johnson, 1988; Nash, Hsieh, & Chen, 1989; Phinney & Mathis, 1990; Warden, 1995). In fact, when students are more computer literate than their teachers, the students may be the best judges of how and when CAI should be used. Computer-literate students are able to give honest feedback, informing the instructor as to whether CAI is aiding their learning or is only a more technologically advanced form of busy work.

On the other side of the argument are teachers who refuse to see any benefit in computers. These instructors may lack experience in CAI and therefore fear implementing it in any form (Pennington, 1991; Thiesmeyer, 1989). They may also perceive computers as lower in cultural value when compared to more traditional media, such as books, equating computers with popular culture, video games, or time wasting in general. Michael Heim’s book *Electric Language: A Philosophical Study of Word Processing* reinforces such negative views, according to Hodgkin: “[Heim] offers a pessimistic critique of today’s technology. Word processing is seen as regularizing, algorithmic, automatic, and formulaic, public, evanescent, and intrusive” (Hodgkin, 1988, p. 166). A common statement among many teachers who hold this position is “I just hate computers!” Comments like these are interesting because one would rarely say, “I just hate books” or “I can’t stand overhead projectors!” The latter comments may suggest the instructors or learners are behind the time and betray their ignorance.

While this paper addresses some of the points made above, my main concern is how CAI relates to the ideas of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. As someone who has been greatly influenced by Freire’s work, I have always wondered how to integrate his educational philosophies with CAI. At the same time, I fear that computers, due to their mechanical nature, can be in conflict with the extremely humanistic principles that Freire advocated.

Some of the points address are the following: How can computers be used to help students express their diverse personal interests? How do computers weaken dichotomies of high/low culture? And how does one use computers to create a classroom dialogue where “the teacher of the students and the students of the teacher cease to exist?” (Freire, 1970, p. 67). After reviewing these questions, I provide some practical examples of how to integrate Freire’s ideas in the writing classroom.

**Discussion**

(a) **Expression of Diverse Personal Interests/Equalizing Student-Teacher Authority**

In a traditional writing classroom, students tend to write with the teacher in mind, picking topics and taking stances they believe will result in a high grade. Rather than pursue a subject of personal significance, many students stay within safe zones, choosing nonoffensive and
oftentimes overly discussed topics. The standard writing assignment is thus artificial. Rose (1989) stated that a student cannot truly express his or her emotions and beliefs if only one individual dictates its worthiness. In this scenario the student is constrained by the desire to please his or her instructor and by nothing else. In contrast, Elbow (1998) and Macrorie (1984) indicated that when a person writes in real life, he or she is in full control of whom he or she is writing to, even if it is an audience consisting of only three to four people, and even if the audience is only the writer him- or herself.

As with all disciplines, the gap between classroom practice and real-life application is inevitably wide. What motivates students in real life is not a final grade but rather interest and pride in their work. Therefore, the more control students are given over their writing, “the more ownership they will sense and, consequently, the more energy and enthusiasm they will bring to the project” (Bicknell, 2003, p. 25). With the emergence of the Internet, traditional media gatekeepers have lost total control of peoples’ sensory. If a writer wants to publish his or her novel online, there is nothing preventing him or her from doing so. A person’s ability to promote him or herself is only limited to his or her energy. A publisher, television station, or newspaper is no longer the sole determiner of what is “worthy” for public consumption.

Computers can be an extension of traditional peer editing and evaluation. For example, two classrooms in distant parts of the world can collaborate on peer editing, evaluation, and even idea generation. Additionally, the Web provides a more authentic audience: writing online means that a student will not only be evaluated by his or her instructor but also by any potential visitor to the student’s site.

The option of perceived anonymity online may help learners be less fearful of experimentation. It aids in removing the presence of the teacher’s ego, allowing students to focus instead on the ego of the writer, which is “the only ego that should be of interest in the teaching of writing” (Emig, qtd. in Logan, 1990, p. 6). For many introverted students, working in front of a computer screen and keyboard is “less threatening than having to speak out loud in front of peers and instructors,” and students are no longer, “silenced because they [have] differing opinions [than] those of the teacher, the traditional ‘expert’ and authoritarian figure of the classroom” (Sullivan, 1993, pp. 34–35).

Last, a computer lab designed specifically for writing can provide an environment ideal for brainstorming and group encouragement. Whereas writing has traditionally been something done in isolation, computer-assisted writing labs can potentially transform writing into a more social activity. Admittedly, most computer labs on college campuses encourage isolation, with signs asking individuals not to speak or eat. Tables are often placed as if in a classroom, with all students facing the chalkboard. A more ideal writing lab would create a lounge-like atmosphere. Instead, of cold tile and brick walls, it would resemble a café. Students would be encouraged to communicate, and if a student encountered writer’s block, he or she could sit in another section of the room with similarly frustrated individuals. The idea is to keep students in the lab, help them feel comfortable about writing, and encourage them to feel as if writing is a social experience. In an environment like this, students may not feel as if it is them against the computer screen. They can ideally ask a peer for advice and consultation, lessening the need...
for an overworked lab/writing assistant. Selfe (1988) warned against the idea of computer-centered classroom:

Machine centered computer classrooms that focus on individual drill work and are arranged in rank-and-file rows limit, rather than encourage, the sharing and exchange of information. Such classrooms are not designed as writers’ environments; they inhibit rich collaborative exchanges among writers and readers, the sharing of electronic drafts and texts, and the valuable discussions of purpose and audience which mark the interaction of writers functioning as peer groups (p. 70).

(b) Weakening High/Low Cultural Dichotomies
One of the goals of an introductory writing class is to prompt students to think analytically about issues. Unfortunately, this usually results in students writing simplistic “for” or “against” papers. However, polarized thinking is not a sign of critical thinking and does little to aid one in a modern world. I believe the wide variety of sources on the Internet can provide a steppingstone for important questions about validity and, ultimately, lead students to question sources traditionally considered “authentic” as well. Just as statements made on every website are not true, information originating from other sources, such as television, radio, or print are not necessarily authentic either. In fact, it is rare that any piece of information is wholly authentic, or inauthentic, no matter where it originated from. I believe the hypernature of the Internet can accelerate students’ ability to read between the lines and help some students feel less vulnerable to deception.

An example of an activity that focuses on authentic and inauthentic information might involve testing students’ knowledge of history. The instructor gathers different URLs professing to provide an accurate account of different historical or political events. While the teacher is fully aware of the validity or invalidity of these articles, he or she pretends to be unaware. It is then the job of the students in the class to determine why certain articles are true or not, relying not only on their intuition and personal knowledge but also on their ability to research and confirm the truthfulness of said articles. While researching, students write on the class website about their opinions and findings, collaborating in some instances and possibly debating in others. The final product consists of a short group paper.

Activities such as the one described above attempt to show that information found on the Internet is no less valuable than information found at a library. In other words, personal learning done through the Web is no less authentic than learning done with a textbook. In fact, one might argue that exposure to incorrect ideas gives one a broader understanding of the subject at large and an ability to synthesize good and bad. This is a tool that is invaluable in writing. Furthermore, online it is possible to explore any topic of interest, allowing a student to participate in web discussions or chats. Using online tools provides a reason for writing when many students may have felt no need at all. Unlike television and print, the Web provides two-way interaction with information. Being able to interact with the Web beyond primitive pointing and clicking necessitates learning to write effectively.

(c) Practical Examples of Computing in a Writing Classroom
I would like to preface the section below by stating my own opinion about computers in the classroom. Although this paper focuses primarily on computers, I never expect to become a
teacher who utilizes computers only. In fact, if one takes nothing else from this paper, it should be that computers are tools and that, like any tool, they can be used or abused. With that said, I would like to reiterate the words of Freire, who believed that “experiments cannot be transplanted” and “must be reinvented” (qtd. in Wallerstein, 1983, p. 12). The following activities are only suggestions, and an instructor should consider whether they are appropriate for his or her classroom—not just blindly accept them because technology or computers are involved.

(d) Technology Autobiography

On the first day of class, students are prompted to think about their relationship to and assumptions about technology. The instructor raises some key questions, such as “how computer technology coupled with capitalism may widen the socioeconomic gap between haves and have-nots in our society, and how computers may be overused or misused in elementary schools” (Duffelmeyer, 2002, p. 367). Students give their impressions of computers: Do they believe that technology has lived up to many of its promises? Has it truly made our lives easier? How do they personally feel about computers?

Between the first class meeting and the second, students begin preparing their technology autobiography. The biography first asks students to recollect their history with computing. Some starter questions ask students to think of the first computer they used, why they used it, and how literate they now are in computing. Students are also asked to describe how they believe computers influence the writing process. Last, the autobiography provides students with an opportunity to personally elaborate on some of the questions raised in class. The purpose of the autobiography is to encourage students to become “technology critics,” not merely assuming a hegemonic position where “they simply accept computers as inevitable and natural” (Takayoshi, qtd. in Duffelmeyer, 2002, p. 359).

(e) Class Website and Content

To lessen student-teacher tension, students post their drafts and final papers on a class website, where not only fellow students can view and critique their work but also the public at large. The instructor does not, unless explicitly asked, ever delete student submissions in the future, and the class’s site remains archived well after the semester has ended. This approach serves an additional purpose: it reinforces to students the permanency of web publishing. What is written on the Web cannot be easily retracted.

There are very few assigned readings for the course. Instead, content focuses primarily on the students’ own creations. Rather than assign traditional textbook readings, students are asked to read all of their peers’ writings online before class and bring printouts of their own work for group discussion. The class is not primarily held in a computer lab but rather in a classroom with chairs arranged in a circle. Students are asked, however, to participate in out-of-class group writing sessions in specified (and previously reserved) labs on campus. Ideally, these labs would be accessible until the late hours of the night and provide an atmosphere where students could socialize during the writing process. The goal is not to simply plop students in front of cold machines or to dehumanize the learning process by replacing the instructor with a computer! Students who feel more comfortable writing by themselves are allowed to do so, but the instructor should request that they attempt to attend the group sessions at least once.
Using the course website, students are asked to compose a collaborative short story. The instructor, to encourage the participation of others, may if necessary write the first sentence, to which an additional student adds a sentence. Throughout the week each student adds a sentence until a page-long story is completed. The content of the story is not judged; however, those students who do not participate in its creation are penalized.

After the story has been completed, each student prints out a copy and brings it to class. The students and teacher discuss why certain decisions were made and investigate how the story could be improved. Just as the story was collaboratively composed, it can be edited collaboratively as well. The class appoints a group of perhaps four or five students who serve as editing ambassadors, ensuring that the entire class’s suggestions are implemented as closely as possible. The purpose of this activity is to ease students into the process of editing their own work, making them aware of multiple audiences. I believe the fractured nature of the group’s short story can reinforce the importance of editing to clarify one’s meaning by showing that what may have been clear to one member of the class while composing, may have been totally unclear to another.

Student-authored web pages allow students to gain not only writing literacy but also computer literacy. In the early weeks of the course, the class meets perhaps once or twice a week to learn basic web authoring. This activity provides students with enough background knowledge to begin creating their own personal website. Students are asked to keep a weekly journal or blog of their thoughts—either about this course, their personal interests, or even current events. The day before the class meets, the teacher looks through everyone’s journal and brings a few to class that he or she thinks are worth discussing. Alternatively, students can mention pieces they believe are important. Blogs and class discussion are reciprocal: something said in class may prompt students to write extensively on their blog, and something mentioned in a student blog may generate classroom debate. Class discussions allow less introverted students to participate, while shyer students may feel more comfortable expressing their feelings and responses online.

Those who created personal websites ideally work more enthusiastically knowing that their page can be viewed by anyone in the world, long after completing the course. It is established early on in the class that personal sites should not simply be a picture of oneself, a few paragraphs, and some outside links. Personal sites, rather, should include authentic and meaningful writing. This might mean a detailed autobiography or the expansion of a journal entry into a well-composed essay.

Conclusion

Before implementing computers in the classroom, instructors should be skilled in the use of this technology and subsequently “able to develop curriculum that reflects student needs and proficiency, and stimulates students’ interest at the same time” (Suh, 2002, p. 677). The use of computers should never be a way to avoid actually teaching. No piece of software exists, nor will one ever exist, that can replace an adequately skilled teacher who not only understands but is also aware of classroom dynamics. Introducing technology to the classroom means more
than transplanting traditional techniques to an electronic form. Asking students to write and post journal entries online is not inherently superior because it is done digitally, unless there is a sound reason for doing so. Finally, instructors unfamiliar with computers may find it useful to seek feedback from more technologically literate students, ensuring that activities are not merely an extension of busywork.

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References


Weblog-Based Learning in an EFL Young Learners’ Context: 
Students’ Perspective

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Abstract
There has been a deeper appreciation on using technology in English classroom. It is used to create an interesting learning process. Weblog-based learning in classroom is becoming imperative nowadays since the students themselves are growing within digital era. However, this study purposes that many educators are not taking advantage of this unique and fun learning tools for young learners. This study is designed to reveal: (1) the students’ background in using computer and internet to get useful information; (2) the students ‘perception of the use of classroom blog learning as a tool in learning English; (3) the students’ perception toward weblog activity; (4) students’ perception towards the benefits of the weblog as a means of problem solving for learning English. This research applied the descriptive method which attempted to describe the primary students’ response toward the use of weblog. Data obtained from 120 as a total sample of 5th grade students in an Islamic Bilingual School, West Java, Indonesia. Questionnaire and interview were used to collect the data. The findings of the present study indicated that most of the participant showed positive attitudes and willingness to integrate weblog-based learning in English classroom. This technique made them more engaged and excited to learn English. However, factors such as technical problem and bad internet connection on the use of internet could be possible impediments to the use of classroom blog.

Keywords: classroom blog, students’ perception, technology, young learners, weblog
Introduction
Teaching a foreign language has been carried out for a long time at all levels of education. One of the languages learnt by the students in Indonesia to communicate among others is English. It is learnt in Indonesia as the first foreign language, since it plays an important role in the international communication and mastering English both written and spoken are absolutely needed. In some big cities in Indonesia, English is considered to be the first foreign language to study by the learners of junior and senior high schools. Moreover, English is also recommended to learn by the learners of elementary schools. The aim of English teaching is to develop students to be able to achieve communicative and discourse competence (The Rule of Ministry of Education Number 22 Year 2006).

Teaching English to young learners in Indonesia refers to teaching English for children especially those of primary school ages. Moreover, according to Alwasilah (2007), there are two reasons why government allows elementary school to have English as ‘Local Content’ to their students: (1) many parents send their children to attend the English courses, especially English for children, and (2) it is assumed that teaching English in Elementary school will create a positive attitude toward English that English is no longer regarded a difficult subject. Similarly, Mustafa (2002) mentions that when young learners are introduced to English since early stage of life they will get sufficient exposure, with sufficient exposure they are expected to be successful language users in the future.

Regarding to this demand, educators both in formal school and language institutions have been trying to formulate a concept of teaching which suit young learners’ need in learning English. In bilingual primary school, the curriculum aims to provide children with a deep understanding of the world around them and stimulate their abilities, capacities and desire to learn. Basically, primary learners in visual support is also very important to help convey meaning and to help children memorize new vocabulary. Therefore, the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) by language teachers such as multimedia technology, audio-visual, software and internet access materials have greatly improved and made the use of these resources in the classroom more practical.

The use of media, particularly Weblog, is part of e-learning because it includes online course content. This attracts young learners’ attention and heightens their curiosity while the teacher is delivering the message. In such a condition, classroom blog is one of internet based learning tools that can be used for mastering language. In teaching and learning English, weblogging is used not only for supporting language aspects such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, but also for studying four language skills. However, some teachers rarely use computer as part of instructional process and they may not see the value of instructional technologies in their particular content area of teaching and they are also not eager to use technology in teaching although the school has already provided it as multimedia room or computer room.

Literature Review
E-Learning and Technology to Young Learners
It has been widely recognized in the research literature that technological change, which not only permits new activities but makes those new activities superior in many important ways
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over the previous method of operation, creates long lasting innovations in society. Web-based
education is one of those innovations (Franklin & Peat, 2001). “E-Learning” nowadays is usually
used to describe “web-based” learning in literature reviews. Therefore, McKimm, Jollie, Cantillon (2003) point out that web-based learning is often called online learning or e-learning
because it includes online course content. Whenever web technology is used in educational
setting, it is vital to reflect on how this effects students, courses and institutions (Barr & Tagg, 1995).

Moreover, teachers can modify various materials from websites to support a variety of
activities in the classroom to help fulfil their teaching goals. Content free includes specific topic
and controlled learning environments. Research shows the use of computer supports and
increases young children’s skill in the social, cognitive, language literacy and writing. Therefore,
adult guidance for children using computer is associated with increases in abstract reasoning,
materials from internet can be specifically downloaded to support an existing topic from the
course book. For example, teacher can help children focus on tasks by telling them to look
carefully at an action on the screen and observe what is happening by asking them what they
need to do in a particular situation presented while using internet.

Classroom blog as one of multimedia technology has enormous amount of interactive
content, some of which is highly exploitable in the classroom. The real advantage of weblog- at
least from a language learning point of view - is that it offers authentic materials. Weblogging
enables teachers to attach the students to the “real life” nature of the English lessons. By creating
context from online materials, students can be helped to explore a world of online English
learning possibilities.

**Review of Previous Studies on Classroom Blogs in Classroom**

Many developed countries have taken the advantages from technologies and other
sophisticated gadgets effectively, especially as a tool to help students learning. Obviously,
weblogging is an effective tool for delivery instruction because there are several studies showed
some benefits for its used which outweighed the drawbacks of conventional learning. There are
three studies related to the present study about classroom blog. These are the study conducted by
analyses the benefits of blogging in the elementary classroom. This study was carried out--- in a
suburban school district outside of Rochester, New York. Caring Community, where this study
took place, is an intermediate elementary school that housed 794 students in grades three, four,
and five for the 2009- 2010 school year. Her case study revealed the effect of blogging is highly
beneficial for elementary students, resulting in increased motivation, strengthened writing skills,
and engagement in an authentic activity. She also found that the use of a classroom blog would
most certainly be a valuable asset to the classroom because classroom blog is motivating for
elementary students.

Second, the fact also found in another research conducted by McGrail and Davis (2011).
The finding from their case study was from multiple data sources, such as classroom observation,
students and teachers interview, and students and teachers blog writing, to ascertain young
writers’ perspectives. They found that students ‘bloggers’ reader awareness and appreciation of the reader-writer relationship. Students’ bloggers benefited from emotional and pedagogical assistance, both of which addressed their needs as writers, readers, and learners. Another finding was from the students who enjoyed positive comments from readers. This study showed the findings on the use of online venue as a great potential of interactive technologies and spaces which support teachers and their young learners to develop awareness in communication skills.

A more recent study by Lou, Kao, Chuan, Yen, Ling, Shih, & Chu (2013). They used a quasi-experimental approach and conducted the teaching experiment lasted 10 weeks with three sessions conducted each week. The findings of their study showed that the blog-assisted life education course is effective for higher-grade elementary school students. The students’ information literacy and competence, course satisfaction, collaborative learning attitudes, and attitudes toward blog use are improved. Finally, the students’ life education values are significantly enhanced through the blog assisted instruction in this study.

The studies listed above indicate that there have been several researches done to investigate the utilization of classroom blog. Weblog has not been widely utilized especially in Indonesia. Thus, the present research attempts to see the potential of the technology to promote English proficiency in primary level of education, especially the students’ perception regarding the use of classroom blog in English class.

Weblog-Based Learning and Its Characteristics
Today’s students are growing up immersed in digital media which they use for entertainment, communication and learning. Students without access to digital media face the prospect of being developmentally delayed and disadvantaged. Therefore teacher as a central role in ensuring the successful implementation in education have to work in multifaceted and complex environments. They have to be well equipped with the current technology which reflects in their teaching, especially web technologies in their practice. Another recent web-based application for learning English is the creation use of Weblog, also referred as blogs.

A blog (or web log) is a kind of online diary that has been reported to be a useful tool for language learners for a number of reasons. Blogging as a medium that allows bloggers to record everything and anything they are interested in was first proposed by Barger in 1997. Blogs can be managed by individuals or groups. Text, photos and video clips can be posted at the individual’s discretion. Bloggers can take notes online, leave messages, and share their stories and thoughts; thus, blogs may be like diaries on the Internet, blogs that interactively allow their visitors to leave comments and messages consist of web-based journals that are easily linked and cross-linked in online communities (Goodwin-Jones, 2003) or discrete entries or posts that are created by single individuals, small groups or multiple authors.

In education, blogs are useful since they do not require high Information technology (IT) skills and because they are great repositories for storing data generated in the classroom. Part of the simplicity of using blogs stems from the fact that no specific software is required so that difficulty in creating a blog depends on the level of complexity the owner desires. In order to avoid the use of a programming language, there exist on the net which offer the registered owner a series of templates that will help them to design, delete, rewrite, control comments, etc.
Moreover, teacher may become a personalised and teaching-aid medium. For instance, a class blog enables students and teacher to share their teaching ideas and materials; become regarded as a collaborative discussion space.

**Figure 1.** The main page and sample of news on weblog

![Figure 1. The main page and sample of news on weblog](image1)

**Figure 2.** Weblog activities ([www.irmasavitri.edublogs.org](http://www.irmasavitri.edublogs.org))

This research applied the descriptive method which attempted to describe the students’ perception towards the use of weblog as teaching media in learning English subject. In relation to this research, descriptive qualitative method was chosen because this study presented a description about students’ perception on weblog-based learning and at the end built a conclusion based on the data gained. As Gay (1990:189) states that descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. The data gained from this study were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative was represented by percentage of the data gained. Meanwhile, qualitative analysed was clarified by description of data percentage.
In language learning process, some aspects need to be considered, one of them is perception. Perception cannot be neglected to be an important factor in the process of teaching and learning language for it has a big impact to learner’s learning. As students are the major stakeholders in the learning process, to understand their learning experience, it is essential that their perceptions are considered (Anthony & Walsh, 2009; Bishop, 2003, Forman & Ansell, 2001; McCullum et al., 2000 in Perger (2009).

To get the data, this study applied questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The questionnaire which consisted of 25 items and comprised of four options each, in the form of Likert Scale which started from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The questionnaire in this study was modified into three sections: (1) comprising of eight items to collect students’ personal and background information (2) comprising of eighteen items to collect the data about the students’ perception towards the use of weblog as teaching media in learning English; and (3) comprising seven items to collect the data of the students’ perception towards the benefits of the weblog as a means of problem solving for learning English.

Interview was used to gain the supporting data the researcher could not get through questionnaire. According to Heigham and Croker (2009) interview can provide important insight into respondents’ experiences, beliefs, perceptions, preferences, and motivations. In this study, the researcher interviewed 20 students using semi-structured interview. They were given 8 questions toward the use of weblog-based learning in English subject. The result of interview was presented, analyzed with the related theory, and summarized.

Population and Sample
The population of this research was the 5th graders in academic year 2015/2016 in one of Primary Islamic Bilingual School in West Java, Indonesia. This study was conducted in February 2016. It involved four classes of students who had English 5 subject. They were 10 to 11 years old, while the remaining 63 were females and 57 were males. The participants of present study were 120 students as a total sample of 5th graders at Salman Alfarisi Islamic Bilingual School. All of them had an adequate background for their views regarding the use of weblog in English subject.

Limitations
Although the researcher has reached its aims, there were some unavoidable limitations. First, because the research was conducted in one Islamic Primary Bilingual School. Therefore, to generalize the results for larger groups, the study should have involved more participants by conducting similar studies across different primary bilingual schools. Another limitation of this study is that the students’ perceptions were collected through a short self-report survey that has only 25 items. The number of items might not been sufficient for students to express their views of classroom blog.

Findings and Discussion
This study is developed based on three main questions: (1) what is the students’ background in using computer and the internet to get useful information. (2) How is the students’ perception towards the use of weblog as learning media in English subject?, and (3) How is the
students’ perception towards the benefits of the weblog as a means of problem solving for learning English?.

**The students’ information and background towards the computer and internet**

The data of the students’ perception towards the use of Internet were obtained by questionnaire, and it was analyzed through SPSS program to find its percentage, mean, and standard deviation which described the students’ perception towards the use of Internet as learning media to improve English Language skills. The result of the computation of data analysis could be seen at the table 1 below.

**Table 1. Percentage, Mean, and Std. Deviation of the Students’ information Towards the Possession and the Use of computer and Internet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Do you have computer at home?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Do you have internet access at home?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sd. Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Someti mes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I use computer</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I use the internet</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I use computer and internet for my homework</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I use e-mails</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I use internet messenger

| 8 | I use internet messenger | 7.5 | 39.2 | 45.0 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 3.6 | 0.6 |

The survey result reveal that a substantial number of male and female students (86.7%) responded that they had computer at home and 81.7% of them also had internet access at home. The findings indicate that computers and the Internet have been an important element in the life of the individual of young age students. In addition, students responded to five items related to their level of frequency to use computer and access internet. Item number 4 shows that 96.7% of students answered “very often” and “often” used computer. In contrast only 30% of students sometimes used computer at home/school. On the 5th item, 33.3% of students declared that they very often accessed the internet and 52.5% of them often used internet. However, 10% of students responded “not often” and “not very often”.

As can be seen on the 6th item, large number of students (14.2% very often and 48.3% of students often) used computer and internet for their homework. The rest of 37.5% of students responded “sometimes” to use computer and internet for homework. This result supports the interview result that student were found to rate the computer and internet for homework as supportive and important. See the following excerpt:

[I get a lot of sources and information from the internet. If I have difficulties in doing my homework, I often search on Wikipedia or Google engine and they lead to the answer, student 7]
[I often browse the internet for homework, especially when the teacher ask me to make a poster, I can find many good photos and pictures, student 18]
[If I cannot find enough information from the book, I sometimes use computer and internet for homework, student 11]

The above comments can be inferred that majority of students often use computer and internet for their homework. They like to use it because the internet is useful and it helps them to get various information and sources to finish their homework. In addition, the Internet is swamped the students with information about anything and everything.
The frequency of Students to Use computer and Access Internet

Figure 3. Students’ information and frequency toward the Use of computer and Internet.

Table 2. Percentage, Mean, and Std. Deviation of the Students’ perception towards the Use of Classroom Blog.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA A D S D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I enjoy learning English through Weblog-based Learning.</td>
<td>48.3 35.8 11.7 4.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I’m confident when it comes to work with classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
<td>47.5 49.2 1.7 1.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I want to study English more using classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
<td>52.5 47.5 - -</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I find the problem of logging in and other technical difficulties.</td>
<td>44.2 45.0 6.7 4.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I become more motivated in studying English using blog.</td>
<td>57.5 24.2 18.3 -</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I like studying through images, videos, sounds and playing games in blog.</td>
<td>64.2 17.5 18.3 -</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I think using weblog in class takes up too much time</td>
<td>- 11.2 29.5 59.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much time.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 I like having my classmate make comment on my work</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 I like posting articles, artwork, and photos or clips on the weblog.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Weblog in learning language is not necessary.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 I like the hyperlinks that bring me to the pages with the answers.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 I do not like making comments on my friends’ post.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 When I find bad internet connection, I lose my access to the classroom blog.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Doing homework on the blog is easier than writing it by hand</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 I sometimes have difficulty in figuring out what my teachers expect from me.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Weblog-based learning is more interesting than learning English in the classroom using board, pen, and paper.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 I find a problem in operating new application on the classroom blog.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 I get many new things and information through weblog-based learning</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Weblog-based learning is useful technique because it gives me a chance to use computer for learning process.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Weblog-based learning is helpful to learn new vocabulary</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Weblog-based learning is important to improve speaking skill</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Weblog-based learning is important to improve listening skill</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Students’ Perception toward the Use of Weblog

From the table 2, it could be seen that students responded to 25 statements of the questionnaire which revealed their perception of the use of weblog as teaching media of English subject. In the table three, it was obviously found that the highest percentage of the students’ response which showed their positive perception towards the use of classroom blog was the statement number three which stated that “I want or study English more using blog at home/at school” (100% of the students responded that they agree or strongly agree with that statement). The answered on the sixteenth statement showed that 100% of the students agree and strongly agree that weblog-based learning is more interesting than learning English in the classroom using board, pen, and paper. Additionally, other statement showing the students’ positive perception towards the weblog was number 1, 2, 5, 10, 14, 16 and 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve reading skill</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve writing skill</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Games and videos in weblog are helpful to understand the lesson.</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Result of Students’ Positive Perception toward the Process of Learning through weblog-based Learning Technique

According to Figure 4, considerable numbers of students (48.3% strongly agreed and 35.8% agreed) expressed that they enjoyed learning English through weblogging. There are 11.7% of students who responded “disagree” and 4.2% of them chose strongly disagree. Further, the above figure shows that the majority of the students seemed to be enthusiastic in learning English using weblog. Additionally, other statement showing the students’ positive perception toward the use of weblog-based learning was number 5, “I become motivated in learning English
using classroom blog”. (81.7% of the students answered that they “agree” and “strongly agree” with the statement. This finding is supported by the previous study which suggested Lamonica (2010) the use of blog is beneficial for primary learners and that the students’ motivation is higher in learning. Further, it can be observed that the use of classroom blog was the statement number 10, which stated that, “classroom blog is not necessary in learning language” (90% of the students answered that they “strongly disagree” and “disagree” with this statement) with the mean score (M = 1.5) and Std. deviation (SD = 0.9). There was also facts gained from the interview that the students definitely showed their interest in weblog-based learning. Some students commented:

[Yes, absolutely. Weblog is very interesting and fun. It helps me a lot in learning English, especially in writing and reading, student 9]

[I love to learn English through weblog. I feel more motivated in learning English and I think I learn English better than before, student 16]

Moreover, the survey result revealed that the students considered extremely confident when they are working with computer at home or school. 96.7% of students chose “Strongly agree and “Agree” for item number two. This perception result effected their learning, therefore they prefer to work with computer. Item number 14 shows an impressive 91.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that doing homework on classroom blog was easier than writing it by hand.

A substantial number of students (70% strongly agreed and 30% agreed) believed that the use of weblog-based learning is more interesting in learning English than the use of classroom-based learning. This result corresponds with the characteristic of young learners and instructional media as the key principle in effective instruction. According to Musthafa (2010) the use variation of instructional activities engage and avoid boredom of the students. In line with Musthafa (2010), Heewon & Kim (2013) defines instructional media as the tools which stimulate students’ interests and help to create effective learning. In addition, students had high means of perception about the statement that weblog is important in learning language. It helps them to learn many new things thus they want to study English more using classroom blog. The interview also indicates that teaching and learning process were not boring and valued weblog-based learning as helpful technique and perceived their process of learning English as positive.

Students’ Perception toward Weblog Activity

Figure six illustrates substantial proof that the students responded positively to the weblog activities. Item six indicates that 81.7% of students answered “strongly agree” and “agree” that they liked posting articles, artwork, photos and clips on weblog. It can be observe that classroom blog is fun for them to use. It is proved that weblog is suitable for primary learners because it is attractive, interesting in appearance. Unlike adults who can learn very comfortably from parts to whole, children tend to learn things holistically (Musthafa, 2010). For young learners, therefore, weblog is fun and easy to learn when they are in their contextual ability. Majority of students responded positively to the blog activity, specifically posting articles, artwork, photos or clip. 93.3% of students loved this activity. The researcher created a personal classroom blog on www.irmasavitri.edublogs.org. It is fully customizable, so the students were easy to post and edit their works.
Figure 5. Students’ Perception toward Weblog Activities

In addition, 74.5% a large number of students in item 8 (48.5% agreed and 26% strongly agreed) indicated that the students liked having their classmates made comments on their work. Item 11 showed that 69.2% of the students-participants responded “strongly agree” and “agree” that they liked the hyperlinks which brought them to the pages with the answer. Only 20.8% of them showed “disagree” response and 10% were “strongly disagree”. Many students realized that most of weblog activities were fun and interesting, as in the comments:

[I like the activities in classroom blog, such as posting articles and pictures. I can share them to my friends so they can read my work, student 1]

[My favorite activity is interactive games in classroom blog, I can personalize the characters and record my own voice, student 15]

It can be inferred from the data that using weblog in teaching and learning provides authentic, interactive and interesting materials, therefore it creates a meaningful learning materials which are served by internet. However, it is found on the item number 12 that 60% of the students answered “agree” and “strongly agree” that they did not like making comments on their friends’ post. Some students reported that they only liked to see their friend work without commenting it. See some of the following excerpt:

[I rarely write comment on my classmates’ post. I just enjoy reading my classmates’ post and I expect my classmate read and comment on my own writing, student 8]

[Well, I don’t think I have to comment on my friends’ posts because they are not interesting, student 14]
[I sometimes comment on my friends’ posts if their posts are good and interesting, student 3]

The responses seem to indicate that the students who like to write will probably like to comment on their classmates’ posts. In general, they enjoyed uploading photos, pictures, and their voice relevant to their assignments. They also seemed to enjoy on what their classmates wrote and they liked having their classmate’s read and comment on their own writing. This again supports the idea of blogging activity as a student-centered and meaningful activity.

**The Students Benefit toward Weblog**

In terms of perceiving the benefit of weblog for language learning is in figure 6. The answers on the item number 19 shows that 60% of students agreed and strongly agreed that weblog is useful because it gives them a chance to use computer for learning. There are 14.2% of students responded disagree and 25.8% of them strongly agreed. This fact can be seen from the students’ background and information toward the use of computer and internet (see Table 1). The majority of students have already experienced in using computer for learning, sending email, using i-messenger, etc. Therefore, they are quite familiar with the use of computer and internet.

**Figure 6. Students benefit toward weblog-based learning**

In addition, 88.3% of students answered “strongly agree” and “agree” for item number 25. This perception result effected their learning because video and games are assumed as the media widely used to stimulate interesting topic. It motivates learners, brings the real world into the classroom, and contextualizes language naturally. This statement in line with Stempleski and Tomalin (1990) and Canning (2000) that video as audiovisual learning can give students realistic models and increase awareness so the teacher does the best way to exploit the students’ motivation and guide them into successful language learner.

The survey result in the above figure revealed that weblog is useful to improve the student speaking skill. 73.3% of students chose “strongly agree” and “agree”. 26.7% of them
answered “disagree” and “strongly agree”. The facts of the benefits on weblog were also gained from the interview. See these following excerpts:

[I love to record my voice in voki. It’s really awesome, I can also personalize it by choosing the characters, voice and theme, student 9]

[I enjoy to create my own voki. Even though it’s not homework, I like to record and create story in voice blog or voki and post it to classroom blog, student 2]

This fact can be seen from the materials in classroom blog that the students enjoyed to create voice blog and Voki program (www.voki.com) as a tool which the students create, personalize, and upload their voice to classroom blog. However, only 35.9% of students perceived the benefit weblog for listening.

An impressive 96.7% of students strongly agreed and agreed that classroom blog is important to improve writing skill. Only 3.4% of them disagreed and agreed. Further, a substantial number of students (41.7% strongly agreed and 45.8% agreed) believed that the use of classroom blog is more interesting in learning English than the use of classroom-based learning. The classroom blog facilitates students to get more reference for their writing. The students get reference from the articles and the hyperlink that leads them to the English websites through blog. The benefit of it is also supported by Stanley on Zhang (2009) who asserts that blogs in education has many advantages, such as to provide real audience for students writing, to provide extra reading practice for students, to increase the sense of community in a class, to encourage students participate, and to create an online portfolio.

**Students’ Challenge in Learning English through Weblog**

The questionnaire item on the perceived challenges reveal that the majority of respondents (60%) perceived that the students have problem in operating new application on the classroom blog. 68% of the students agreed and strongly agreed that they found the problem of logging in and other technical difficulties. While 32% of students do not have problem in logging in and technical difficulties. In addition, a large number of students (60.8% agreed and 26.7% strongly agreed) showed that they lose their access when they find bad internet connection. As can be seen in Figure 7, a small number of students (5% strongly agreed and 6.7% agreed) answered that using weblog takes up too much time. The rest of respondents (88.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed) that weblogging wasted their time in English class.
Based on the result in Figure 8, the students find some difficulties during the process of study. The challenges above have the same result gained from the observation and interview. There are some technical problems: first, students had hard time to log in because when all students visited the same website, therefore they had to wait a little bit longer. Some students also have problem when they were introduced to the new application or program on the classroom blog. This caused they had to asked many times to the teacher. The third, some of the students forgot their password when they wanted to post to the classroom blog. The last challenge is from the internet connection. There are times when the internet connection slows down to a crawl. This was also from outside factors that affect connection speeds, such as busy websites or spreading computer viruses. Some of challenges due to technical problems can immediately be solved by the teacher and one IT expert who was in charge to organize and control at the computer laboratory.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

The aim of this study is to investigate the students’ responses toward the utilization of classroom blog to learn integrated English as foreign language. The utilization of classroom blog in learning English gained a positive response from the students. It can be inferred from the questionnaire and interview data that mostly young learners nowadays have high level of frequency computer and access internet. This fact is strengthened by the data analysis of percentage of the students who used computer. 96.7% of young learners often used computer and 63.5% of them use it for doing homework. An impressive 85.8% of students often use the internet at home or school. The information of young learners’ background and frequency in using computer and internet strength the fact that the majority of the students responded “agree” and “strongly agree” that using weblog-based learning technique help them to improve them in learning English. In other words, students consider using classroom blog to gain useful
information and knowledge which enable them to enhance their language skills in English and increase learning motivation.

Based on the research findings, Weblog-based learning is highly recommended to be applied in helping young learners to improve their English language skills. It is an effective media to enhance students’ motivation to get engage in the meaningful, contextual activity, and the same time, challenging. More importantly, the teachers are expectedly to be a guide for the students in using classroom blog since it has some problems during the teaching-learning process. Therefore, it is urged that the teacher should design and plan the activities in order to give better guidance in implementing the teaching program and anticipate some technical problems before beginning the English class session using classroom blog since the media can be used only when it is connecter to the internet access.

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Irma Savitri Sadikin is a Post-Graduate Student of English Education Department of Semarang State University, Central Java, Indonesia. She has special interest in CALL, English Language Teaching in EFL/ESL setting, and Teaching English to Young Learners. She has published some articles in journals in the area. She has also presented some of his research results in international seminar such as, ICTTE, CONAPLIN, ICPECE, and Early Childhood Studies Conference.

Prof. Mursid Saleh, M.A., Ph.D is a professor in English Department of Semarang State University. He has special interest in Language Teaching Methodology and Language Teaching Materials Development. His research entitled “The Teachers’ Selection of Materials and Methods in EFL Teacher Education Classes” has brought him to get Ph.D. He has also presented his research results in international seminar such as RELC.

References


Appendix

Students’ Perception towards Uses of Weblog-Based Learning

QUESTIONNAIRE: Students’ perception towards uses of Weblog-Based Learning.

Dear students,
This questionnaire is part of a research and will help me to collect information. There are no right and wrong answers. Just make sure that your answers show your experience during the use of Weblog-based Learning in English class.
Please, read the statements carefully (Your English teacher will read and translate them aloud to you, too). If before, during, after the survey you have any concerns, please talk to your teacher, tutor, or the person who give you this survey.

Section I

Please put a tick in the box below to give information about yourself.

1. Gender?
   □ Male □ Female
2. Do you have computer at home?                                  Yes                          No
3. Do you have internet access at home?                           Yes                          No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometime</th>
<th>Not Often</th>
<th>Not Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I use computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I use the internet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>I use computer for my homework</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I use e-mails</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I use internet messenger</td>
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</table>

Section II

Please put a tick in the box to state you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Agree with the statements below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I enjoy learning English through Weblog-based Learning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Statement</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I’m confident when it comes to work with classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>I want to study English more using classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I find the problem of logging in and other technical difficulties.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I become more motivated in studying English using blog.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>I like studying through images, videos, sounds and playing games in blog.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I think using weblog in class takes up too much time.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I like having my classmate make comment on my work</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I like posting articles, artwork, and photos or clips on the weblog.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Weblog in learning language is not necessary.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>I like the hyperlinks that bring me to the pages with the answers.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>I do not like making comments on my friends’ post.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>When I find bad internet connection, I lose my access to the classroom blog.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Doing homework on the blog is easier than writing it by hand</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>I sometimes have difficulty in figuring out what my teachers expect from me.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is more interesting than learning English in the classroom using board, pen, and paper.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>I find a problem in operating new application on the classroom blog.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>I get many new things and information through weblog-based learning</td>
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<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is useful technique because it gives me a chance to use computer for learning process.</td>
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<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is helpful to learn new vocabulary</td>
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<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve speaking skill</td>
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<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve listening skill</td>
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<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve reading skill</td>
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<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve writing skill</td>
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<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td>Games and videos in weblog are helpful to understand the lesson.</td>
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An Exploration of Teachers’ and Learners’ Perceptions and Use of ICT in EFL Classrooms: The Case of Moroccan High Schools

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Abstract

This study aspires to explore the attitudes of students and teachers vis a vis the general computer assisted language learning (CALL) in the English language classroom, the obstacles and the solutions perceived to better use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. 30 English teachers and 40 high school EFL learners have been interviewed and asked to fill in a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The software Excel has been used to carry out the main statistical measures: mean scores and percentages. The results of the study support the claims advanced in previous research literature that the integration of ICT in the EFL classroom enriches the motivation of both teachers and students, facilitates the learning process and enriches the classroom interaction. Nevertheless, the paper has also found out that there are many challenges that hamper the full integration and use of ICT in the Moroccan EFL classroom. The latter have been categorized into three main categories: administrative, technical and human.

Keywords: attitudes, challenges, EFL, electronic resources, ICT, perceptions
1. Introduction

The Moroccan Education Reform Chart, set in the early years of the twenty first century, has shed considerable light on the importance of the English language for the country’s education, among other aspects. Moreover, it also stresses the need to master educational technology use on the part of the instructors and learners as well.

No one can deny the fact that the learners nowadays have access to electronic content, via mobile phones, tablets, PCs, etc, more than any other time in human history. More and more time is spent online through chatting rooms, social media and video streaming websites. This fast evolution has brought a radical change to the EFL classrooms (Tanweer, 2011). This “more interactive and learner-centered classroom environment” (Chou, 2010) has paved the way for new classroom interaction approaches. A considerable number of researchers claim that the emergence of information and communication technologies (ICTs) have changed the approaches and their effectiveness to language teaching. Such effectiveness from the standpoint of the teachers has also gained important attention recently, but the obstacles that stand in the way of its implementation have not drawn as much attention.

In Morocco, witnessed during national and international conferences, there has been an overwhelming agreement on the part of the decision makers in the educational environment that ICTs should be implemented in the EFL classroom, and the present paper is set within this context. The study aspires to explore the perceptions of both students and teachers, their use of e-learning technologies, their challenges and difficulties met in the use of ICTs for e-learning opportunities in the EFL classroom. These objectives have been turned into the following empirical questions.

2. Research Questions

Based on the goals mentioned above, the study purports to answer the questions below:

A. To what extent do Moroccan high school EFL teachers and students perceive the importance of ICT implementation in the classroom?
B. To what extent is the implementation of ICTs in the Moroccan EFL classroom a straightforward and trouble free process?
C. What are the possible methods and strategies that teachers and students suggest to effectively use ICTs in the Moroccan EFL classroom?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The data of the study emanates from a questionnaire designed and distributed to 30 teachers and 40 Moroccan EFL learners in high schools in the capital, Rabat, in April 2015. All the high schools follow the same national curriculum. Table 1 presents additional information about the subjects of the study.
3.2. Instruments

The questionnaires used in the study comprise open-ended and close-ended questions for both groups of subjects; a five-point Likert scale has been used for the measurement of their dis/agreement on the following variables: their perceptions, challenges and approaches to ICT use in the EFL classroom. Open-ended questions were mainly concerned with their perceived challenges and suggested solutions to the various obstacles in the implementation of ICTs in the classroom.

3.3. Data collection

All the students participating in the study had to fill in the questionnaires in class under the supervision of their teachers. All the instructions and objectives of the questionnaires were explained in classrooms by the teacher to make sure their students understood all questions as well as the significance of choosing their answers. A considerable number of the latter turned the filled questionnaires via email.

3.4. Data Analysis

The main statistical analysis tool used was the Excel software. All the answers of both groups of participants were fed into the software. Recourse was made to percentages and graphical representations since the study aspires to measure the extents to which ICT implementation and use is perceived, its obstacles and the types of propositions the participants advance for a better ICT use in the EFL classroom. These measures allow classifying and grouping the most important findings in the participants’ feedback.

4. Findings and Discussion

After collecting the subjects’ answers, there was a need to categorize them into three groups: perceptions, obstacles and approaches. The next subsection is a presentation of the most important perceptions of ICT in the EFL classroom.

4.1 Perceptions

The first question in the two questionnaires administered to both students and teachers concerns their perception of the use of ICT in the EFL classroom. The overwhelming agreement among the two categories of participants stresses their awareness of the importance of using ICT in the classroom. The following quotes could be the best examples of their perceptions.
4.1.1. Learners’ perceptions

The majority of the young learners stressed the fact that they are familiar with the new communication technologies and that they spend significant time on them everyday; moreover, most of them insisted on the following three main facts:

a. The need and desire to use them in the EFL classroom.

b. ICTs help them learn many “new things” everyday in language outside the classroom.

c. When used in the classroom, ICTs provide a very enjoyable, entertaining environment for the exchange of ideas and research results.

d. ICTs help the teacher as well since the learners bring a lot of interesting content for them and share it in the classroom.

4.1.2. Teachers’ perception

The first striking finding of the study is that only a third of the interviewed teachers use ICTs in their EFL classrooms. The next section will try to explain the reasons behind this unwillingness and reluctance to use them. However, the following points are an attempt to summarize the teachers’ perceptions of the importance of ICT use in their classrooms:

a. ICTs attract the attention of learners and keeps them focused and more involved in the learning interactions and activities.

b. They save significant time, energy and money for teachers.

c. They facilitate the learning and teaching processes and bring new materials to the classroom.

d. As one of the interviewed teachers says, “ICT has become an important tool in facilitating English learning. ICT optimizes the learning process of the language and renders the material of teaching more attractive and appealing.”

The overwhelming agreement among teachers in the above quotation and statements on the need and importance of ICTs in the EFL classroom is considerably noticeable. Even if the teachers generally confirm that they did not grow up using ICTs for language learning, they stress the need for its implementation and its usefulness for their young learners. A significant number of researchers advance that the use of ICT in language learning can render the learning process rich and independent of the formal classroom processes, develop autonomy in learners, help them interact more freely, manage their skills and develop student-centered habits (Melor, Maimun & Pin, 2009). A percentage of 50% of teachers in the study used terms like: “more interactive”, “motivating”, “modern” and “saving time”.

The high school students equally toed the same line; the vast majority (89.5%) reflected an undeniable need for the use of ICTs and online content in their classrooms. The following terms: “break away” (from the course book), “more entertaining”, “enjoyable” and “we prefer ICT (to the course book)” are but some of the highly repeated expressions undermining their keen desire to learn EFL via ICT. As to their attitudes towards the teachers using ICT, a majority of almost 70% (35/40) “preferred” and “liked” teachers using the latter in their classrooms. These findings highlight a new trend among the younger generations to incorporate ICTs in the EFL syllabus design, teaching methods and content selection.
The abovementioned finding only toes the same line of previous research. Smith (2000) puts it elegantly in the following words, “computers will not replace teachers, but teachers who use computers will, inevitably, replace teachers who do not”. This should by no means hint at the idea of a total replacement of the books. Nevertheless, 30% of the learners showed a significant reluctance to rely on ICT in EFL learning. This educational challenge is discussed below in section 7. So interesting and worth investigation is the fact that among the younger generations, many still not following the general trend.

In the last place, by no means least important, both the teachers and the students expressed their disinclination in using ICTs for language learning evaluation; it seems that the traditional pen, drafting and exam sheets constitute the “comfortable”, elemental bits and pieces of a test or exam long inculcated in the mental representation of learners and teachers alike, even though both of them recognize the time-saving attributes of ICTs in the EFL classrooms.

5. Challenges

A considerable number of researchers have exchanged views on the advantages and drawbacks of modern life, including language teaching. Melor, Maimun and Pin (2009) advance that “language teachers struggle to catch up or keep up with the heap of newly invented digital gadgets to effectively adopt them for their own agenda of language pedagogy”. The data of the study suggest that three main categories of challenges face the use of ICT in the EFL classrooms.

Tanveer (2011) puts forward that the participants in his study reported two main obstacles in the way of CALL: the lack of electronic resources and the lack of permanent administrative staff to monitor the use of the different technologies.

In the present study, the subjects mentioned “the absence of technical resources” such WIFI and cellular connections, data show hardware and computer units as the main challenges for successful CALL classrooms. Add to it, both the teachers and learners attest to the fact that many teachers’ use of the different ICTs still remains inadequate and untenable. This “wastes a lot of time” added one participant. In the third place comes the agreement among both teachers and students that both categories need more training on the use of electronic resources such as the language banks, live video streaming, monitoring classroom activities using dedicated software or simple PowerPoint or Prezi presentations on different aspects of EFL teaching and learning. Last but not least, the managing boards and individuals should adopt positive attitudes towards the use of the copious ICTs in the language classrooms. The availability of data shows or internet connection in “one particular classroom in the institution should remain something of the past”, as one teacher put it.

The teachers and learners came up with many solutions to this hurdle; the vast majority required that:
- Schools need equipped spaces, such as labs, dedicated to ICT for language teaching
- Provide computers, internet, data shows and multimedia spaces.
- “Last but not least, teachers should be assisted in many ways by the ministry by providing them with computers that most of them cannot afford for the reason that their wages cannot cover extra expenses.”

Teachers do overwhelmingly stress the responsibility part of the educational authorities
and administrations.

The second type of challenges concerns the lack of technical training. Both students and teachers revealed their eagerness to make the best of the available ICT content and uses to enrich the EFL teaching/learning processes but also uncovered the lack of training and familiarity with the new ICTs. Some teachers confirmed that their teaching methods are more or less the same as those of their own teachers decades ago. They admitted that their computer skills are not satisfactory and that they cannot download videos or other electronic content for their classes, nay the use of different software for that matter. One participant claims that even when he intends to use online video streaming for listening and speaking objectives, the internet connection, desktops or equipped classrooms do not allow smooth and high quality classes. It is noteworthy in regard to reemphasize the fact that both learners and teachers stress the importance of technical training as a need for better ICT use in the EFL teaching. Both groups insisted on the need for training sessions and workshops on the use of various software, websites, blogs, as well as hardware tools to make part of the global trend in foreign language teaching and learning.

The weak and most of the time lacking, technical facilities in the Moroccan high schools play havoc on the pedagogical side of the teaching process. The waste of time has been the teachers’ first complaint related to the unsatisfactorily available technological services in their high schools. The latter’s requirements are that the administrations should develop the teachers’ ICT skills; in fact, some of the teachers go as far as stating that ICT use should make part of the teacher trainee programs. Electronic bank creation and online resources, at the national level, have also been pointed out.

6. Discussion

The integration of ICTs in the teaching of EFL, as has been understood via the aforementioned results does not only reside in the teachers’ or learners’ ability to deal with the ever-growing flow of electronic data in the incessantly expanding cyberspace. It brings to light the roles of the modern curriculum and syllabus designers as well. The global tendency towards smart education now calls upon the decision makers to virtualise a great deal of the teaching and content; designing online tasks and practice drills and the training of educators to be able to produce their own content, tasks and teach their learners how to use them would no doubt lead to a richer, learner-based teaching methods focusing on eclectic approaches. This would foster learner autonomy, selection of interesting content, exposure to authentic content and unlimited educational resources.

The findings of the study go hand in hand with a number of others in many developing countries. For example, Taiwo (2004) claims that the success or failure of a teaching-learning situation in language acquisition depends considerably on the teacher. She recommends that

“teachers should upgrade and familiarize themselves in the use and application of ICT facilities in the acquisition of language education. The commitment and enthusiasm to the teaching and learning of English through the effective use of ICT should be of utmost importance not only to the curriculum planners and education policy makers but also the teachers and the learners of English”. (p.4)
In a similar manner, Padurean and Margan (2009) claim that in most developing countries, access to internet is “often difficult and very poor when available”. Some researchers have even revealed that some of the teachers interviewed have nurtured a certain “fear” of using technologies for EFL teaching. The latter advance that the use of ICTs could lead to a situation where the roles of teachers would be “replaced by computers”, hence stepping back from any training or familiarity with technologies and relying solely on the course books. This stands in sharp contrast with eagerness of the Moroccan teacher and learner.

7. Conclusion

Nobody can deny the indispensable role of modern ICTs in the EFL teaching/learning environment. Given the increasingly wide access to the world wide web, user friendliness and ‘smarter and smarter’ electronic gadgets, abundant websites, webpages, blogs, and other electronic resources online, it is even imperative that the teachers join the more “addicted” young learners online and push the latter to spend more time using EFL in their virtual worlds.

Nevertheless, the challenges like technological scarcity, limited technical skills of some students and teachers, the lack of time and shortage of specific electronic resources, the lack of confidence to use ICT equipment, untrained teachers and students, etc hamper the full, useful exploitation of ICT. Considerable support is needed for teachers and students in terms of training, equipment, and time and digital resources.

The present paper has shed light on the main obstacles to the use of ICTs in the Moroccan EFL classroom; the latter fall into three main categories: technical, administrative and human. More electronic resources, such as databases or resource banks are needed at the national level. More training of teachers and learners on the use of the various technologies is another important need, and the decision makers need to develop an awareness to the generally global tendency to make the future educational institutions “smart”, which entails an abject need to have well-trained, technologically literate teachers.

One should not overlook the individual efforts and willingness of most teachers and learners to integrate ICTs in their EFL teaching/learning interaction as well. A great number of teachers have taken the initiative and contributed to the modern EFL teaching evolution through more interactive and online material integration in their syllabi, as many of them reported. One should not underestimate the investment of government and non-government agencies in the creation of human, logistic and technical facilities to reach these goals. The success of the MOOCS program, developed by the USA in the 2000s, in many developing countries could be the best example. As a person in charge of the program in the University of Yaoundé explains, “MOOCs are a wonderful opportunity for a country as Cameroon where, every year, 50,000 young people ask to have access to higher education, for eight state universities and two virtual universities”. (Jeune Afrique magazine, www.africatopsuccess.com).

About the Author:
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References


A Critical Discourse Analysis of Synchronous Facebook Communication: Native and Non-native English Speakers

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Abstract:
The purpose of this research was to study language with a focus on online communication between native speakers (NSs) and non-native English speakers (NNSs) in an international study consultancy Facebook group. This communication has proven unique and is important to study for two specific reasons. First, the popularity of social networking sites and their use by second language learners both amongst themselves and with NSs makes it important to investigate. Second, the analysis of these types of conversations is essential to understand how power and identity work in online interaction between NSs and NNSs. The study addressed the questions of what type of discourse are these highly contextualized groups of English speakers using to communicate online and how does the online environment shape NNSs’ power relation and identity shifting when interacting with NSs on Facebook. The study findings revealed that there are pedagogical implications in the interactional collaboration between NSs and NNSs in online interaction on Facebook. In the context of second language learning (L2), scaffolding was not only offered by collaborating with peers and interacting with more knowledgeable others, but also by the friendly environment of the social networking sites and the meaning negotiation strategies.

Key Words: Computer Mediated Communication, critical discourse analysis, Facebook, identity, native speakers, non-native speakers
Introduction:

Computer mediated communication (CMC) is very popular in higher education. Particularly, universities use CMC to launch web conferences and almost all higher education institutions have their own Facebook sites. These sites act as a platform for students, professors and administrative staff to communicate with each other and the larger community as well. Many research articles have been published tackling the recent emergence of Web 2.0 technologies in all aspects of life, but to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, little work has been conducted on researching the discursive strategies adopted by Second Language Learners (L2) learners on Facebook and the potential application of CMC such as Facebook in bilingual education.

Yet, the use of social networking sites such as Facebook by English as Second Language (ESL) students might be significant as a pedagogical tool. One of the major concerns of ESL classrooms is that they might lack the collaborative and interactive nature of learning which ESL teachers so desperately seek. This absence, which is essentially a scarcity of authentic language situations, has been a challenge for many ESL classrooms around the world, especially in the Middle East where access to authentic target language is not always available. Thus, in this region and many others around the world, the focus has always been on structure and grammar. ESL classrooms need to utilize more authentic language material to improve students’ learning.

Richards and Schmidt (2013), stated that interaction is the way in which language is used. English language learners outside English speaking countries usually find little opportunities to interact with NSs. The decrease in the digital divide and the advancement in Web 2.0 technologies have led to the emergence of new paradigms for teaching ESL. Researchers argue that utilizing social networking sites as a platform for authentic online communication between NSs and NNSs would eliminates much of the anxiety, fear and lack of confidence that ESL learners usually experience when trying to interact in a face to face setting. Furthermore, online forums provide a chance for students to share their thoughts in a social context and comment on one another’s to gain knowledge and negotiate meaning (Hashemi & Najafi, 2011). In other words, the power relation between learners and teachers is far more balanced (to the benefit of both teachers and learners) as a result of this implementation.

This study drew from the researcher’s experience prior and after 989*status as an international student in the U.S. The researcher first observed the potential benefits of incorporating this platform when he witnessed Iraqi students communicating synchronously with American academic advisors online to access information on how to study in the U.S. Despite the students’ low English proficiency level, they were found to be more willing to communicate and use the target language. U.S specialists who were administering that Facebook page were aware of the NNSs’ comprehension level and thus were more interactive and offered flexibility in helping the NNSs communicate affectively and negotiate meaning.

Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model of analysis was used in analyzing the data. Specifically, Fairclough’s approach for description, interpretation and explanation was adopted in this study. Unlike interpretive approaches, CDA appeared to fit more with qualitative designs and one which is highly applicable to the context of an online interaction between NSs and NNSs. According to Fairclough, there are three ways in which language operates as discourse :1) as text; (2) as the social processes of producing and interpreting a text, or the interaction; and 3) as the social conditions for the production and interpretation of the text, or the
social context. Since Fairclough's model focused on the standard form of English (Fairclough 2003), there was a concern about whether this model could accommodate the non-standard English data used in this study. After scanning the literature to see how ESL text could be evaluated using Fairclough’s model, a study was found by Kettle (2005) who concluded that ESL text or the text produced by NNSs in interaction with NSs is valid for analysis following Fairclough’s (2001) model of CDA. This is also in line with the openness of CDA and its interdisciplinary dialogue referred to by Fairclough (2003).

The study used purposeful and convenience “opportunity” sampling. The transcripts of the conversations analyzed were freely available on the U.S embassy Baghdad “studyUSAIraq” Facebook page. Thus the data sets (available here, https://www.facebook.com/StudyUSAIraq) were transcripts of a Facebook communication between potential Iraqi graduate students and American academic advisors. The transcripts were taken from a Facebook post on a subject about Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Another interesting point to note is that the language used in this transcript is considered a hybrid because it included a blend of standard native and non-standard Englishes (Kettle, 2005).

Besides the introduction, a section on literature review was added in order to address the importance of online communication in second language learning and also to explore related studies. The analysis section was conducted qualitatively and is followed by a finding and discussion and conclusion sections that included a summary of results plus an interpretation of findings.

**Literature Review:**
There was much written about the effect of synchronous interaction on the teaching and learning of ESL, but studies directed towards investigating pedagogical implications of social media used in ESL environments are rare. The purpose of this literature review was to help fill in this research gap. The researcher tried to address the current empirical conversations, to broaden readers’ background knowledge related to this topic, and familiarize them with research methodologies used in other studies. As stated, the study is important as it seems that there is little research conducted on NSs and NNSs’ communication to explore the potential use of technology in language learning and also to stimulate sound academic discussion about this topic.

Blattner and Fiori (2009) highlighted the sense of community that technology creates in the language classroom, taking into consideration the trends of connectivity today’s learners expect. They compared high and low tech learning and concluded that high tech learning could offer a chance for more effective learning in light of the familiarity L2 learners have with these technologies. These technologies and the level of accessibility to them was promising for the adoption of the learner-centered model of teaching as learners will have greater options in completing their assignments and managing them through high tech tools. High tech also affords more opportunities for students to interact with one another.

In ESL classes, this potential connectivity is more of an opportunity than a risk given the potential for exposure to the target language. According to MacKay (1999), input is an essential factor for learning a second language. Nothing proves this point more than the fact that we keep hearing from teachers and language educators about the negative effect of learners not having opportunities to engage in authentic language situations. Now with the globalized nature of
English being further facilitated by technology, language learners can stay better connected using English. Iraqi students, for instance, who were interested in studying in the U.S were more frequently visiting a study abroad consultancy Facebook page sponsored by the U.S embassy in Baghdad. Students visited this page in order to communicate with American consultants and advisors on a variety of topics related to higher education. Thus we can easily see that Facebook’s immense popularity makes it an asset as a pedagogical and technological tool for ESL classes and students.

Interest in social media interactions started with the emergence of Web 2.0 tools which enabled synchronous online communication (Fitzpatrick & Donnelly, 2010). Since then, socialization in the virtual world has become a dominant norm leading to the emergence of gigantic Web 2.0 social media sites such as Facebook. In this study, the researcher argued that the paradigm shift that Facebook and other social networking sites have created would positively extend broadly to education and second language learning in particular. Facebook is one of the most visited social networking sites. According to Facebook news room (http://newsroom.fb.com/company-info/), there were 829 million daily active users on average in June 2014. There were 654 million mobile daily active users on average, 1.32 billion monthly active users, and approximately 81.7% of Facebook daily active users are outside the US and Canada.

Though English is widely spoken all over the world, many learners lack exposure to authentic language situations. CMC appears to provide a solution here given the globalized nature of English. In an empirical study meant to test the interaction hypothesis about second language acquisition, MacKay (1999) stated that active participation in interaction accompanies development in second language learning. According to MacKay, for learners to comprehend, produce and negotiate language, they need to be provided with a pre-modified conversation. More precisely, native speakers need to make their language easier through rephrasing, rewording, slowing down and so on. Interactions via social media seemed to provide an excellent vehicle for this kind of communication.

Many researchers came to similar conclusions. According to Ware & Warschauer (2005), the recent advancement in information and commutation technology (ICT) has four characteristics that have led to transformation in the practices of literacy: the interactive written communication allowing hypertext, democratizing multimedia creation and allowing mass communication via what they called many-to-many communication. Additionally, Arnold and Paulus (2010) investigated the integration of the social networking site called Ning. They focus on the usability of social networking sites on the management side, highlighting the community aspect and the collaborative nature of social networking as well as its potential in supporting language learning. Their conclusion about the use of Ning and the students’ perception of it was significant. However, what was lacking in their analysis was the authenticity of the methodology as the setting was artificial. Content analysis was important to unpack more of the usability of online communication in foreign language learning. This was further supported by Fitzpatrick and Donnelly (2010) who stated that what is interesting about the online communication in cross cultural and diverse linguistic setting is the strikingly cooperative meaning making process involved compared to face-to-face communication.
Scanning the literature, it was found that most studies were either strikingly qualitative or quantitative in nature. The interest in this topic came from the fact that learning is dramatically changing as a result of the learner-centered approach trend as well as the quick, recent advancement in information and communication technology and the potential of their utilization in education. According to Rambe (2012), little was being said about the discourse taking place on Facebook. He was interested in addressing a gap in the research related to adopting CDA on Facebook discourse. However, his approach itself lacked the in-depth analysis of the content as he focused on modelling specific pieces of teacher-student interaction under the assumption that it would be adopted by a wider audience. The account Rambe gave to identity was interesting. Rambe (2012) explained about how this kind of Facebook communication could democratize power relations given the technological environment of Facebook and how it appeared learner friendly. This environment could contribute to democratizing the academic relations among teachers and learners and enhancing the collaborative sense for the process of teaching and learning. It is this negotiation of meaning and face-saving atmosphere that we look at as promising in the area of ESL teaching. Fitzpatrick and Donnelly (2010) elaborated on the meaning making process in online interaction between students and teachers. They asserted the gap in methodologies regarding content based analysis which might be one of the reasons behind the paucity of studies targeting meaning making through analyzing online discussion. They defined CMC as a text-based interaction that involves human beings through the medium of computer or mobile device. Tapit et al (2011) attempted to answer the question whether discourse analysis would be a suitable approach to analyze public discourse. Studying public discussion and debate was important to them as it related to social meaning. Their rational for the adoption of CDA was interesting. It related to how CDA would serve as both a theoretical and methodological framework and to the applicability of unpacking meaning out of belief construction oriented by media and culture coverage.

Fairclough’s CDA provided a solid explanation of the context and eliminated the criticism of the interpretative nature of the content based analysis. Fairclough (2013) based his methodology on three dimensions that are interrelated. Fairclough (2013) said:

By critical discourse analysis I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relationships and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power. (p.93).

Despite the fact that Fairclough offered other models for analyzing discourse such as the ten model question which was used to find out the text’s formal properties that are supposed to imply the speaker’s ideologies and values (see Fairclough, N. (2001). Language and power. Pearson Education.), the three dimensions model seemed more applicable in analyzing social networking communication as this model is highly structured and analytically so comprehensive. Herring (2007) looked at discourse analysis as a methodology for online based discussion by looking at such factors as modality, number of participants, text and discourse types and genre. The meaning making sought in these kinds of CMC was meant to understand the kind of discussion between students and tutors in order to find out about the potential use of technology for
instructional purposes (Fitzpatrick & Donnelly 2010, Herring, 2007). They looked at online communication in terms of pragmatic linguistics which focuses on the social use of language.

Identity shaping and power relations were the major factors which distinguished online communication from face to face communication. Tapia et al (2011) stated that “…Fairclough’s multi-level framework for CDA…postulates that macro-level social structures (e.g. power relations) are linked in a dialectical relationship to micro-level social practices, such as speaking or writing”.

Kettle (2005) discussed the identity of English language learners especially, those who already have their identities framed within a sociocultural background and are studying in a new environment as international students. She used the notion of agency and defined it as a “form of discursive practice and is reflexive”. This related to the process of adaptation that international students undergo when they study abroad with English being their second language. This reflexivity is in line with Fairclough’s CDA in the call for unpacking the opaque relationship of powers. According to Fairclough (2001), this sense of agency as social practice is clearly part of what CDA is trying to convey. This can be seen in the use of Facebook communication by international students such as Iraqi students in the case of the US embassy Facebook page and how they behaved as agents communicating with a dominant audience, that of the native English interlocutors. Kettle (2005) also provided a clear account on the process of meaning negotiation in the communication taking place between NSs and NNSs. Kettle interviewed her international student using English and she was aware of the status of his English as a second language. Some of the practices that she used to maintain the communication were “keeping the face”, “topics initiation and questions initiation”. Polant et al (2013) also asserted the importance of L2 engagement in synchronous communication where the sense of anonymity gave learners more power to control the language input, ability for meaning negotiation and more comfort for a peer feedback discussion. This identity shaping and shifting were important themes that addresses in this study.

It might be argued that cultural differences lead to miscommunication, especially when it comes to communication between NSs and NNSs. This of course applies to those who have different cultural backgrounds from that of the West as in the case of the Middle Eastern students studying in the U.S. This power distance is, according to Paulus, et.al (2005), a category of culture. This cultural component could, however, provide insight into teamwork involving both American and international team-members. Paulus et.al referred to power distance as situations where less powerful members accept the unequal distribution of power in a given community. In collaboration, however, the cultural dimension of power distance results in the voices of both American and international students being heard. In the case of a CMC as in the case of Facebook, NNSs represented the less powerful groups and their very acceptance that they were less powerful, language-wise, provided more potential for effective language learning. This acceptance of the lack of balance in power was positive when it comes to L2 learning.

Data Collection and Analysis:

A qualitative research methodology was followed in analyzing the data for this study. The data set were transcripts of online communication on Facebook between potential Iraqi graduate students and American educational specialists. The data was available on Facebook
page called StudayUSAIraq page and can be found at https://www.facebook.com/StudyUSAIraq. The transcripts were taken from one of StudyUSAIraq faecbook’s posts on a subject related to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The language used in this transcript was considered hybrid because it included native and non-native speakers of English. According to Kettle (2005), this text is called hybrid because it compromised a blending of both standard and nonstandard forms of English. For the sake of analysis, a focus was made on themes as they emerged from the data. This study is qualitative in nature and the analysis centered on the discursive practices involved in this online communication and what it might tell us about the research questions mentioned.

**Analysis:**

The analysis focused on the readily available data set taken from one post of the StudyUSAIraq Facebook page. The turns were numbered for easy reference. Themes are not listed chronologically in the analysis as they were analyzed as they emerged from the data. Then, examples from different turns provided and grouped in the themes related to them. So, for the sake of analysis, the researcher started by coding themes, and applying the CDA three dimensions analysis: text, interpretation and explanation. The analysis started with a text description followed by interpretation and explanations as per the model of analysis selected which is Fairclough’s three dimension analysis. In the following analysis the word “learners” means those turns produced by the NNS participants. The “administrators” referred to the native speakers of English in the interaction and who were the initiators of those talk and were the administrators of the Study USAIraq Facebook page.

**Themes Coding and Analysis:**

**Trigger and motivation:** This theme was found at the opening of the post started by the administrators of the Facebook page. The purpose was to help the participants come and join the online discussion. Though the administrator was one person, the statement started with the pronoun “we” to emphasize the institutional nature of this Facebook page. The subject presented was new to the participants who were mostly from a socialist country that has little experience in online education. The second line of the initiation trigger was an expansion of the topics giving more information on what “MOOCS” are and what to expect. The key words here were “popularity” and “youth”. The emphasis on these words was intended to encourage the learners who were mostly young and were looking to advance their education by joining and getting more information from their interaction with NSs in this Facebook group. Another kind of trigger produced by the learners was at the end of the discussion in turn numbers (29-33) where the participants typed in the profile name of some of their friends who were not present at the time of discussion. Tagging names on the comment spaces means that Facebook will send a notification to those people to check the discussion post. This tagging meant that the discussion appealed to those participants and they wanted to have come and join the discussion in. Lastly, this was also a collaborative environment which displayed giving and receiving feedback.

**Exploration:** Most of the learners’ turns can be categorized as exploration since main aim of this discussion was to provide more information to the learners about MOOCs. Since exploration meant asking questions, it was apparent that the interrogative forms of “Wh-questions” and the “yes-no questions” were extensively used by the learners as it can be seen in turns numbers (2) and (4):
(2): “Hello how we can join these courses and whether a certificate of participation will be awarded at the end of the course”

(4): “Is there any requirements to take the courses? And I hope you can advice me with the best course for me, I'm a high school graduated and I have a Toefl test degree which is 580, and is there any other courses or scholarships that I can apply to? Thank you”

Some question forms were given formed using a statement or an indirect question as in turn number (2). This kind of question was common in the Iraqi dialect (the learners’ first language) and this is why learners used this form spontaneously as a result of their native language transfer. Though this structure was also available in English and is usually said with a rising tone and question mark at the end of the sentence, the learners used it extensively and did not use a question mark, instead following the Iraqi form which indicates their low English grammar level. The exploration also ranged between general inquiries and social interest inquiries. After the learners got introduced to MOOCs, its popularity and availability, their interest was made clear from their questions on specific MOOCs courses relevant to their fields of study. This was apparent in the turns (4, 6, 11, 21, and 23):

(4): “Is there any requirements to take the courses? And I hope you can advice me with the best course for me, I'm a high school graduated and I have a Toefl test degree which is 580, and is there any other courses or scholarships that I can apply to? Thank you”

(6):” Is there any course for Optoelectronics engineering?”

(11):” Is there for business management??”

(21): “And is there for pharmacist??”

(23): “Is there any course for industrial engineering?”

**Identity and Power Relations:** The identity theme was apparent throughout the discussion. Primarily, the learners’ identities were ESL users who were seeking information on U.S education. This was apparent from the structure of their questioning turns and the rather low English level they had. The administrators’ identity, on the other hand, was that of experts, which was made clear by their answering turns and offering more information. We see that the administrators were those who hit reply for almost all the questions to offer additional information and tracked the learners feedback. The identity balance between the two types of participants was reflected in the responsibilities of each participant and also in the way turns were introduced. The content of the turns was also a sign of the power relations.

**Meaning negotiation:** This theme was of course dominant in this kind of hybrid text with ESL text produced by the learners using low level of English. We found that learners checked comprehension by asking for confirmation as in the turns (8, 9):

(8): “Also free”

(9): “Is it free??”
Here again the learners used the indirect form of question or the statement question such as “Also free [?]” and again the learners forgot to put the question mark. This was due to the fast ongoing nature of the conversation and also transferring of the learners’ native language which usually uses these interrogative forms instead of the direct wh-questions and yes-no questions. This was also related to the power relation among the participants. The administrators and learners were from two different cultures which also utilized two different economic systems, namely capitalist and socialist. Meaning negotiating to check whether MOOCs are free or not was used by the learners as it might seem uncommon to see free higher education in capitalist America where the administrators were from. The negotiated meaning here was not only because there were experts on one side and information seekers on the other side, it is also because the learners’ low comprehension and interpretation of English. As a result, they make repeated indirect questions to ensure complete comprehension. The other kind of meaning negotiation we can see are the learners’ questions about whether these MOOCs course are recognized and accredited or not as in the turn (2, 10, and 14):

(2): “Hello how we can join these courses and whether a certificate of participation will be awarded at the end of the course”

(10): “does those courses and the certificate clears the way to apply for a degree in the US universities”

(14): “Is there credit for MOOCs?”

In a socialist society like the one where the learners are from, online learning hasn’t yet caught on and lots of issues surrounded it. The use of the quick direct question in turn (14) was to make sure this point is clear so that further discussion can start. We also see that the administrators’ response to this question delayed after several other turns as this might seem like less of a core question asked by people from a capitalist culture. The administrators likely needed time to figure out the meaning.

**Content Discussion and Topics Expansion:** Here participants asked more questions to expand the topics and discuss the content in greater detail. The administrators started the conversation by setting the tone with a response to a basic question about what MOOCs are and how to make use of them. Then we found that learners asked more questions about whether the MOOCs are accredited or not, as in the turn (2) “Hello how we can join these courses and whether a certificate of participation will be awarded at the end of the course”. This question asked about the certificate of completion and about finding specific courses related to the learners’ background as in the turns (6 and 11) and also about the structure of these courses:

(6):” Is there any course for Optoelectronics engineering?”

(11):” Is there for business management ??”

**Error Correction:** Despite the many spelling and grammatical errors in the learners’ turns, we saw no direct error correction from the administrators was initiated. This was in part due to the fact that even with the errors, the turns were understood mainly from the context. It was also due to the polite nature of the administrators’ language. However we saw some indirect correction related to the use of the vocabulary. In the turn pairs (4 and 5), we saw that the
administrators repeated the learner’s question using Standard English (“correct words”); they used the word “prerequisite” to replace the learners’ word choice of “requirement”. Here’s the exchange:

(4): “Is there any requirements to take the courses? And I hope you can advice me with the best course for me, I’m a high school graduated and I have a Toefl test degree which is 580, and is there any other courses or scholarships that I can apply to? Thank you”

(5): “Some advanced courses may need prerequisites, but most of the other courses do not. Just search for the course that matches your interest, get yourself enrolled and with this level of English, you will be doing great. Also, stay tuned because we will be posting about the best MOOCs out there and how we can help students navigate their way through them.”

In the turn pair (14) and (15), the administrators replaced the noun form of “credit” used by the learners with the correct verb form “credited”:

(14): “Is there credit for MOOCs?”

(15): “There are only six MOOCs that are credited so far. Read this link for more information [https://www.coursera.org/signature/college-credit-guidebook](https://www.coursera.org/signature/college-credit-guidebook)

This was a great tool where collaboration by both the administrators and the learners regarding the meaning provides double benefits: both gain mutual understanding without feeling embarrassed, and learners gain authentic use of language which otherwise wasn’t possible.

Discussion:
This study investigated the use of discourse in online communication between NSs and NNSs interacting in English on a Facebook page. Learners used this forum to find out more information regarding their future study in America, but their English level was also clearly displayed. Despite the low English level that most students had, which was apparent from the formal analysis of their turns, we saw that they had the motivation and confidence to communicate in English with the NS advisors who were the administrators of that Facebook page. Generally, the results showed that both learners and administrators were aware of each other’s needs (in terms of language), and they used several strategies to ensure mutual understanding. Specifically, the administrators negotiated meaning and extended and answered turns to ensure learners understood the discussion. The learners used successive questions, Web 2.0 tools that Facebook offered, and cooperation among themselves as strategies to understand the administrators’ turns. This synchronous communication seems to have effective pedagogical implications for ESL classrooms. Online communication could be an effective supplemental tool for ESL classes as it eliminates many of the issues reported in face to face interactions (such as anxiety and the effect of power relations between learners and teachers). The different power relations usually seen in ESL classes due to the students’ realization of their low English level frustrates students and prevents them from taking the initiative to engage in classroom discussions. Other students’ presumptions, especially in multi-cultural ESL classrooms where educational systems encourage less classroom engagement and participation, make it even harder for students to interact in classrooms using their target language. The results in this Facebook
communication showed that power relations and identity realization did not overwhelm the overall communication. As synchronous communication, this interaction had dual benefits. First, the learners practiced their English in an authentic situation that would have been unavailable otherwise. As a result, they learned new vocabulary and socialized with others. Additionally, students felt motivated and willing to learn more as a result of their interaction on this page, and they also believed that the page is a place where they could give and receive feedback from others.

Conclusion:

The results showed that young learners with an intermediate English level were highly motivated to improve their English in digitally-mediated environments. Unlike monolingual online communication seen on social networking sites, this hybrid language communication appeared to have an impact on educational practices and affected the ways students engage with language and culture. This was very promising considering today’s globally networked learning environments. Furthermore, these international interactions may play a significant role in enhancing English language learning and helping students to achieve proficiency goals, and learners may also benefit from better intercultural understandings and digital literacy skills.

About the Author:

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References


Using BetterAccent Tutor and Praat for Learning English Intonation

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Abstract
Learning English pronunciation necessitates a deep understanding of the prosodic features such as intonation. The present study reports the effective use of BetterAccent Tutor and Praat programs for the learning of English intonation with an experimental and a control group that involves nine students during a third semester phonetics course, at the Department of English, University of Guelma, Algeria. The research aims at investigating the usability of audio-visual feedback paradigm to learn prosody by Algerian students in order to enhance their English intonation renditions. The experimental method enabled generating, measuring and analyzing intonation contours, pitch and intensity of English wh-questions and tag-questions. The results revealed that the audio-visualization technology support helped the students to identify the errors and to understand the functionality of acoustic features they produce regarding intonation patterns.

Keywords: Audio-visual feedback, intonation software, pitch, intensity, acoustic features
Introduction

Research in applied linguistics and second language (L2) acquisition demonstrates that pronunciation instruction has been marginalized compared to morphology and syntax growing body of literature (Derwing & Munro, 2005). The secondary position given to pronunciation has urged researchers to implement new methods with the advent of speech technologies that are accessible and up-to-date. Computer-aided pronunciation tools are integrated into second language classroom in higher education to serve as the medium to display and analyze the segmental and prosodic features of English language. Concerns raised about the difficulties that users may encounter in interpreting and understanding the visual display of speech urge experts to examine pronunciation software interface.

1. Literature Review

1.1 English vs Algerian Arabic Intonational Systems

L2 learners’ failure or success in acquiring the target language segmentals and prosodic features is due to the learners’ dialectal background (Odisho 2005, p. 66). English and Algerian Arabic (Darija) phonetic inventory systems share similarities as well as differences. Intonation in English and Algerian Arabic is dependent on pitch levels that are ranged from low and mid to high. Native speakers may mishear an utterance when L2 learners not only mispronounce sounds but also use improper pitch patterns.

Different pitch levels depict several intentions. For instance, interjections, statements, wh-questions and commands in English are produced with a falling contour (Odisho, 2005). Algerian Arabic shows similar intonational patterns of the mentioned structures (Benrabah, 1987, p. 81) as displayed in the following examples:

/kı´bınıa/ (How tasty!)  
/mʃıtəl´ba:rəfi/ (I went yesterday)  
/jhalxə´ıho stu/ (How did you pay for it?)  
/bəlaʃəl´ba:b/ (Close the door)

English and Algerian Arabic yes/no questions, requests and listing items are characterized with a rising contour (Odisho, 2005; Benrabah, 1987, p. 81). For example:

/təmʃi´mʃa:ja/ (Do you want to go with me)  
/jrinalba´ta:talə´snaβwà´ʃìna/ (We bought potatoes, grapes, and oranges)  
/kı´ʃafətənı´ʃarbat/ (When she saw me she ran away)

Pitch patterns in Algerian Arabic and English may serve various functions with some language structures; also, the falling pitch in Algerian Arabic does not reach a low level as in English. Pitch changes in English may occur on a single vowel or a group of vowels; however, in Algerian Arabic the movements of pitch fall on a vowel at some point in time and a sudden or unexpected change in pitch may occur in the next vowels. These differences may lead to deficiencies in mastering English intonation patterns and may result in accented speech and misunderstanding of Algerian learners’ intent by native speakers of English.

Intonation comprises linguistic and phonetic components in which the former deals with the pragmatic and phonological explanation of phonetics features and how speakers and listeners...
employ various intonational patterns to interact in a communicative setting, and the latter with intonation acoustic, perceptual and physiological patterns (‘t Hart et al., 1990). Intonation patterns serve different paralinguistic and linguistic functions in which the former expresses attitudinal and emotional nuances (Bolinger, 1986) while the latter indicates sentence types (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). Thus, the present study focuses on the linguistic functions of intonation contours related to specific types of sentences: wh-questions and tag-questions.

1.2 Visualization Technology of Intonation

The growing interest in computerized learning dates back to the 1970s and it focuses on the analysis of speech patterns, using different commercialized acoustic phonetics software and hardware. Advances in speech technologies make it possible to share and implement better ways to learn and teach the prosodic feature of intonation. Computer Assisted Language Learning software (CALL) allows speech to be visualized and graphically represented by demonstrating pitch contours and sounds waveforms. The innovation of the early software Visi-Pitch by Kay Elemetrics (1986) provided visual display and analysis of native and non-native speakers’ productions (de Bot, 1983). In light of this, the prosodic features and intonation contours in particular have been the center of interest of many researchers (Anderson-Hsieh, 1992, 1994; Chun, 1989, 1998, 2002; Molholt, 1988), in which L2 learners combining auditory and visual tools achieved better results than depending only on auditory input (de Bot, 1983).

Investigating the use of visual feedback paradigm of intonation contours took place mainly in laboratories settings (de Bot, 1983) and it was directed to advanced foreign learners of phonetics-centered course (Lord, 2010). Predominant concerns were raised about implementing visual feedback model in L2 classroom to elementary level learners who are at the level of developing their language skills. Some researchers claimed that speech analysis technologies are better used by trained instructors and these devices are too advanced for students and may not suit their needs (Derwing, 2010; Setter & Jenkins, 2005; Wang and Munro, 2004). Also, the students who have limited competence in using signal analysis software may not interpret intuitively spectrograms unlike the visual display of some forms of intonation contours (Chun, 1998; Hardison, 2004). In his study based on a questionnaire to students in a third semester Spanish course to evaluate their perception of intonation contours using Praat software, Olson (2014) reported that visual feedback paradigm was beneficial to conceptualize pronunciation features in L2 classroom.

1.3 User Interface

User Interface (UI) stands for the interaction between computer program and user. It is the visual part that displays information on the computer screen. The design of UI depends on three rules (Bahrami, 2012): (1) the user is placed in control; (2) the user’s memory load is reduced; and (3) the interface is to be consistent. The process of User Interface Design (UID) involves four basic activities (Pressman, 2009): (1) interface design; (2) implementation; (3) interface validation; and (4) user, task and environment analysis.

The software application failure or success is related to UID. Designers have to take into consideration users’ gender, age, personality traits, motivation and educational level, and ethnical and cultural background because the UI may not be applicable by all computer users but it may be intended for specific learners (Shneiderman, 1997). Learners’ affective factors that
influence the teaching and learning process may affect the use of UI such as the pedagogical stimuli that involve coercion, requirement and motivation (Mehrdad, 2007). It is frustrating to the learner when s/he experiences difficulty in using the software especially when his/her mistakes are not overcome; the learner is more likely to dislike the program regardless of the functions offered by the application; thus the interface has to be accessible to the learner (Pressman, 2009).

2. Research Questions

Taking into consideration the necessity for systematic pronunciation methods and the applicability of visual feedback paradigm in enhancing prosodic features production, the paper addresses three research questions:

(1) Does audio-visual feedback help Algerian learners to improve English intonation production in the classroom?

(2) Do similarities and differences between English and Algerian Arabic influence the rendition of English intonational patterns?

(3) Which software user interface suits the needs of Algerian students?

3. Experimental Study

3.1 Methodological approach

The answer to the above research questions requires the exposure of the experimental group to audio-visual feedback provided by BetterAccent Tutor software while the control group listened only to audio files of the same recordings produced by native speakers of American English. The materials employed in this study were a set of three wh-questions and tag-questions that were taken from BetterAccent Tutor curriculum (see Appendix). The collected data are analyzed also with Praat visual technology support in which pitch contours, duration and intensity of the produced questions are displayed on the screen.

3.2 Systems Description: BetterAccent Tutor 2.0 Program and Praat

*BetterAccent Tutor* software is designed to help learners improve their American English pronunciation with primary focus on the prosodic features: intonation, stress and rhythm. The software application enables interaction between the learner and the Tutor, in which the user selects language structures from the available comprehensible curriculum that involves respectively: Word Stress, Simple Statements, Wh-Questions, General Questions, Repeated Questions, Alternative Questions, Tag Questions, Commands, Exclamations, Direct Address, Series of Items, Long Phrases and Tongue Twisters. The software UI permits the learner to listen to the audio recording of the native speaker’s rendition of the selected item and to record his/her pronunciation. The software provides the learner with an audio-visual feedback and analysis of the learner produced stress, intonational and rhythmic patterns. The explanation box allows the learner to compare his/her performance with the one of the native speaker and correct it after many trials.

*Praat* is a speech visualization program that can be freely downloaded from the internet and installed on the computer. It was elaborated by Boersma and Weenink (2008) at the Department of Phonetics, University of Amsterdam. The program is constantly updated and it comprises acoustic features as pitch contours, spectrogram analysis, intensity analysis, formant
analysis and many other functions. It can measure maximum, average and minimum pitch levels that indicate intonation contours; in addition, the spectrogram represents in colors both the frequency and intensity in which the latter demonstrates stress placement in sequence of speech.

3.2 Participants

Two groups were drawn from second year students in the third semester taking an intermediate level phonetics course in which the students learn for the first time the acoustic characteristics of English prosodic features, mainly intonation. Five students in the experimental group received audio-visual feedback provided by BetterAccent Tutor and Praat, while four students in the control group listened only to audio-recordings.

3.3 The Task

The instructor invited the participants to record the productions of wh-questions and tag-questions during the pre-test phase (session 1), then after listening to the sample exercise in the test phase (session 2) and finally during the post-test phase after many trials (session 3). The control group recorded their renditions using the record mono sound function of Praat and the instant recording and analysis of data was avoided to give more credibility to the research. The experimental group used the researcher’s computer to have access to BetterAccent Tutor and Praat programs in order to listen and visualize the native speaker’s pronunciation, and to record and visualize their productions. The native speakers who participated in this study were 4, in addition to the model speaker on BetterAccent Tutor.

3.4 Procedure

The control and experimental groups were given equivalent amount of time for the productions of wh-questions and tag-questions. Both groups spent 180 minutes in one week organized in three sessions, in order to complete the experiment activities. Throughout the experiment phases, both groups did not receive from the instructor any verbal corrective feedback or clarification regarding the target prosodic patterns.

Pre-test recording Phase: the participants recorded in isolation the selected items prior to the class session.

Re-recording and Practising Phase: the instructor asked the participants of both groups to re-record the target questions. Unlike the control group, the experimental group participants were encouraged to visualize, compare and analyze their own productions and the native speaker’s renditions of the intonational compositions.

Post-test re-recording Phase: the participants were required to submit the final recordings after many trials in the last session.

3.5 Measuring Techniques

The investigators collected the minimum and maximum pitch of the target questions (6 in total) in order to calculate the mean pitch (in Hertz or Hz) and average intensity (in decibels or db) of these values of Algerian non-native students and native speakers of English and experimental group vs control group, with the use of Praat program.
4. Findings

(i) Wh-questions

*Wh-questions* are characterized with a falling intonation (Celce-murcia et al., 1996). The participants read a set of questions that were taken from BetterAccent Tutor (see Appendix). The following is an example of a *wh-question* produced by a native speaker of American English and an Algerian participant and examined with BetterAcent Tutor (Figure 1).

Example: What’s this?

![Figure 1. Wh-question Pitch Contour Productions of Native Speaker vs Algerian Non-native Speaker of English on BetterAccent Tutor Program](image)

The results demonstrate that English wh-questions end with a falling tone that requests more information and the center of intonation contour differs depending on the more prominent word in the string of speech. In Algerian Arabic, falling tone is associated with *wh-questions* (Benrabah, 1987); however, the majority of Algerian learners speaking English tend to place the pitch contour on the interrogative word that is pronounced with a rising tone regardless of where the center of intonation pattern is Figure 2.
The main difference between native speakers and Algerian learners’ productions of English *wh*-questions is the mean pitch. The average pitch of English native speakers is 132 Hz that contrasts with 138 Hz of the standard pitch contour of Algerian participants. Employing rising pitch instead of falling pitch expresses confirmation rather than genuine question. The results are displayed in table 1.

**Table 1. Wh-questions Mean Pitch**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Mean Pitch (Hz)</th>
<th>Intensity Average (db)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algerian non-native speakers</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The experimental and control groups achieved quite similar results regarding the production of wh-questions during the pre-test stage. However, there is a significant difference of experimental group wh-questions mean pitch in test and post-test phases, in contrast to the control group that were quite equivalent during the three sessions as shown in figure 3.
(ii) Tag-questions

Tag-questions are typically used in English to clarify information or expect confirmation (Celce-murcia et al., 1996), and they are characterized with a falling pitch final contour. Also, tag-questions can be pronounced with a rising pitch when asking for information giving the sense of yes/no questions (see figure 4). The following examples illustrate the two types of pitch contours associated with tag-questions.

**Falling Pitch**

It isn’t bad, is it? (Expectation of ‘yes’)

**Rising Pitch**

It isn’t bad, is it? (No Expectation)
Figure 4. Tag-questions Pitch Contour (Expectation of Yes/ No Expectations) of Native Speaker vs Algerian Non-native Speaker of English on BetterAccent Tutor
The results indicate that the majority of Algerian participants performed the English tag-questions with a rising intonation contour. The participants used a rising tone in reading the tag-questions with *expectation of yes* instead of a falling tone giving the sense of yes/no sentences rather than clarification. Furthermore, more than half of the participants ended the tag-questions of *no expectations* with a rising pitch similar to native speakers’ productions (see figure 5).

![Figure 5. Tag-questions (Expectation of Yes/ No Expectations) Pitch Contour of Native Speaker of English vs Algerian Non-native Speaker: Analysis with Praat](image)
The results show that Algerian participants’ production of tag-questions with expectation of yes reached a high average pitch of 213 Hz compared to American speakers who ended this set of questions with a lower pitch of 186 Hz. Moreover, American subjects’ average pitch of tag-questions with no expectations was 192 Hz which is slightly equivalent to Algerian participants mean pitch of 194 Hz. Similarly, both native speakers and Algerian participants’ intensity average was ranged between 76 db and 77 db, respectively; this is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Tag-questions Mean Pitch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Mean Pitch (Hz)</th>
<th>Intensity Average (db)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expectation of Yes</td>
<td>No Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algerian non-native speakers</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observing the average pitch of both experimental and control groups during the pre-test phase demonstrates similar results; however, there was a noticeable progress in the rendition of the tag-questions with expectation of yes by the experimental group (see figure 6).

5. Discussion
(i) Algerian Learners’ English Intonational Productions
The combination of visual feedback and auditory feedback helped the experimental group to achieve better results than the control group, in which the latter had access only to auditory feedback. The control group mimicking the native speaker’s model, made use of Listen and Imitate technique, thus, combination of both visual and auditory input is found to be effective to Algerian students.
This study demonstrates the similarities and differences between English and Algerian Arabic with certain types of questions in which learners tend to transfer their native language intonational patterns into English.

(ii) Pedagogical Perspectives on UI of BetterAccent Tutor and Praat

The observation of the students’ use of speech-based technology software helped to assess at pedagogical level the applicability of BetterAccent Tutor and Praat programs. The UI of BetterAccent Tutor is very accessible to the students. The program is found to be limited to compare the participants’ intonational compositions with the target model and the learners’ attempts to match the provided native speaker sample may not always be successful. Two renditions of intonational patterns, even of the same speaker, cannot be equivalent. The program provides the learners with explanation about the type of the intonation contour and which constituent receives the tone in the native speaker’s chart of speech; however, there is no explicit clarification or corrective feedback regarding the participants’ intonational compositions except the visualization of pitch curves. Thus, it is up to the learner to estimate the level of accuracy that is related to matching or non-matching of pitch patterns to those of native speaker’s model. The software does not provide instructions on how to align the two produced pitch contours in order to achieve better results. The learners need to compare their productions not only to the target model but also to other regional varieties and native speakers’ attitudes, that is, explanation of pitch patterns in accordance to particular situations, and to provide the learner with the environment that encourages integration into natural speech contexts. Also, the program does not focus on: phonetic transcription, waveform and articulatory representation, and video or graphical animation.

Praat allowed the experimental group to analyze and synthesize their speech, and it offered knowledge about their data computation, segmentation, manipulation and labelling (Boersma & Weenink, 2015). The produced speech signals are graphically presented, and the spectrum and speech analysis functions of Praat provided the learners with information about features as pitch, intensity, formant, pulses, etc. The participants need to be acknowledged enough concerning the acoustic characteristics of prosody for a better understanding and use of software functionality. The second year phonetics course curriculum is intended to instruct the students about preliminaries regarding the acoustic features at segmental and prosodic levels. Thus, the software is oriented for more advanced level of phonetics and phonological research. The visualization of pitch patterns of longer stretches of speech – discourse – is complicated as the screen window necessitates the instant display of data to be interpreted immediately by the learners. At elementary level, the visualization of intonation contours is helpful, but with longer strings of speech this technique may be difficult to apply at intermediate and advanced stages such as in oral presentations.

Conclusion

The study outcomes are very effective in answering the research questions and the results are found to be compatible with the related literature. The findings assume that visual feedback technologies are not exclusively used in laboratory-based setting but it is possible to test the potential application of these digitalized devices in English language classroom in order to enhance Algerian learners’ pronunciation. The similarities and differences between English and Algerian Arabic prosody allow figuring out the sources behind the mispronunciation of English
intonational patterns. *BetterAccent Tutor* and *Praat* were the tools used to generate the intonational compositions; however, *Praat* proved to be more useful to measure the pitch contours and intensity of intonation. Finally, the present study focused on a limited group of learners, thus, instructors may implement feasible pedagogies and maximize the beneficial use of visual feedback paradigm for large group size in L2 classroom.

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**References**


### Appendix

#### English Questions

1. **Wh-questions:**
   - What’s this?
   - Where did you go?
   - Who is this woman?

2. **Tag-questions**
   - The weather is fine today, isn’t it?
   - It isn’t bad, is it?
   - She has a sister too, hasn’t she?
Students’ Perception toward Online Self-Access Learning in English Language Learning

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Abstract
This study is related to the application of computer which is meant as a medium of online language learning. The study aims at finding out students’ perception toward online self-access learning (OSAL) and the correlation between OSAL and their grammar achievement. Online self-access learning refers to a kind of fully autonomous learning done by each individual student through internet. In this study the particular English language learning focuses on a language aspect, grammar. The major discussions regarding the students’ perceptions toward English language learning were mainly to seek the answers of the questions on: (1) link addresses of OSAL in general, (2) online grammar materials provided, (3) benefit of OSAL, and (4) the correlation between students’ perception toward OSAL and students’ grammar achievement. The data were taken from a questionnaire of 20 close items given to 35 undergraduate students of the English Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University. The descriptive statistical analysis revealed that the response of the students’ perception toward OSAL was generally positive in which the overall average score of their perception toward OSAL was 4.15 in the category of agree in the Likert’s scale. This means that they supported the application of OSAL in English language learning. Another finding was from the result of regression analysis in which R2 was 0.279 meaning 27.9% of OSAL gave effective contribution toward students’ grammar achievement. Besides, the correlation was negative (r coefficient = -0.528), but there was a significant correlation between students’ perception toward OSAL and their grammar achievement as the p-value 0.001 was less than 0.05.

Keywords: autonomous learning, language aspect, online self access learning, students’ perception
Introduction
The success of language learning can be obtained from independent study by each individual language learner. The independent study, so called self-access learning, is not new in educational environment as it has been applied by educators from time to time. The term self-access itself can be defined as “the organization of learning materials and equipment which are made available and accessible to students without necessarily having a teacher present” (Diaz, 2012, p. 117). While Hornby (2014, p. 1206) says that self access is a method of learning in which students choose their materials and use them to study on their own. The advantage of self-access learning (SAL) is basically to get extra knowledge about the topic they have from their formal classes. One of the advantages of SAL is that it is a flexible and student-centered option, offering instructors and institution a means of supporting students in their out-of-class learning (McCarthy, 2011).

Self-access learning is a part of autonomous learning. One of the characteristics of autonomous learning is independence (Weiguo, 2003). In this study autonomous learning can be defined as the activity of students to learn what they need to learn related to their previous studies by themselves freely.

The importance of self-access learning has been commonly available in language learning centers as they usually provide facilities such as rooms completed with self-access materials in the form of printed and non-printed ones. Books, magazines, newspapers, etc. are all examples of printed materials. While, CDs, films, cassettes that need equipment to operate, including computer-based materials are categorized as non-printed ones.

The use of self-access learning is unquestionable. Dickinson in Lin and Cheng (2010, p. 2677) provides such five benefits of autonomous learning for self-access learners as to identify what’s been taught, formulate their learning objectives, select and implement suitable learning strategies, and monitor their own learning strategies. While Holec as cited in Balçtkanh (2010, p. 80) states that one purpose of promoting learner autonomy, which is meant for self-access learning here, is used to encourage students to define the contents and progressions.

In the era of modern technology self-access learning can be done through online. This means internet has become a popular medium for online educational information retrieval. The use of internet is included in the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education environment especially in English language teaching (ELT). ICT itself has been introduced in many education systems throughout the world since the mid 1980s (Pelgrum and Voogt, 2009, p. 293). Hockly and Dudeney (2008, p. 8) believes that the use of ICT itself is an essential part of ELT as ICT tools provide learners to expose and practice the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This study is about online self-access learning (OSAL) in English language learning. Online self-access learning is a fully autonomous learning through online in which the students feel free to learn any materials they like in a place where internet connection is available. Song, Hill, and Koh (2004) identify both flexibility and convenience are considered as strengths of online learning. In other words, online learning provides students to be able to complete learning units whenever and wherever they like to learn through online.
OSAL can be done in a formal self-access language center equipped with computers connected to internet or in another place where Wi-Fi is accessible so that students can make use of their own laptop or any other related medium. The practice or the implementation of OSAL in this study focuses on English grammar learning.

**Research Questions**

The idea of getting information about OSAL from the students is essential as to know whether this kind of activity is good enough to be applied for the purpose of grammar learning. Grammar is one of the language aspects that the students commonly study while learning a language. Therefore, the topic seems to have the following problems:

1. What is students’ perception toward online self-access learning in English grammar learning?
2. Is there any correlation between students’ perception toward OSAL and their grammar achievement?

Meanwhile, the objectives of this study are to find the students’ perception toward online self-access in English grammar learning and to see whether there is a correlation between students’ perception toward OSAL and their grammar achievement. The term students’ perception refers to their idea of or response to what is being introduced or performed, in this case, OSAL.

**Overview of English Language Learning**

This study is actually based on Indonesian context taking place at higher education institution in which English, taught as a foreign language, is included in the curriculum as a school subject. The number of credits of English language learning may vary in higher education institutions. Some study programs offer 2-4 credits while others offer more than 4 credits depending on how important English is taught at the study program concerned. For example, at the Nursing Study Program of Sriwijaya University, students have to take 4 credits as stated in the curriculum of the study program and an additional one hundred-hour Intensive English Training Program before their graduation as certified nurses.

The teaching of English at Sriwijaya University is included in the teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Most language learning materials prepared at this institution are related to ESP. Reading skill as the target language has been more emphasized for the ESP study. This is in line with what Remirez (2005, p. 380) says that “the teaching of ESP is meant to increase a deeper knowledge of the context or texts occurring within it”. Reading skill has become the target language as most books, journals or any other related sources in educational information center such as library as their academic references are written in English. The learners’ purpose for learning the target language became the most important (Maleki, 2008). In addition, the topic of reading materials usually reflects the discipline of the study program. For examples, the topic about “Fish Management” is probably suitable for the students of aquaculture, the topic about “Green House” is good for the students of agriculture, and the topic about “Legal Issue” is appropriate for those majoring in law.

**Methodology**

This section discusses the participants of the study and data collection.
Participants

This study was conducted to the 35 forth semester undergraduate students of English Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University in the academic year 2013/2014 taking Structure II subject. They had already taken their preliminary subjects, Intensive English Course (IEC) and Structure I. The students taking this study program plan to be secondary school English teachers when they graduate. English Study Program offers major courses of English language education covering the four language skills and aspects, linguistics, and some other related educational ones. The procedures of online self-access learning for grammar learning are so simple as in the following activities.

1. In this study the students were asked to do self-access study about grammar for 1-2 hours after each meeting of their Structure II class within the semester in the language laboratory connected to internet and Wi-Fi.
2. When the students were in the language laboratory, they began searching using computers available or their own laptop. What they did for their OSAL was to learn more about what grammar materials had already been learned during classes by getting access to a variety of link addresses. The grammar materials covered the major topics offered within the semester such as passive sentences, noun clauses, adjective clauses, adverbial clauses, reduced adjective and adverbial clauses, and other related topics.
3. Each student might have different link addresses with a variety of grammar materials or he or she might work together for discussion related to the grammar materials available in the link addresses provided there is no space for the internet individually.
4. There was no need that the students should report their work, but they had to sit and do searching for grammar knowledge within time allocation.
5. Although this activity was purely autonomous learning, the teacher should stay in the lab in case the students needed any help if there was no staff available.

Data Collection

The instrument to investigate students’ perception toward online self-access learning was a questionnaire tried out to non sample students for its validity and reliability. The questionnaire consisted of 21 positive statements (items) containing such three major points as link addresses for grammar information retrieval in general, online grammar materials, and benefit online-self access language learning. The students were asked to select one of the five Likert’s scale choices (scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1) which had been established and converted to the category of strongly agree, agree, fair, disagree, strongly disagree for each item. To make sure whether the students’ answers to each item was consistent or not, they were given another 21 negative statements which were the opposite of the positive ones. In completing a questionnaire, it sometimes happens that the respondent tends to select whatever choice he or she likes without reading the whole statement. In the website of http://www.fao.org/docrep/w3241e/w3214e05.htm, it is mentioned that it is common for a respondent to be increasingly reluctant to the questionnaires because of fatigues as it is close to the end. Logically, when the students’ answer for a positive item is strongly agree, the answer for a negative item, which is the opposite, should be strongly disagree or at least agree. It should be noted that these 21 additional statements were not included in the analysis of the study.
As presented in the Figure 1 below, the response of the students toward the OSAL questionnaire is relatively consistent. The result of the questionnaire shows that 79% of the respondents chose the category of agree and strongly agree for positive statements, while in contrast, 80% of them chose the category of disagree and strongly disagree for negative statements. Although there is a very slightly different number of percentage (1%), this reflects that the respondents seemed to be consistent in answering the questionnaire.

![Figure 1. Diagrams of students’ response on online self-access learning (OSAL) questionnaire. Note. SA = strongly agree, A = agree, F = fair, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree](image)

To determine the validity of the questionnaire, statistical analysis using Social Package for Social Science (SPSS) 16.0 version was applied. The first try out shows that three items (4, 8, and 17) were not valid, but after having been revised and retried out, all the invalid items were found valid. Meanwhile, the reliability analysis using Cronbach’s Alpha reveals that the test instrument was reliable (0.809 > 0.334 in r table) as shown in the Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The other instrument was a test on grammar actually given to find out whether there was a correlation between OSAL and students’ grammar achievement. The test, in the form of essay questions consisting of 20 items containing all topics taught within the semester, was given once at the end of the instruction. All the collected data were calculated and analyzed using regression analysis and simple statistics included in SPSS package16.0 version.

### Results and Discussion

**Students’ perception toward OSAL**

As already mentioned before, the discussion of the students’ perception toward online self-access learning focuses on the questionnaire of consisting of 3 major points: link addresses for grammar information retrieval in general, online grammar materials, and benefit online-self access language learning. In addition, the correlation between students’ perception toward OSAL and grammar achievement is also discussed.
a) Link addresses for grammar information retrieval


The students’ perception on link addresses that provide access on online grammar generally consisted of five statements as shown in the Table 2 below completed with mean and standard deviation of each statement.

Table 2 Students’ perception on link addresses for grammar information retrieval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>There are many link addresses providing a variety of grammar learning.</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Link addresses are easy for access and user-friendly.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Link addresses usually give feedback on exercises provided.</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Link addresses usually provide correct answers on grammar exercises available.</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Link addresses usually provide some explanations, examples, exercises, and instruction for every single grammar topic.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the Table 2, the average of students’ perception on link addresses for grammar access is 4.23. This means that the students felt satisfied with link addresses they got access to as the score 4.23 is converted agree in the Likert’s scale. In other words, link addresses containing a variety of grammar learning materials which are easily accessible and provide various kinds of grammar exercises with explanations and feedback gave a positive response to the students.

b) Online grammar materials

Mean and standard deviation of students’ perception on online grammar materials are shown in the Table 3 below.

Table 3 Students’ perception on online grammar materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Grammar materials available in link addresses vary in terms of their level of difficulty.</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grammar exercises provided in some link addresses vary in relation to the type of questions.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grammar materials available in most link addresses cover various kinds of grammar learning.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Grammar exercises available in most link addresses are graded from the easiest to the most difficult ones.

5. Grammar materials in link addresses are the same as or parallel to the ones taught in grammar classes.

The questionnaire on students’ perception on online grammar materials contained five items. The average mean is 4.17. Referring to the weight of Likert’s scale range, in which score 4 is in the category of agree, the students seemed to be satisfied with the online grammar materials. The online grammar materials whose available topics are the same as the ones taught in grammar classes present a variety of materials completed with questions with different levels of difficulty. So, the students could learn the materials in the form of grading system from the easiest to the most complex ones.

c) The benefits of OSAL

The students’ response of the benefits of OSAL related to grammar learning are shown in the Table 4 below with mean and standard deviation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>OSAL activity gives me knowledge how to learn language skills and aspects well.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>OSAL activity gives me motivation in learning a language.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>OSAL activity needs to be implemented regularly for the purpose of grammar learning improvement.</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>OSAL activity is fun as it is free from formal grammar learning.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I like OSAL activity more not only for knowledge of language aspect but also for other language skills.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The more I do OSAL activity is the better my grammar knowledge is.</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I like grammar more after I do OSAL activity several times.</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>OSAL activity helps me improve my language knowledge.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>There are many additional grammar materials gained through OSAL activity.</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My grammar knowledge gets increased and improved after doing OSAL activity.</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My grammar materials gained through OSAL can help me learn language skills and aspects better.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total average score 4.04 .75
The average score of students’ perception toward the benefit of OSAL is 4.04. The score was a little bit lower than that of link addresses and grammar materials. However, it was found that the students still agreed and supported the activity or program of OSAL. The total mean score of the eleven items (4.04) is in the category of agree in the conversion of Likert’s scale, so it implies that the students have a fairly high positive perception on the benefit of OSAL.

As the overall average score of the 21 questionnaire items above is 4.15 (the category of agree), it can specify that the students had good perception and supported the application of OSAL.

**Correlation of students’ perception toward OSAL and grammar**

The students’ perception toward OSAL and their grammar achievement are discussed based on the data of the questionnaire and the result of grammar test analyzed using statistical analysis. The result of descriptive statistics shows that the data of students’ perception toward OSAL with 35 students had the range of 50, maximum score of 160, minimum score of 110, mean of 134, standard deviation of 11.26, and variance of 126.84. Meanwhile, the data of grammar had the range of 24, maximum score of 86, minimum score of 62, mean of 74, standard deviation of 6.92, and variance of 47.95.

The results of One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test show that the data of the students’ perception toward OSAL were normally distributed with p-value = 0.503 > α = 0.05, and the grammar data were also normally distributed in which the p-value was 0.666 greater than 0.05.

Table 5 *Correlation between OSAL and Grammar*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OSAL</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.528**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

The correlation between students’ perception toward OSAL and their grammar achievement is identified by the coefficient correlation whose score is -0.528. The study has a negative correlation, which means that the higher the OSAL score the lower the grammar score. The strength of correlation is categorized moderate because the r coefficient, 0.528 occurs between the range of 0.36 and 0.65 (Creswell, 2012, p. 347). Meanwhile, the p-value is 0.001 < α = 0.05 meaning that there is a significant correlation between students’ perception toward OSAL and their grammar achievement.

Table 6 *Regression analysis of OSAL*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>R Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adjusted R Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Square</td>
<td>R Square Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>df1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>df2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aPredictors: (Constant), OSAL
Furthermore, from the result of regression analysis as presented in the Table 6, the R square equals to 0.279, which indicates that 27.9 % of OSAL gave effective contribution to the students’ grammar achievement. Whereas, the other 72.1% were influenced by other factors, and this is interesting for further study.

Conclusions
This study conducted at the English Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Sriwijaya University aims at finding out the students’ perception toward online self-access learning (OSAL) in English grammar learning and its correlation with grammar achievement. The findings of this study reveal that there is a positive response of the students’ perception toward OSAL in English grammar learning, which was identified by the overall average questionnaire score of 4.15 equal to agree category in the Likert’s scale. Meanwhile, regarding the result of the correlational study, although providing a negative correlation (r coefficient = -0.528), it was decided to conclude that there is still a direct effect of OSAL activity (29%) giving an effective contribution to the students’ grammar achievement. Perhaps, it is not excessively to say that to apply OSAL in language learning can be meant to improve language learning strategy in particular. Therefore, the related facilities for the OSAL system should be provided for the needs of successful learners. It is advisable that this learning strategy also be applied in the teaching of other language skills and aspects. Furthermore, it is hoped that this study might give a good contribution to the field of grammar learning in other institutions and invite other related studies concerning OSAL.

About the Author:
Muslih Hambali holds a master’s degree from University of Western Ontario. His major interests are grammar and ESP, but now he is planning to conduct a research on Regional-based English Assessment for Senior High Schools in South Sumatera, Indonesia.

References


Teachers and Students’ Attitudes towards Using Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract

Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) is considered as a new multidisciplinary field of educational technology. Recently, this new wave of technology has gained its popularity among students due to the widespread of various mobile technologies to enhance learning. The current study endeavors to investigate the attitudes of EFL teachers and learners at the University of Batna 2 towards the effectiveness of mobile-assisted language learning. The research methodology used in this study is the descriptive. Thus, the data were collected by using of questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed randomly to eighty (80) master students, and fourteen (14) teachers of English at Batna 2 University. From the questionnaire, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The findings of this study revealed that both teachers and students of English have positive attitude towards the effectiveness of MALL. Likewise, both showed their agreement on the potential of MALL as a promising approach for teaching and learning foreign languages. Listening, speaking, reading, and culture are identified as the main aspects of language that can be taught and enhanced by integrating mobile technologies. Students have shown both their willingness and motivation to adapt their mobile devices for language learning; however, some teachers showed that mainstreaming mobile education is still early. The finding suggests that more time, pedagogical infrastructure, and training is required. Accordingly, the results of this study will serve as a foundation for coming researchers to investigate mobile learning in depth.

Key words: Attitudes, EFL teachers and students, higher education, mobile assisted language learning
1. Introduction
The emergence and development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have changed the way in which teaching and learning processes are pursued at the university level. ICTs facilitate immediate access to information resources needed for teaching and learning. The process takes place through the use of different ICT tools including computers, radio, television, mobile devices and the like. In the recent years, the increase use of modern mobile technologies in the educational field have received a great deal of interest. The potentiality of these light technologies to handle activities that have the relation with language teaching and learning has raised the curiosity of some researchers to investigate to what extent can these devices contribute to learning in general and language in particular. As a progeny of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is considered as an influential tool as it handles multifunction tasks. Despite the challenges, the handheld devices offer numerous advantages, providing an ideal addition to teaching and learning tools. In fact, widespread ownership of portable devices is enabling students to participate in learning foreign languages at anytime and from any location, whether individually or in contact with others. The current study is aimed to survey the attitudes of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and students towards the use of mobile devices as a learning material, and to cover this issue at Batna-2 University. Thus, this study attempts to answer the following research question:

What are the attitudes of EFL teachers and students toward the use of mobile assisted-language learning inside classroom?

2. Literature Review
2.1. Mobile Assisted Language Learning
The literature review that follows is an attempt to survey some of the ensuing thoughts and research studies about the integration of mobile devices in language learning, with a special focus on mobile phones. The review starts by outlining various definitions of mobile learning; then, a follow-up of a brief description of several research studies undertaken in regard to the use of mobile devices for MALL.

In a review of integrating mobile phones for language learning, Darmi & Albion (2014) claim that:

The use of mobile technology in education offers new learning experiences and flexibility in learning –learning anywhere and anytime – with increased opportunities for decisions to be made by the learners. Furthermore, mobile technology offers ubiquitous and immediate access to information as well as saving resources (p. 93).

Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler (2005) define mobile learning as learning mediated by the assistance of small portable devices available most of the time and that can be adapted to the learner’s immediate context. Another technocentric definition was provided by Keegans (2005) who defines mobile learning as” the provision of educational and training on PDAs/palmtops/handhelds, smartphones and mobile phones”. He restricted his definition to these small devices, which a lady can carry in her handbag or gentleman can carry in his pocket. Hence, mobile learning system can deliver education to learners anytime and anywhere. Thus, we can define mobile learning as learning with the assistance of small portable electronic devices such as smart phones available to the learner when needed. Mobile devices have generated a branch of
studies that relates to language learning and mobile technologies named Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). According to Chinnery, (2006) the increasing use of mobile learning in the language education field has given origin to what is known as MALL, or language learning facilitated by the mobility of the learner and/or portability of mobile devices. In a review of developments in MALL, Begum (2011) describes it as an approach to language learning that is enhanced through using mobile devices such as mobile phones, MP3/MP4 players, PDAs, and palmtop computers. Moreover, Baleghizadeh & Oladrostam (2010) claim that “mobile assisted language learning (MALL) is a branch of technology-enhanced learning which can be implemented in numerous forms including face-to-face, distant or on-line modes” (pp. 79-80). According to Cavus & Ibrahim (2009), cell phones are the most common mobile devices in MALL research, due to their popularity among the student population. Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler (2005) go on to claim that although cell phones’ design was not originally intended for educational purposes, latest models have contributed to the increasing use of these devices for learning. Chinnery (2006) believes that more recent models are known as smart phones, and have smart features enabling communicative language practice for language learning as well as giving access to authentic content and task completion. El Hariry (2015) further claims that “Cell phones could possibly have a huge effect on teaching and learning by the use of many educational apps. Apple, BlackBerry, Google, Palm and others have their own 'app stores' for cell phones, so these applications can find their ways into the classroom curriculum” (p. 303). Previous studies on the use of smart phones for learning English as a foreign language have shown that language learners expressed positive improvements while learning English through the use of smart phones. El Hariry (2015), additionally, states that “a lot of researches are conducted to understand how the mobile devices could be used to reach better education because they include a wide variety of applications and different learning and teaching techniques” (p.299). Cavus & Ibrahim (2009) look into the use of short message services supported by a system that they developed to teach new technical English words to first-year Turkish college students. Participants enjoyed the new way of learning outside the classroom and were satisfied with what they had learned. Concerning grammar, Miangah & Nezarat (2012) suggest designating grammatical points as a program and install it on mobile devices. This program teaches rules that are followed by multiple-choice activities. Different exercises can be formed, as 'true-false' or 'fill-in the blank', and practiced by the learners. Vocal services or SMS are also convenient tools for grammatical explanations. Begum (2011) look into the potential of cell phones as tools in EFL teaching in Bangladesh focused on five EFL classrooms and their teachers. The results showed that there was a positive attitude among teachers and students because cell phone use enhanced motivation and collaboration from both sides. Mahruf and colleagues (2010) analyze teachers’ perceptions, and gathered opinions from EFL teachers in Bangladesh who were using videos on cell phones and iPods to improve their students’ listening skills. With data from semi-structured interviews, teachers showed a positive attitude to using iPods and cell phones as complementary tools. Burston (2011) addresses the use of cell phones as tools to enhance communicative competence in MobLang, a European Union funded project in which foreign language learners made use of cell phones in new instructional ways. Dictionaries are not only used to find the meanings of words, but also to learn how they are pronounced. Gholami & Azarmi (2012) suggest that learners may download dictionaries to their mobile phones and learn the pronunciation of unfamiliar new words. Miangah & Nezarat (2012) also add, via multimedia functions, they may record their own voices and submit them to the teacher. This would assist in assessing the students' weaknesses in pronunciation. Liu and
2.2. Teachers and Students’ Attitudes Towards Using Mobile Assisted Language Learning

Although mobile technologies have been proven to be effective and successful media for educational purposes, their implementation requires pondering over students as well as teachers’ attitudes.

Bogardus (1931) (as cited in Bashar, 2012) defined an attitude as “a tendency to act toward or against something in the environment which becomes thereby a positive or negative value” (p. 62). In mobile education, this means that whether the integration of mobile devices as learning and teaching materials or not depends on the attitude students and teachers have toward these smart technologies, regardless of whether they are effective or not. Pollara (2011) claims that people have opposing opinions concerning the use of mobile devices. Some consider them as personal tools, others perceive them as helping students to cheat on exams, and still others acknowledge their pedagogical affordances as valuable tools for delivering learning contents. Yet, despite the importance attributed to their attitudes, students are but a one end of the continuum. The other extreme of the continuum is the teacher. In a study, Dashtestani (2013) surveys the perspective of 126 Iranian learning English as a foreign language and 73 EFL teachers’ attitude on the use of electronic dictionaries. The results show an overall positive currency concerning electronic dictionaries for learning English as a foreign language. This is because of the anytime anywhere affordance of mobile devices since the electronic dictionaries are installed on students mobile phones. The study, also, encountered some obstacles such as the use unreliable dictionaries, and the distraction caused by their use inside classroom. Generally, MALL has gained a considerable acceptance because studies end up with a positive attitude among students and teacher. Thus, the understanding of MALL as a promising approach in teaching and learning foreign languages is partly dependent on attitudinal research.

3. Research Methodology and Design

3.1. Method

The choice of the method is dependent on the nature of the topic, the nature of the data, the aim of the research, and the sample to be investigated. Accordingly, and as advanced beforehand, the present research is aimed to find out the perception of EFL teachers and students toward the effective use of mobile technology, particularly smart phones, in language learning. The research methodology used in this study is the descriptive one. Relying on the questionnaire as a research method, both quantitative and qualitative data are included.

3.2. Population and Sampling

Following our research requirements, we need both students and teachers’ population out of which a sample is extracted. The sample is randomly selected from about 400 Master students of English at Batna-2 University. We have used a random sampling corresponding to 1/5 of the
population. In this respect, we have worked with 80 students. In addition, a sample of N=14 teachers were randomly assigned the questionnaire as well. Polit (2001) states that:

Sampling involves selecting a group of people, events; behaviors or other elements with which to conduct a study. When elements are persons, they are known as subjects . . . selected from the delineated target population in a way that the individuals in the sample represent as nearly as possible. (p.235)

The random sampling technique is adopted because it provides an equal opportunity for each element of the population to be selected. According to Brown (2001), “each individual in the population must have an equal chance of being selected” (p. 72).

3.3. Data gathering tools

To collect the necessary data for answering the research question, the study entirely relies upon the questionnaire. We deliberately decide to rely on a questionnaire to collect the needed data for many reasons. First, this study is a survey that aims to figure out teachers and students attitudes towards MALL. Second, the number of the sample under investigation (N= 80 master students and N=14 teachers) urges us to utilize a data gathering tool that saves time and effort. Wallace (1998) stated that “questionnaire and interview are usually bracketed together since they both involve eliciting something from informants: usually factual information about themselves their teaching situations, or attitudes/opinions on some issues” (p. 47). Hence, the study uses the questionnaire for gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. The same questionnaire was administered to both teachers and students with slight differences in the last section. The reason behind delivering the same questionnaire to both teachers and students is to compare the results obtained from each.

3.4. The Description of the Questionnaire

In the questionnaire, students and teachers respond to close-ended and open-ended questions that seek to elicit students and teachers’ opinions about their acceptance of implementing mobile devices inside the classroom. To collect the needed information, the questionnaire is composed of 10 items divided into two categories with different but related purposes.

3.5. Results and Analysis

In order to identify the perceptions, attitudes, and views of the participants, the data obtained through the survey was analyzed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20 program). While the open-ended questions are descriptively discussed.

Students and Teachers’ General Information

The participants of this study consisted of both teachers and students of English language at Batna 2 University. The general information of participants involved their age and gender.
Table 1 Range of Students' Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>20-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50-59</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that students' age ranged from 23 to 55 years. This reflects a great interest to study the English language by different categories of people. The findings reveal that there are four (04) age groups in our selected sample. The majority (92.50%) of the students' ages vary between 20-29. We have recorded 5% who are between 30-39 that represent the second rank of the students' age. Only two students who are more than 39 years old. One student came in the third rank 43 years old while the other came in the fourth rank 55 years old. As far as gender is concerned, females predominantly outnumber the males, females who were reported in the questionnaire consists of 55 female students (68%) and only 25 male students (31.3%). This is not surprising as the population of EFL learners is occupied by females.

Table 2 Range of Teachers' Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50-59</th>
<th>60-69</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 2, of the 14 teachers, six were male and eight were female. Participants' ages ranged from 30 years to 65 years old. This reflects that participants varied in their levels of experience as language teachers.

Section One: Teachers and Students’ Use of Mobile Technologies

This part was intended to collect data concerning the general use of mobile devices in the students and teachers’ daily life. The data collected can be divided into three areas: mobile devices ownership, the different functions and activities accessed through mobile devices, and finally the relation between mobile devices usage and developing language skills.

Table 3 Kinds of Mobile Devices Used by Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Smart phone</th>
<th>Tablets/ Ipad</th>
<th>Smartphone+ Tablet</th>
<th>Smart phone +DMP</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>67.95%</td>
<td>1.28%</td>
<td>24.36%</td>
<td>6.41%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in table 3, the 80 students assert that they own mobile devices. The rate of students who own just a smart phone are 53 students (67.95%). A considerable number of participants (24.36%) have both a smart phone and tablets. Then, Smart phone and digital media players come on the third rank by 6.41%. The least percentages refer to the tablets (1.25%). The respondents did not state any other devices.

**Table 4 Kinds of Mobile Devices Used by Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Smart phone</th>
<th>Smart phone+ tablet/IPad</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in table 4, the 14 teachers state that they own mobile technologies. The ten out of fourteen teachers asserted that they own both tablets and smart phones. The four teachers have just smart phones.

**Table 5 Students’ Use of Mobile Technologies in Daily Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a- Make calls and send messages
b- Read (PDFs, notes, …)
c- Record audio of me or other people speaking in English
d- Take notes and pictures of information on the board
e- Access the internet.(use Google search and Google translator)
f- Post in English to a social network (e.g. twitter/Facebook)
g- Listen to songs in English online or in my mobile phone music player.
h- Use an offline dictionary app (looking up meaning or pronunciation)
i- Watch and download videos in English.
j- Play and download offline games
k- Use educational Apps
l- Chat with natives
m- Interact with English speaking foreigners to improve linguistic knowledge
n- Interact with English speaking foreigners to exchange cultural knowledge

The above table (5) indicates that participants are using their mobile devices for socializing purposes. As shown in the reported answers, the majority of the students use their smart phone for making calls and sending messages (96.30 %). A significant number about 76.3% said they are accessing social networks through mobile devices.

It is clear from the table that almost the majority of responses illustrate participants’ uses of mobile devices for educational purposes. A considerable number of students use smart phones to read PDF (75%), to picture information on the board (72.5%), and recording people speaking in English (65%). Students who are accessing the internet from their mobile device represent 85% in order to use Google search or Google translator. Listening to music by using mobile technologies is another popular activity among students of English. The above table also reveals that almost the majority of responses illustrate participants’ use of mobile devices for listening to English songs (63%), as well as 81.3% of respondents note that they use offline dictionaries application and 60% use educational applications. Moreover, 26.50% of participants use these technologies for cultural exchange. Thus, using mobile devices as a dictionary is the most used educational function, as far as language learning is concerned.

A considerable amount of responses indicates the use of mobile devices as a tool to play games (45%) and to download/watch video in English (57.5%). Thus, mobile devices are also used for entertainment purposes.
Table 6 Teachers’ Use of Mobile Technologies in Daily Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 6 depicts, teachers’ usage of mobile devices is much related to making calls. 100% of informants report that they use them for making calls and sending messages. The chart reveals too, 50% of teachers are also accessing social networks such as Facebook from their mobile devices. As the table illustrates, about 50% of teachers reported their use of mobile technologies for listening purposes. Responses also show about 64.30% of teachers who said they download and watch videos from their mobile devices. Not surprisingly, the majority of teachers deny the fact that they use mobile devices for playing games.

Generally, almost the majority of teachers claim their use of mobile technology devices for educational purposes. As the table depicts, 78.60% of teachers browse the internet from their mobile devices. About 57.10% of participants reveal their use of mobile devices to take notes. Ten out of fourteen teachers (71.40%) reported that they use mobile devices to read PDFs and notes. Teachers who respond their use of mobile device as an electronic dictionary represent about 64.30% of teachers’ respondents. Likewise, responses indicate that there is approximately around 14.30% of teachers’ participants who affirm their use of mobile device for recording purposes. Five out of fourteen teachers (34.90%) indicate that their use of mobile devices for improving linguistic knowledge. Similarly, 34.90% of teachers assert that they use their mobile technologies to interact with foreigners for cultural exchange purposes.
As illustrated by table 7, the majority of respondents (86.30%) believe that mobile devices can be exploited to practice listening activities. More than half of informants (72%) consider the mobile device as a material for teaching certain speaking activities. In addition, 53.3% of participants believe that mobile devices are suitable for practicing a certain reading activity. By contrast, a low percentage, about 16.3%, who do not think that they can practice any writing activities by using their mobile technologies. Furthermore, there were a remarkable percentage; about 63.80% of respondents confirm the idea that mobile devices can be used for enhancing and developing cultural awareness.

As illustrated by table 8, there is a consensus, among teachers participant, upon the likelihood of using MALL in teaching the following language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and culture). As the table depicts, a high percentage of teachers (78.60%) agreed on the possibility of using mobile devices for reading practices. Also, more than half of teachers (57.10%), believe that mobile devices can be used as a material to teach listening activities. As far as speaking is concerned, the same number of teachers (57.10%) agreeing on the possibility of using mobile devices for speaking activities. Likewise, 64.30% of teachers agreed with the possibility of teaching and developing culture awareness through mobile technologies. However, a low percentage of teachers’ participants (14.30%) indicate the use of these devices for improving learners’ writing skill.

**Discussion**

The findings revealed that mobile devices was prevalent among EFL students and teachers. This proves the ubiquity and availability of mobile devices as two main features to exploit. As shown in table 3 and 4, tablets and smartphones are the most widespread devices. It is also worth noting that every student and teacher owns at least one mobile device, which may be due to the low cost of some mobile devices. Hence, handheld devices penetrate students’ as well as teachers’ lives.

The above results indicate that the use of mobile phone for socializing purposes is very common among both students and teachers. These findings suggest that there is a strong tendency...
towards using basic functions of smart phones and tablets. Student’s usage of mobile devices, mainly smart phones, includes making calls, sending messages, browsing social networks. However, teachers’ usage of mobile phones is devoted mainly to making calls and sending messages. In addition, both students and teachers reported the use of mobile devices for educational purposes. To date, thanks to mobile technology, teachers can reach their students not only inside classroom, but also outside classroom. This can be accomplished through mobile phones basic function such as calls and texting, as well as social networks and emails as the issue of internet connection was almost solved with the arrival of the third generation (3G).

The findings of this study indicate both students and teachers’ positive attitude toward the potential of mobile devices to leverage listening, speaking, reading, and culture activities. However, the majority of both participants were uncertain about the potential of mobile technologies to handle writing activities. The suspicion of students and teachers toward the possibility of delivering writing activities on handheld devices might be attributed to technical constrained such as small screens and keypads.

Section (2): Student/Teachers’ Attitude toward the Use of Mobile Devices Inside Classroom

This section aims to find out both students and teachers’ views toward the benefits of mobile assisted language learning, as a material inside classroom.

Table 9 Students’ Use of Mobile Devices inside the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dictionaries</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice recorder</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google (translating and searching)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculator</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 shows the results of students’ attitude toward the potential usages of mobile devices inside classroom. Firstly, it is clear from the table that the 63.80% of participants confirmed that they use smart devices as dictionaries to check meaning and pronunciation of words. A considerable number of participants 46.30% indicate they use handheld devices inside the classroom in order to record the teacher’s explanation. Likewise, 31.30% of participants use their camera for recording videos or taking pictures from the board. The above table also reveals participants access to the internet inside the classroom mainly Google 38.80% and Facebook 17.50% because the issue of internet connection is solved with the arrival of the 3G. The participants also asserted that they use their devices for management, the rate of students who used memo 11.30% and calendar 6.30% whereas a small percentage 7.50% they use calculator.
Table 10 Teachers’ Use of Mobile Devices inside the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dictionaries</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice recorder</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google (translating and searching)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculator</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 shows that the majority of teachers 50% affirmed that they use handheld devices as an electronic dictionary. They also use them to access the internet like Google 28.60% and Facebook 14.30%. In addition, some teachers indicate that they use voice recorder 14.30%, camera 14.30%, memo 14.30%, calendar 21.40% and calculator 21.40%.

Table 11 Teachers’ Acceptance of Mobile Devices Use inside Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 11, the majority of students 68.80% said that teachers banned them from using mobile devices inside the classroom whereas 31.30% of participants said that teachers accept the fact of using these devices inside the class. Hence, some teachers become more conscious of the importance of educational technologies.

Table 12 Teachers’ Allowance of Using Mobile Technologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As table 12 indicates, six out of fourteen teachers responded that they allow the use of mobile devices inside classroom, while the rest eight teachers indicated that they do not allow mobile phone usage inside classroom.

This question was followed up with another inquiry in which teachers have to justify whatever their responses. According to the teachers who allow the use of mobile devices inside class, mobile technologies can be used as supporting material for learning purposes. One teacher said that “they are allowed according to the purpose and need of learners but not much, they can be useful and helpful in oral expression classes, particularly for listening activities. Other teachers justify their answers by saying that “mobile devices allow easy and quick access to e-learning and different materials such as audio, videos, dictionaries and the like. On the other hand, teachers who ban mobile uses inside classroom said that this is because the presence of the teachers is vital and the other said that for the time being we can not implement mobile technologies in classroom activities , as we need more time and practice.

What do you think of using mobile devices for learning purposes inside classroom? (for students).

This question was addressed to students in an open-ended format. The aim from this question is gaining more qualitative data since all sections of students’ questionnaire were in a form of closed-ended items. After reviewing students’ answers, it was found that sixty four 64 students responded in favor of mobile assisted language learning inside classroom. On the other hand, a small number of students (seven) believe that mobile devices are not suitable for language learning and have negative impact on language learners. The remaining number of participants (nine) left the answer space blank. The sixty four students’ answers who said that MALL is an effective approach of learning foreign languages are classified as follow:

a. MALL promotes interaction inside the classroom: a considerable number of students said that these small devices can help them to interact easily inside the classroom.

b. Increase motivation: a significant number of students stated that MALL motivates students to engage in learning activities.

c. Effectiveness of MALL: students indicated that the hand-held devices are effective and useful for learning purposes, and help them in their learning performances.

d. Support learning everywhere and at any time: the ability of mobile technologies to access the internet were cited as useful for learner to obtain the needed information everywhere and at any time they wanted it..

What do you think of using mobile devices for learning purposes inside classroom? (for teachers).

The main aim of this question is to investigate teachers’ attitude toward the potential usages of mobile devices inside classroom. Teachers’ responses showed that the majority of teachers (10 teachers) agreed on the possibility of mobile assisted language learning to enhance collaboration inside classroom. Seven teachers express their agreement with the potentiality of mobile devices for learning purposes inside classroom and enhancing interaction. However, four teachers express their disagreement with the idea that mobile devices can be applied in language teaching and learning due to the large class size and lack of the internet in classrooms. Two teachers said that they are with the idea of implementing them if appropriately used by students.
Discussion:

The results of section two show that the majority of students and teachers show their readiness to adapt mobile assisted language learning. The study found that students’ attitudes towards the usability, effectiveness, and satisfaction of MALL were quite positive. In general, students of the study thought that mobile technologies are effective and useful for language learning, and easy to use. As well as, the teachers consider students’ devices as a complementary learning tool, and they further support the use of mobile technology within the formal setting. On the other hand, the results obtained from teachers’ questionnaire reveals that some teachers, however their positive attitude toward MALL, have a negative attitude toward the possibility of applying MALL in their context of teaching. This is a result, as they justify, of lack of internet access and large classes, more than 60 students per class. In other words, teachers reveal positive attitude toward the effectiveness of MALL as an approach of teaching and learning foreign languages, but expressed a slightly negative attitude toward the possibility of applying such approach in their context of teaching. This is not to say that they completely refuse the deployment of MALL in the context of Batna 2 University, but, as they said, more time and preparation is needed.

4. Recommendations

Mobile technologies, including Smartphones, tablets, MP3/MP4 players, and so many other handheld devices, become an essential part of both students’ and teachers’ lives. Hence, it is crucial to raise awareness on the part of all EFL practitioners in order to know how well invest in these digital devices. After surveying students and teachers attitude toward the effectiveness of mobile assisted language learning, a number of recommendation can be suggested:

a. In the current era, rising students and teachers awareness about the effectiveness and innovation of MALL is required.

b. Teachers should allow the use of mobile devices inside classroom as far as it is used for learning activities.

c. Teachers can use mobile devices for teaching activities including listening, speaking, reading, and vocabulary.

d. Providing teachers with training sessions from experts on how to exploit these technologies.

e. Organizing seminars and study days to further students and teachers’ awareness of what is MALL and what are the appropriate ways of implementing it.

5. Conclusion

In this study, we surveyed both students’ and teachers’ attitude toward MALL. Mobile technologies are invading every aspect of our lives, including education. In line with Sharples, Taylor, & Vavoula (2007) who claim that “Every era of technology has, to some extent, formed education in its own image” (p. 221). Thus, both language teachers as well as learners need to evaluate and examine the value of today’s technology (mobile devices) and its contribution to language teaching. In the light of the findings, we can conclude that both students as well as teachers had positive attitude toward MALL. Likewise, both show a general agreement on the potential of MALL as a promising approach to learning foreign languages. Listening, speaking, reading, and culture. Moreover, students have shown their willingness and readiness to adapt mobile assisted language learning. However, teachers still perceive the process of implementing
MALL is not appropriate for the time being. In other words, teachers believed that their context of teaching is not yet suitable for MALL that is more time, training, and pedagogical infrastructures were among the acknowledged needs that highlighted by most teachers. This is not to deny the fact that teachers have a positive attitude toward MALL as a promising approach of teaching/learning foreign languages.

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Dr. BAHLOUL Amel has been a teacher at the University of Batna (Algeria), Department of English since 1998. She got her Doctorate degree in 2008. She is specialized in theoretical and applied linguistics. Her main interest is investigating new ways to teach students the skills they need. To understand foreign language acquisition and promote change at the university level.

References


### Appendix

**Students/ Teachers’ Questionnaire**

Dear Students/ Teachers,

The present questionnaire is part of our research. It aims at investigating Master teachers and students’ attitudes concerning the integration of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in university EFL classes.

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning is used to refer to learning language with the assistance of mobile devices such as Mobile phones, Mp3/Mp4 players, IPod, IPad, Tablets and the like.

We, hereby, request you kindly to answer sincerely because your answers will determine the success of this investigation.

Thank you
General information

1. Specify age ☐

2. Specify gender Male ☐ Female ☐

I. Section One: The use of mobile technologies

II. Do you have mobile devices?

Yes ☐ No ☐

III. If "yes", what mobile device(s) do you have?

Smart phone ☐ Tablets or IPads ☐

Digital media players (mp3/4 players, iPod…) ☐ None of the above ☐

Other .....................................................................................................................

IV. The following table contains a list of mobile device functions. Please check the function that best applies to your mobile device use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I use my mobile device to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e. Make calls and send messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Read (PDFs, notes, …)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Record audio of me or other people speaking in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Take notes and pictures of information on the board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Access the internet.(use Google search and Google translator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Post in English to a social network ( e.g. twitter/Facebook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Listen to songs in English online or in my mobile phone music player.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Use an offline dictionary app (looking up meaning or pronunciation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Watch and download videos in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Play and download offline games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Use educational Apps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Chat with natives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Interact with English speaking foreigners to improve linguistic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Interact with English speaking foreigners to exchange cultural knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Please include any other activity (or application) you did with your mobile that was not listed above:
VI. Which language skill(s) can be improved through your mobile devices?

- Reading
- Listening
- Writing
- Speaking
- Culture

II. Section Two: The use of hand-held devices inside the classroom

VII. Do you use technological devices inside the classroom?

- Yes
- No

Please specify why

VIII. If yes, what type of application(s) do you use inside the classroom?

- Dictionaries
- Voice recorder
- Camera
- Memo
- Facebook
- Calendar
- Google (Translating, searching)
- Calculator
- Others

IX. Do your teachers allow you to use these apps inside the classroom?

- Yes
- No

Please specify why (for teachers).

What do you think of using mobile devices for learning purposes inside classroom?
A Sociolinguistic Study of the Algerian Language

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Abstract
This article discusses the function of the Algerian language through the social networking site Facebook. The Algerian language is considered a dialect by Algerian politicians, but its daily use by the local community hands it an enormous amount of importance. The object of the article is to observe the frequency of use of Algerian within the analysed texts in comparison to Arabic, the official language of the Algerian Republic. Algerian is considered in this study a language which still finds itself in the initial stages of formation. For this reason, it is important to analyze its use, its grammatical rules and its social character. We are conducting a sociolinguistic study, that is, the language will be analyzed within a certain context, and time frame. A quantitative study will be done in order to study the Algerian language within society, and the frequency of use of other languages, such as the standard Arabic, the French language, or the English language, amongst others. The use of Algerian language will be dissected from a pragmatic point of view, considering its use youngsters; and different speeches from citizens from middle social classes, education and economic living standards to investigate all particularities within the above mentioned language. A sociolinguistic study has been made in order to observe the linguistic behaviour of Algerian speakers, and the obtained results allow us to observe the discourse rules of the Algerian language.

Key words: algerian language, identity, pragmatism, sociolinguistics
Introduction
The Algerian language is discussed from a sociolinguistic point of view, as well as considering its language policy, with the aim of analysing the use of such language, including its grammatical rules and pragmatic use. Within Algerian legislation, Arabic is considered the standard as an official language, and French is viewed as the country’s first foreign language and second language sociolinguistically speaking, but in reality it is not actually like that. Actually, Arabic is taught at school as a first language, but it has never been the main communicating language within Algerian society. The mother language for Algerians is the Algerian language which is used to express oneself on a daily basis. It is a language formed by different languages, which has come about through the coexistence of various civilizations in the North-African lands, like Arab, Berber, French, Spanish, Turkish, Italian and also, influence from English through it being a global language.

The second most commonly spoken language is French, which is used by the majority of the population due to colonization and the parabolic which is very present in Algeria. Madani explains (1996) that television in Algeria has created many job opportunities by foreign production companies, which offers various programmes in French of American or European origin.

Another language which is present in Algeria is the Berber language, which is spoken by natives. Standard Arabic, on the other hand, has been expanded within writing, especially all the literature or the communication between other Arab countries. Although ultimately even the written form is done in Algerian and it is about time we studied its discursive rules. Many debates are happening lately in Algeria to establish Algerian as a co-official language alongside standard Arabic, but politicians have not approved this yet, as it was analysed by Louafi (2010).

To expand and further comprehend the debate, and to demonstrate the language which is used in Algeria, a series of conversations are gathered together from the social networking site “Facebook” to show the language which is used by Algerian transmissions, with the aim of studying the use of that language within a specific social context and also within a certain time frame. The objective will be to observe the most used languages when communication takes place, and Facebook is selected due to its daily use by the majority of young people as a social medium, which has expanded worldwide to communicate between us.

Social networking sites and the concept of Facebook
The use of Facebook extended to other countries and expanded even more from the year 2007, finding versions in a diverse amount of languages with the aim of creating a community based within the web which could share people’s tastes and feelings, through words, videos, music, etc.

The use of Facebook is a common concept between cultures, the principle and function is the same, but the content is what really changes from one society to another depending on sociocultural values: culture, politics, women’s role in society, dictatorship, freedom of speech, linguistic conventions from different communities, which is the case of Spanish on the Iberian Peninsula and Latin American Spanish, and at the same time the Spanish which is used in Mexico and the Spanish used in Peru changes the function of contextual aspects, of education,
and of political and religious convictions; it is what happens on equal measure between different Arab countries which are dissimilar to each other. Mufwene (2014, 27) saw the need to study in the social context: "It is likewise noteworthy that, as pointed out by Lipski, the evolution of Spanish in Latin America, like that of Vulgar Latin in Iberia, has not been uniform".

Until quite recently, language and its development are analyzed through social networking sites in order to acquire quantitative and qualitative results. The analysis of debate through a computer allows us to ask about colloquial features which are more frequent in messages, the language economy, the quantity of graphemes, the communication code of social networking sites, spelling mistakes or intentional deviations (Heterography), lexical selection, vulgar and foul acceptance, dysphemistic expressions, adjectives with a pejorative meaning, etc.

All of this information can be collected from texts taken from Facebook and from the internet in general through its immediate availability and by the representative quantity of texts which can be found. The diversity of available texts is an advantage to analyse different texts at the exact same time. To be able to do this study it is necessary to follow the ethical principles of compilation of information from the social networking site Facebook. This is what is detailed as follows.

**Ethical Principles**

Mancera Rueda & Pano Alamán (2014, 1) explain the importance of privacy when compiling information from social networking sites, saying that it is necessary to adopt some solutions relative to user privacy when it comes to gathering data. Within our analysis we suppress all types of information that could give away clues regarding the identity of the authors. The texts are represented in the same fashion as they were published, without omitting any orthographical or grammatical errors, etc.; but we will eliminate any personal information from every speaker in order to preserve the anonymity of the users and their privacy, creating an objective study with this.

The study which will be made here inquires about the language which is issued within a certain society, therefore for these reasons, we collect theories relevant to sociolinguistics.

**Sociolinguistics and historical factors**

In this article, we are using texts which have been gathered from the social networking site Facebook so that we can observe linguistic variability in society, the use of language within a certain context, social rules, such as the coherence of texts, the lexical which is used, and the grammatical competences.

We inquire about linguistic particularities of the Algerian language (Algerian is different to Arabic, the language has been influenced by Berber, Turkish and French from which it has many borrowed words), noting the context of the spoken text and their age. These points are invaluable in order to understand the function of the development of any given language. Taking into account that Algeria is a country which is 2 381 740 km² in length, with an large amount of diversity of ethnic groups and diverse languages which are spoken in the country: the Kabyle language in Kabylie, Chnaoui in the north-east, and Chaoui in the Aurés region, Tuareg in the Sahara, Temzabit in the M’zab Valley, Tashelhit on the Moroccan border, Hassaniya Arabic
spoken by Sahrawi refugees; in addition to the diverse amount of dialects which are spoken in each region and that is difficult to put into numbers: The Algerian spoken in Algiers, Oran, Tlemans, Anaba, Constantine, and many others. The linguistic variety in Algeria is very rich and aided throughout history by other foreign languages, due to the coexistence of foreigners with Algerians (wars, long periods of staying put, globalization, etc.).

For these reasons, different texts are studied to observe that linguistic variety from the quantitative and qualitative aspects, as the knowledge of social facts are created through observation, to understand the behaviour of individuals like social actors and their relationship with the person next to them, taking into account social differences like sex, age, social class, education, etc. Middle social class prevails in Algeria, for that reason, this study is done by taking texts from speakers whose social class is middle, to obtain a quantitative result that we can trust.

The presence of foreign languages is equally as important as the presence of French is obvious due to the long-term stay of two civilizations in the Algerian lands for long periods of time, there are traces of Spanish as commented by Baussant (2010) that Oran has been occupied by the French, the Romans, and the Spanish since the year 1509 remaining a total of three centuries in the Algerian city.

In the same way, the importance of the English language is relevant due to globalization and its influence in technology, as Mami (2013) explains:

By the mid of the year 2000, Algeria has started a series of changes with the aim to improve the structure of the educational system. However, the traumatic past events have left the administration confused in certain areas where many schools required better organization and more teachers. Since the introduction of the English language into schools, it has become an important part of the curriculum and has recorded a great demand in all levels of education. Various TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) schools have been established throughout the country. While encompassing the motive of the venerable French grammar, the current view of the place of English in language learning is also filled with political scenes aiming to put one language at the edge of drowning (p.911).

These coexistences create a unique language for the Algerians, who express themselves in different languages and switch from one to another frequently, what is commonly known as “Code-Switching”. It is defined as following by Tawwab & Ahmad (2014):

Code-switching could be defined as a term used to refer to the act of conversing in another language, besides the mother tongue. On the other hand, code-switching is also defined as a combination of words, phrases and sentences that result from sentence limitations in similar speech context. Based on these definitions, it can be deduced that code-switching in general can be regarded as the act of speaking in different languages interchangeably in order to overcome language constraints, to deliver speeches affectively and most importantly as a crucial step towards
achieving successful communication". [...] A person is said to be multilingual if he or she is competent in more than one language. Multilingualism is usually the result of many factors, such as colonisation, intercultural marriage, cultural interaction, education, and many other reasons. (p.78)

In this project we observe the amount of Code-Switching which has gone about in conversations, and our study consists in finding out if using this method is intentional or not. Tawwab & Ahmad (2014) highlights various causes of that linguistic action as follows:

Speakers may switch from one code to another either to show solidarity with a social group, to distinguish oneself, to participate in social encounters, to discuss a certain topic, to express feelings and affections, or to impress and persuade the audience. (p.80)

In continuation, we analyse texts collected from Facebook (these texts were compiled between the years 2015 and 2016 from a group of youngster from Algeria of different sexes and educational levels, with the aim of answering the following questions:

- Do we consider Algerian a dialect, or a language in process of being formed?
- Is it a language, or a type of code-switching to be able to create an effective form of communication?
- Why is the Algerian language not taught at school in the country?

Next, we will create a quantitative and qualitative study with the final aim of observing the use of the Algerian language.

Text Analysis

We observe a total of 6 profiles from youngsters, openly knowing that the Algerian population is young on average as it is. Entire texts are collected. Facebook is a social networking site whose intention is communication, sometimes the texts are conative and appellative, talking actions are expressed through instructions, suggestions, questions, the sentences can be hortatory or interrogative, the method used tends to vary between the imperative and the indicative, dispensing with on occasion orthography and grammar and for this reason the comfort or the speed of the process of writing. The speaker tends to have her or his own identity.

In this piece of work we analyse discursive conventions such as style, punctuation, acronyms, phonetics, foreign tongues, local linguistic solutions, neologisms, borrowings, anglicisms, polysemy, language economy principles, the mix between “code-switching”, habitual expressions, group identity, prestige language, local language and global language, ideology, and political interest.

This study is made so we can understand better the function of the Algerian language in the 21st Century, bearing in mind that the final objective is to comprehend language within society, as explained by Albirini (2016):
Generally speaking, sociolinguistic research sets out to achieve three main goals: (1) to improve understanding of the relationship between language and social actors and communities, (2) to propose solutions to problems surrounding language perceptions, productions, behaviour, and policies, and (3) to engage in solving inequalities stemming from language attitudes and praxes. […] The Arab social and political systems with their historical roots, norms, structures, organisations, networks, expectations, power relationships, and systems of meaning, provide the framework and boundaries within which Arabic speakers construct their identities and define themselves in relation to others. […] Individuals living within the same politically or geographically defined region in the Arab World may have different sociocultural environments, historical roots, lifestyles, political affiliation, religious beliefs, ethnic origins, and individual dispositions. They are therefore expected to differ significantly in how they define themselves in relation to others. This means that they may simultaneously have convergent and divergent forms of identity. (p. 123)

Personal information is hidden from the speakers in order to establish an objective sociolinguistic study. The female speakers are represented with the letter X and the male speakers with the letter Y. A variability is noted within the style, as we are analysing different texts with speakers from different educational backgrounds and that are versatile, the themes are sometimes interesting and during others times less important, this is done to cover all types of social and educative talks.

No rules of transliteration have been followed when it comes to Arabic words transcribed into the Latin alphabet, due to the fact that the protagonists of the texts do not apply any regulations in their interventions, except for: 3 (ع), ch (ش), etc. Here we mention 6 texts and we list them bellow: Discussion about the Algerian Government; discussion about the new cabinet in Canada; discussion about a colloquium; post about education in Algeria; discussion about the death of a teacher and a post to celebrate the Yennayer (Tamazigh new year).

Here we analyse the first text:

1) **Discussion about the Algerian Government**

La sécheresse, le baril à moins de 35 dollars, la nouvelle constitution, 2016 sannonce mouvementée, bonne année et meilleurs vœux

- Y: ana ajbetni la nouvelle constitution
- X: ana koulchi rah 3ajebni hadl el 3am tu ne peux pas imaginer
- X: moi aussi
- Y: Et le pire c’est qu’on est cloîtré dans cette poubelle à 4 frontière qui se fait secoué par des corniauds...
- Y: un département ou les étudiants Yahakmou

A post is emitted about interior politics in Algeria in a correct French. The first speaker that comments on the post speaks in Algerian (ana ajbetni) [I liked it] and French (la nouvelle constitution) [the new constitution], a type of code-switching that is not intentional and that tends to take place in Algerian society which is very natural and frequent. The first sentence originates
from Arabic (أنا أعجبني) but the phonetics is unlike Algerian, and the second sentence is shown in correct French.
The second speaker does code-switching in the same way between Algerian (ana koulchi rah 3ajebni hadl el 3am) [I like everything that year] and French (tu ne peux pas imaginer) [you can’t imagine].

The first sentence is in Arabic (أنا كل شيء راه أعجبني هذا العام) but written in Latin, the words (كل شيء) [each thing] fuse themselves in Algerian [koulchi], the word (راه) is added which has Arab origin (رأى) which has been adapted to Algerian phonetics, and the rest of the sentence is in standard Arabic and French.
The third and fourth person both respond using a correct sentence, and the fifth person uses code-switching again with the sentence (un département ou les étudiants Yahakmou) [a department where students govern]: the subject is in French and the verb in Arabic written in Latin (يحكموا).

2) Discussion about the new cabinet in Canada
Je ne sais pas pour vous, mais ce gars m'inspire une bouffée d'oxygène.

Here, they talk about the creation of the new government in Canada in French (Je ne sais pas pour vous, mais ce gars m'inspire une bouffée d'oxygène) [I am not sure about you, but those people inspire me and give me a breath of fresh air]. The first person comments on the post in Arabic with the sentence (نحن نأمل أن نكون في власти في الجزائر وننتصر) [we hope the same for ourselves]. The second speaker states a sentence in French (Je confirme) [I confirm it], and the third person turns to code switching (Je l'aime ana ba3da c simple!) [I like it it’s simple!]: the sentences are expressed in French and in the middle of the sentence a word in standard Arabic that means [later] (بعد), but the meaning in Algerian is different [myself], it is a regional word used in the west of the country. In this case, we can observe how one word can change its meaning when it adapts to the incoming language. The other speakers continue speaking in good French. We notice the use of a couple of abbreviations (ct) [c'était], (c) [c’est] which is used intentionally to write fast. They are abbreviations that are very common and are understood by French speakers.

3) Discussion about a colloquium

Here, they talk about the creation of the new government in Canada in French (Je ne sais pas pour vous, mais ce gars m'inspire une bouffée d'oxygène) [I am not sure about you, but those people inspire me and give me a breath of fresh air]. The first person comments on the post in Arabic with the sentence (نحن نأمل أن نكون في власть في الجزائر وننتصر) [we hope the same for ourselves]. The second speaker states a sentence in French (Je confirme) [I confirm it], and the third person turns to code switching (Je l'aime ana ba3da c simple!) [I like it it’s simple!]: the sentences are expressed in French and in the middle of the sentence a word in standard Arabic that means [later] (بعد), but the meaning in Algerian is different [myself], it is a regional word used in the west of the country. In this case, we can observe how one word can change its meaning when it adapts to the incoming language. The other speakers continue speaking in good French. We notice the use of a couple of abbreviations (ct) [c’était], (c) [c’est] which is used intentionally to write fast. They are abbreviations that are very common and are understood by French speakers.
This is a comment regarding a post about a colloquium which is organized with one sentence in Arabic ( jamsa'at늘ة اللغة الإسبانية هاي شاركوا في الجزائر ونلتقاءو [the group in Spanish you can all participate in Algiers and we can meet up], two Algerian words have been used (ناتاع meaning (from) of Arabic origin [ناتاع], and (نلتقاء) [meet] that originates from the Arab verb [نلتى] whose phonetics are adapted to Algerian pronunciation.

The second speaker asks the colleagues for a bit of action in standard Arabic ( شوية نشاط, and the third speaker says a sentence (مكان عليه تقولوا تخصص ما تخصص ترجمة راها داخله في كنشي [it is not important to speak of speciality, the translation enters], the sentence is said in Arabic with some Algerian words (مكان عليه) [it is not important] of Arabic origin [مكان] which fuse together, as we saw in the first text.

The following two speakers write in good standard Arabic and using Arabic letters. The fifth person turns to code-switching between Arabic and French and all of the sentence is written in Arabic (مازال الملك شهير باه تفكروا ي موضوع شوية كوراج يى كوراج يى [we still have a month to think about the theme, have faith]: the sentences written in correct Arabic or French do not need commenting on as it is not of interest to us here, our job is to observe the Algerian language and how it coexists with other languages. In the sentence we note that the fusion between two words whose origin is the standard Arabic (مازال الملك) following Algerian phonetics, the word (باه) was used, which is from Arabic, whose significance in Algerian is different, and the sentence finishes with the French word (courage) written in Arabic. The next person answers in good standard Arabic, and the next one in fine French too.

The eighth speaker says something in Arabic (ولو منع) [nothing, it’s prohibited]: the first word is of Arabic origin (منع) and the second word as well (ولو شيء). The next comment was made in Algerian (مهبولة ياك) [you are crazy aren’t you]: the first word comes from the Arabic (مهبولة), followed by an Algerian interjection. The following speaker
expresses himself in English (Thank you bb. Do you think I can participate ???), and the tenth person does code-switching (Kiraha jayataq alla les colloque yyaawww rani fi [فرزة نقاهة لوروون]) [How much do you like colloquiums! Gosh I am going through a period of convalescence lol]: Words originating from Arabic have been used but they have been adapted from Algerian phonetics, one word in French and the last sentence in standard Arabic with a Latin interjection. The following person answers in Spanish (Thank you Mimi) and the last one uses standard Arabic again (hada houa) which is written in Latin [هذا هو].

4) Post about education in Algeria
- **Y:** Le rôle de l'école n'est pas d'être moralisatrice mais d'apprendre l'esprit critique.
  L'école algérienne n'a fait que de la morale depuis sa création et pas de rationnel. Les enfants manquent de logique pas de moeurs.
- **X:** Xah bon ? moi à l'université je vois tous les jours des comportements qui sont indignes d'un bac, même chez les profs
- **Y:** il a une différence entre morale et éthique
- **X:** X je crois qu'on est absolument pas sur la meme longueur d'onde
- **Y:** J'espère que ce ne sont pas les déflits auxquels tu fais allusions car à ce moment là l'école ne doit pas avoir plus à faire qu'à dire que c'est condamnable et c'est à la justice de s'en charger par la suite
- **X:** si tu veux en débattre faut expliquer clairement ce que tu penses, car instruction sans éducation n'a aucun sens, et je crois (et j'espère que c'est ce que veut introduire la ministère) loin des idées religieuses, qui elles engendrent des humains apeu…
- **Y:** La morale est l'ensemble des règles et normes de soucis comportement relatives au bien et au mal, au juste et à l'injuste, en usage dans un groupe humain. Elle est par consequent subjective à ce dernier groupe alors que l'éthique n'introduit pas forcément la notion du bien et du mal et la perte donc d'universalité qu'est sensée transmettre l'école.

In this conversation they talk about the Algerian education system in a correct version of French. We can notice a few accents missing because it is more comfortable to write this way and also it’s quicker on Facebook.

5) Discussion about the death of a teacher
- **X:** Que descance en paz
- **X:** un homme irremplacable
- **Y:** Allah yarahmah
- **X:** ALLAH YERHMAH INCHALLA
- **Y:** Su cara me disi algouna cosas ? Pero !!!
- **X:** Que en paz descance. Lah yarahmah
- **Y:** D.E.P.
- **Y:** Allah yerhmek ya Y , tu nous manqueras énormément , et ta grande qualité d homme a une eu une empreinte indélébile sur plusieurs D entre nous
- **X:** Te quería mucho, X.
- **X:** Me quedo sin palabras
- **Y:** Tristísima noticia que me (nos) ha pillado desprevenidos. Hablé con él hará un par de meses. Estaba con el humor de siempre, bromista, jovial. Fue un gran apoyo cuando
In this conversation, the death of a teacher is discussed. The first speaker writes in Spanish (Que descance en paz) (may you rest in peace), the second person answers in French (un homme irremplacable) [an irreplaceable man] and the third person says an Arabic sentence (Allah yarahmah) (may god be with you) written in Latin. We notice that when a spiritual sentiment is expressed, general Arabic is chosen, as the fourth person also says (ALLAH YERHMAH INCHALLA) (may god be with you Inchallah).

Another speaker comments on the photo and the post with a sentence in Spanish (Su cara me dice algoua cosas? Pero!!!) although uses some grammatical mistakes: (dice) instead of the correct (dice), (algoua) instead of the correct (alguna), we also see that French is the predominant language, but sometimes the Hispanic community stands out whose written Spanish is moderate. As can be demonstrated in the next sentence (Que en paz descance. Lah yarhmah): (descance) instead of the correct (descanse) and this is followed by an Arabic sentence written in Latin when they talk about spiritual or religious feelings (may god be with you).

The following person uses the diminutive (D.E.P) meaning (rest in peace) and is a sentence which is used very often in Algerian although it originates from Latin and from the Catholic church. Then, the next speaker talks in French (Allah yerhmek ya Y, tu nous manqueras énormément, et ta grande qualité d homme a une eu une empreinte indélébile sur plusieurs D entre nous) although comes back to Arabic to give his blessing (may good be with you). The following two people express their sadness in Spanish, and then another person continues speaking about the dead person in Spanish although she makes spelling and grammatical mistakes for her lack of use of the Spanish language.

Spanish is spoken in some parts of Algeria, but you can tell the difference in level in comparison to the French language and that is because of time factors, as the Spanish occupied the land earlier than the French and the French linguistic impact is actually stronger here nowadays.

The next speaker expresses a sentence in French and Arabic (Ellah yer7mou c'était vraiment quelqu'un de bien) [May god be with him, he was a good person], the Arabic expression is used because a religious feeling is said. The same occurs with the sentences of the last speaker (un grand homme est parti, et un des plus anciens ami de mon pere, allah yerahmek we y wesse3 3lik tonton Y), who mixes French with Arabic to express a feeling of blessing. That word has been written in different ways and that is because of the lack of coding of the Algerian language.

6) A post to celebrate the Tamazigh new year

- X:
  Assegas amegaz les amis
  - Y: amchiche
  - Y: assuguess amugeuss X
  - Y: FELUZ 2.966
The first person wished a happy Tamazigh new year with the sentence (Assegas amegaz les amis) [happy new year friends], the congratulations is given in the Tamazigh language, a language used by 25% of the Algerian population, followed by a sentence in French (les amis). The third person congratulates in the Tamazigh language, and the last person answers in Spanish (FELUZ 2.966), making a single spelling mistake (feliz) meaning (happy).

We can notice the use of many languages to express oneself in Algerian; it is a koine language, meaning that more than two languages are mixed in order to create a new one. The differences between both are becoming fewer, for example the phonetics of Arabic words are different than in Algerian. Firstly, the two languages start getting mixed, then a process of alignment is done, meaning that the two languages get balanced and in the end, the language is simplified and adjusted. Albirini (2016, 180) explains the creation of a language as follow: "Koineization involves a number of related sociolinguistic phenomena including dialect mixing, accommodation, and levelling, among others".

Conclusion

Six texts found on the social network site Facebook in Algeria were analysed and the profile of middle class youngsters, also due to their economic level. All this research was done in order to obtain reliable analysis.

We can notice the use of different foreign languages (French, English and Spanish in majority). We can observe a linguistic economy in Algerian due to code-mixing. During the 90s and at the beginning of 2000, the prestigious language in Algeria was French, but we can notice some changes with the use of many other languages, and we can even notice the importance that the Algerian language holds.

Spelling sometimes suffers because of the trend to write quickly on social networking sites while posting or commenting on posts and as well for the commodity of writing. The style is not excellent anymore for the same reasons, meaning for the speed of writing on internet. Some essential points stand out of this research like: the political interest, the Algerian grammar, the discursive conventions and the linguistic identity of Algerian people.

The political interest is not clear, the minister of education is fighting for teaching Algerian to its native speakers, but the proposal never gets approved. Is this rejection due to an ideology and/or to a religious movement? They pretend to preserve a conservative system by teaching standard Arabic as a language that unifies the Arab world, but the reality shows that none of the Arabic countries actually use this language on a daily basis. Maybe the reason of this rejection is to build an Arabic market with common interests, but never in history have we seen Arabic countries collaborating to develop an economic union.

It is obvious that Algerian is prominent in Algerian society, more than standard Arabic (except in the case of literature), as the statistics show and it is necessary to study its grammar rules because it is still a developing language, and it is a different language than Arabic at grammatical and phonetical level. Writing is more frequently done in Latin because of the commodity of writing with a Latin keyboard and because it is the language used for teaching in
the Algerian universities, as the majority of degrees are taught in foreign languages. Phonetics is different and sometimes very far from standard Arabic.

Grammar is the linguistic tool that studies the word structures and their accidents. In our research, we have observed some differences from varied points of view such as the phonologic, synthetic-morphologic, lexicon-semantic and pragmatic.

-We can notice that Phonetics is different between standard Arabic and Algerian, for example, the difference between (كل شيء) and (Koulchi/كلشي); or (و لو) or (تلتقى) or (تلتقاو) (Walou); etc.
- The morphology between Arabic and Algerian is also different, for example, the present conjugation at the first person is different from the standard Arabic conjugation: the verb (تكلم) in Algerian appoints the first person singular and the first person plural whereas in standard Arabic, it only appoints the first plural person, and the first person singular is conjugated differently (تكلم). We have noticed a linguistic economy in many Algerian words: (كتبتلكم) instead of (كتبتلكلكم) [I wrote you]; (لدارنا) instead of (إلى دارنا), etc. Even though the words are written in Latin, they mix.
- The lexicon is different as well as the etymology of many words comes from surroundings languages, like (كافاني) comes from the French word (Cabas). In this example, it is written in Arabic adding the Arabic possessive (ي), whereas in standard Arabic, we would use the word (حبيبي). A great number of examples can be used, such as: (كوزينا) instead of (لطيف), (تاميل) instead of (تميل), (فريكو) instead of (فريكو), (كاميوكو) instead of (شاحنة), even (بنايا) instead of (مزور), amongst many other examples.
- Pragmatics shows the relationship between language and context where the idea is being developed, and the interpretation of the information in a particular sociocultural environment, and this is what has been done in this research to highlight the importance of Algerian in Algeria. This is the Algerian linguistic identity that needs to be studied in order to create rules and to codify this language.

It is obvious that Algerian is a developing language and it needs grammatical research to be produced in order to establish its own grammar and to codify the language, as it has been done with vulgar languages. Code-Switching that has been highlighted is not intentional but innate, because Algerian is based on languages that have lived together in North Africa. It is not really an intentional type of code-Switching because as standard Arabic and French take different aspects in many occasions and use the phonetics of Algerian, and they don’t preserve themselves like this.

The Algerian minister of education proposed to teach Algerian at school in parallel with standard Arabic language classes, but it was rejected by the Algerian conservative politicians. Was this rejection due to the necessity to conserve the Arabic language for spiritual and economic reasons?

It is an advantage to conserve the standard Arabic language so that the twenty-one Arab countries can communicate with each other, and so that Arab can be part of the list of the most important languages and widely spoken in the world, with 295 million speakers. However, we should not ignore the sociolinguistic reality of each Arabic country, and their interest for their mother tongue. The fact that Arabic is the eighth most spoken language in the world and the
religious language of Islam does not take away the importance of developing the own language of each country.

Identity is the key word in this thesis, it is true that standard Arabic is the official language in Algeria and it has a lot of prestige when it comes to literature and poetry, but in which language do Algerian people feel more comfortable to express their emotions, feelings, and thoughts? Their own language is more modern, and it is an essential element in defining their identity through a national language, even if it is not the one used for international communication or as the business language.

It is clear that it would need many more years of investigation on the Algerian language to codify it, but now is the moment to start investigating its rules, to recognize Algerian identity and to distinguish each country and each language from the commonly called “Arab world”.

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References


New Technology and the Process Based Approach to Writing

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Abstract
Writing is one of the most important skills in English language teaching. Yet, the writing skill is not always easy for both teachers and learners. For teachers, writing instruction usually poses difficulties at the level of implementation as well as learners’ involvement. As for learners, the production of coherent and meaningful pieces of writing can be problematic due to lack of linguistic competence, writing mechanisms and a learning context. The aim of the present paper is to remediate the aforementioned difficulties that both teachers and learners encounter through a writing activity. This writing activity is a qualitative research method as it is a descriptive case study which demonstrates how technology enhances the different stages of the process writing activity. It has been found that the use of technology reinforces the implementation of the process based approach to writing. This facilitates writing instruction and offers new opportunities for both teachers and learners. Besides, this writing activity adheres to the following pedagogical theories: cognitive constructivism, social constructivism and Behaviourism which are in favor of knowledge construction, collaboration, associative learning and reinforcement. The recommendation part explains that technology is not only limited to the writing skill and refers to some examples of web 2.0 tools that can be used for the teaching of English as a foreign language. Another recommendation refers to the last stage of the process writing activity, publishing, which must benefit from available online services in order to gain wider access and communication.

Key Words: English as a foreign language, learning theories, process based approach to writing, technology, writing instruction
1. Introduction

1.1 The statement of the problem
The learning of English as a foreign language is based on the acquisition of the four well-known skills; writing, reading, speaking and listening. Concerning writing, it is often viewed with general uncertainty from the part of learners as well as teachers. Learners are challenged in terms of their ability to express their ideas in well-structured pieces of writing. As for teachers, they face difficulties in terms of writing instruction and students’ involvement and motivation towards the writing skill. In fact, the difficulties that both teachers and learners face are linked to lack of adequate methods and teaching techniques which facilitate the acquisition of the writing skill, and consequently, reduce or reject students’ anxiety towards it.

1.2 The purpose of the study
This paper introduces an example of a writing activity which implements the process based approach to writing. At the same time, the activity integrates new technology in a way that responds to the requirements of the process based approach to writing.

1.3 The Rational of the study
The importance as well as the difficulty of the writing skill necessitate pedagogical examination of the issue in order to adopt appropriate pedagogical theories and teaching techniques which make the teaching of the writing skill accessible for both teachers and learners. Besides, the integration of new technology in teaching in general and in writing instruction in particular must be considered for the variety of opportunities it offers to education and especially for the interest and the motivation it triggers in students.

1.4 Research Questions
This paper examines the use of technology in the process based approach to writing in order to answer the following questions:
- How can technology reinforce the implementation of the process based approach to writing?
- What is the added value of technology in writing instruction?

1.5 The organization of the study
The present paper starts with an introduction which gives a general background of the issue of writing instruction. It also informs about the purpose, the rationale and the research questions of the paper. The first part is a literature review which refers to the difficulty of the writing skill for both teachers and students. Then, it introduces the process based approach to writing as an effective method in writing instruction along with the integration of new technology. The second part describes this paper’s research methodology. As for the third part, it is devoted to data analysis which provides detailed description of the case study. The following part discusses the case study. Finally, a conclusion ends the paper and it is followed by some recommendations and limitations.

2. Review of Literature
This review refers to the importance and the difficulty of the writing task in the teaching of English as a foreign language. This difficulty is linked to language, students’ attitudes and their perceived self-efficacy. Then, the process based approach to writing is proposed as an effective method
in writing instruction. The last part of the review focuses on the integration of technology in writing instruction and highlights the new opportunities it offers for the implementation of the writing process approach.

Nobody can deny the importance of the writing skill in the learning of English as a foreign language. In fact, writing is the visual representation of ideas, opinions, information or spoken language. In school, the writing skill is a prerequisite for learners’ academic success (Morgan, Hessler & Konrad, 2007) since learners are required to produce systematized and explicit output. However, writing is often problematic for learners to learn and also for teachers to teach. For learners, it is not always easy to produce a written format which conveys ideas or information. Many learners avoid writing because of its difficulty or engage in it with unsatisfactory results and achievements (Westwood, 2004). This difficulty of writing is due to lack of necessary language elements and mechanisms which help in the process of writing. In Saudi Arabia, for example, Arab learners in the department of English Language Skills at Najran University face a number of writing difficulties at the level of structure, paragraph, spelling problems, capitalization and punctuation (Khan & Khan, 2012). Likewise, postgraduate learners of the college of Business at Universiti Utara Malaysia face problems which are related to vocabulary, organization of ideas, grammar, spelling and referencing (Al-Khasawneh, 2010). According to Judge (2013), “other barriers to writing have been identified and include lack of time, no confidence, anxiety, and the ability to start or finish” (p. 4). Thus, the difficulty of the writing skill is not only related to language per se, but also to learners’ attitudes and their perceived self-efficacy. In the case of negative attitudes like anxiety, dislike and pressure, learners find it difficult if not impossible to engage in writing tasks. Similarly, if learners possess pessimistic self-beliefs about their abilities to perform a writing task, their motivation is negatively affected. Consequently, they are unlikely to engage in a writing activity, let alone produce a written text. Those pessimistic self-beliefs about oneself are referred to as perceived self-efficacy which is described as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p.3). Hence, it is very important to refer to the role of teachers not only in helping learners acquire language elements for the production of written texts, but also in reinforcing students’ intrinsic and extrinsic motivation so that they show readiness and willingness to engage and excel in writing activities. Concerning the acquisition of language elements, it is a long term process which is not necessarily accomplished in one skill only; in this case writing. As for learners’ attitudes and self-efficacy, they must be taken into consideration in teaching practices. That is to say, the design of writing activities must stimulate students’ positive attitudes and their beliefs in their capabilities to accomplish desired outcomes. Concerning teaching strategies, Troia and Graham (2003) argue that writing is also a challenging task for teachers and that best practices in writing instruction are not incorporated. In fact, teachers must be in possession of teaching strategies that facilitate writing instruction and at the same time enhance students’ involvement through positive attitudes and strong degrees of self-efficacy. An example of these teaching strategies is the writing process approach which involves students in the writing process through different stages. Gura (2011) explains that “the writing process, which identifies stages in the development of a writing project, is an almost universally accepted framework for understanding and teaching writing” (p. 13). In her case study, Alhosani (2008) affirms that fifth grade ESL Arab students “believed it was effective to have more than one chance to write starting from brainstorming to drafting, revising, editing and publishing” (p. 282). Thanks to this approach, “students learn which elements of writing are most important at each stage of the process, and they develop a variety of skills to help them communicate their ideas most effectively” (Tyner, 2008, p. xiii). The different stages of the writing process approach also allow for gradual
involvement of students who focus on specific elements at each stage of a writing task in order to acquire adequate skills for the formulation of ideas. Besides, Gura (2011) explains that “students must use problem-solving skills to successfully complete the activities, and they have the support and aid of the planning sheets so they can organize their thoughts and ideas” (p. 13). More than this, the process based approach to writing guarantees teachers’ guidance and support as they assist students in different stages and provide them with appropriate activities. This is considered an opportunity for teachers not only to engage and motivate their students, but also to strengthen their sense of efficacy. Examples of techniques that can help teachers achieve this goal are “classroom discussions, asking questions, sharing life stories or experiences, playing games, learning phonics, modeling the writing process, and most importantly establishing an anxiety-free and relaxing language learning environment” (Alhosani, 2008, p. 279). It is true that these types of activities are able to engage students in writing tasks especially when they feel at ease in the learning environment. Gura (2011) adds that “students feel motivated to do the work, build key literacy skills, and also become more proficient in critical thinking and collaboration” (p. 11). Consequently, teachers can resort to group work activities which enrich writing instruction especially that “the writing process approach fit well with cooperative learning” (Alhosani, 2008, 278). Another teaching aid which reinforces students’ engagement in the writing process is the use of visuals. A study which investigates the use of pictures and other illustrative devices in writing instruction reveals that the use of pictures has a positive effect on EFL students’ writing performances (Shirvani & Tajadini, 2014). Other illustrative devices like audio and video material also help teachers in writing instruction as they stimulate students’ creativity and imagination. Nowadays, the functions of the aforementioned illustrative devices have been developed and renovated within new technologies. Ghahri; Hashamdar and Mohamadi (2015) state that “language teachers should introduce technology in language teaching classes as it increases the amount of language that students keep in touch with” (p. 1499). This is true since new technology exposes students to language in an appealing way so that they are motivated and inspired to embrace it. Moreover, technology helps teachers create the need for the target language through authentic situations in videos or images in order to maximize exposure to language and ensure attainment of goals, in this case the production of writing texts. In this respect, Gura (2011) explains that technology integration in writing instruction reinforces “curriculum through its authenticity and real life applications – focus on writing for a purpose” and as a result, “this fosters student motivation, student interest and engagement” (p. 11). Accordingly, technology facilitates writing instruction as it provides learners with authentic contexts which trigger their motivation and interest for desirable outcomes in writing.

All in all, this review refers to the usefulness of the writing process approach in writing instruction. The role of technology is also emphasized as it supports the process based approach to writing through the provision of appealing activities which foster students’ motivation, engagement, critical thinking skills and collaboration.

3. Methodology

This part informs of the methodological procedures of the present article, namely the research design, participants and data analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Design

This paper is based on the design of a writing activity which implements the process based approach to writing through new technology. Since “the case study is not confined to the study of an individual but can be used in research involving programs, institutions, organizations,
political structures, communities, and situations” (Thomas; Nelson and Silverman, 2011, p. 295), the writing activity of the present paper is a case study which constitutes a model for the implementation of the writing process approach through new technology. As for its type, it can be referred to as descriptive since “a descriptive case study presents a detailed picture of the phenomena” (Ibid, p. 295). Likewise, the present article examines the implementation of the process writing activity in details. Concerning the research method, “the case study is used in qualitative research to deal with critical problems of practice and to extend the knowledge base of the various aspects of education …” (Ibid, p. 295). For this reason, the writing activity is a qualitative research method which describes all the stages of a process writing activity.

3.1 The writing activity
The writing activity of the present paper adopts the process based approach and suggests a new creative way to teach writing to learners whose level in the English language is supposed to be intermediate. The design of the writing activity is divided into four parts. The first part introduces a video about the topic of healthy life style. The second part is a drag and drop exercise which is about exercising. The third part is another drag and drop exercise about healthy eating habits. The fourth part is a third drag and drop exercise about quality sleep.

3.2 Participants
The design of the writing activity was developed in an Information Communication Technology (ICT) training in the Morocco-Korean center of ICT training in Rabat, Morocco as an end of module project. The ICT training provided technical assistance concerning the editing of the video on Movie maker as well as the design of the three drag and drop exercises on Mediator.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedures
Data analysis is based on the different stages of the writing process activity. The added value of technology, teachers’ roles and students’ roles are also examined. The purpose is the development of an instructional design model which can also be referred to as a pedagogical scenario or a lesson plan which integrates technology in the process writing activity.

4. Findings
This part describes the different stages of the writing activity in details, namely; pre-writing, while-writing and post-writing. The aforementioned three broad stages encompass other specific stages like brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

Before the examination of the stages of the writing process activity, it is very important to provide some information concerning objectives, competencies, required pre-requisites, pedagogical theories, pedagogical strategies, evaluation and material. Concerning objectives, students are expected to write coherent paragraphs about healthy life style. As for the targeted competencies, they include transversal and disciplinary competencies. Transversal competencies refer to effective oral and written communication in the English language, reasoning, creativity, team work, acquisition of writing skills and effective use of information resources. In disciplinary competencies, students learn about the three components of a paragraph, in addition to some effective ways for keeping a healthy life style. Concerning the required pre-requisites, they concern the level of intermediate learners who have supposedly acquired the basics of the English language. As far as pedagogical theories are concerned, the process writing activity adheres to the following theories: cognitive constructivism, social
constructivism and behaviorism. As far as the pedagogical strategy is concerned, it has already been mentioned that the digital resource is based on a process based approach to writing. Concerning evaluation, students’ assessment is based on their participation, engagement, collaboration as well as their final products. As for material, the implementation of this writing activity requires a laptop, a data show and a board.

4.1 Pre-Writing

The pre-writing activity is based on the projection of a video about healthy lifestyle. This video is the compilation of three YouTube videos on Moviemaker software since each one of them is specific to one component of healthy lifestyle. It is very important to mention that the compilation excludes some parts of the three videos which are not essential for the understanding of the topic. Another reason for the compilation of the three videos is the manipulation of the running time in order to adjust it to the different steps of the writing activity. After the compilation and the editing of the three videos, the total running time of the new version is six minutes and 34 seconds knowing that the first video about physical exercise lasts three minutes and 23 seconds, the second video about balanced diet lasts three minutes and 10 seconds and the third video about good sleeping habits lasts four minutes and 27 seconds. Two audio recordings of the author’s voice are inserted in the beginning and at the end of the video. The first audio recording says: keeping healthy and the second one asks the following question: what about you, what do you do to keep healthy? Concerning the content of the first video entitled benefits of exercise (VEA Australia – New Zealand, 2012), it discusses the topic of exercising in relation to physical, mental and social health. The video defines these three components and provides examples for each one of them. Then, the testimonial of a person who discusses the benefits of exercising follows. This testimonial is excluded in the new version of the video as it only repeats more or less the same ideas which are discussed in the beginning of the video. The last part of the video, which is devoted to a written summary of the content of the video, is also excluded since the aim of the pre-writing stage is to introduce students to real life contexts in order to be able to brainstorm the topic of exercising and provide summaries themselves. As for the second video entitled what is a balanced diet (Tettesgr, 2013), it informs about the different food groups by giving examples. The only part which is excluded from this video is the one which informs about the types of eating patterns. The reason for this exclusion is that students are not supposed to be introduced to specific and detailed information. Instead, the aim is to inform them about the different food groups and how they constitute a balanced diet. As far as the third video (Melbourne Medisleep, 2013) is concerned, it is about the topic of quality sleep and it is entitled do you know how to sleep better? The video explains that sleep is linked to physical and mental health and suggests five tips which guarantee quality sleep. Then, it refers to some examples of health problems that may result from lack of sleep. Finally, the main ideas of the video are recapitulated. This restatement of ideas is again excluded in the new version since students are the ones who are supposed to recapitulate the ideas of the video either orally or in their written paragraphs.

The first activity of the pre-writing stage is totally based on the projection of the aforementioned video. When students are introduced to the video, they are involved in a whole class discussion in which the teacher draws their attention to the three components of healthy lifestyle: exercising, balanced diet and quality sleep. Then, the teacher starts a brainstorming activity in which the main ideas of each component are recapitulated. Besides, the teacher stimulates students’ enthusiasm to identify with these components through questions about their own ways of keeping healthy. For this reason, the teacher can refer to the audio recording of the author’s voice at the end of
the video which says: what about you, what do you do to keep healthy? At this stage, the teacher is a facilitator and a motivator as he/she facilitates the understanding of the video through brainstorming. Besides, he/she triggers students’ motivation in order to identify with the content of the video.

4.2 While-writing

While getting students’ feedback concerning their own ways of keeping healthy, the teacher creates groups of students according to their own ways of keeping healthy: exercising, balanced diet or quality sleep. In case there aren’t enough students for one topic and there are more than the required number of students for another topic, the teacher can resort to his/her skills of negotiation and persuasion in order to create equilibrium in the different groups. Once the groups are formed, students are asked to discuss the topic of their choice and write one sentence which introduces the main idea of their topic. The teacher insists that every group is required to write one single sentence which introduces the main idea of the topic they are in charge of. Obviously, students write the first sentence of their paragraphs which is the topic sentence without necessarily being introduced to a new terminology (topic sentence) which might disturb or interrupt their active involvement. Then, students read their sentences aloud and receive immediate feedback from the teacher in an implicit manner since they are not yet involved in editing. Then, students are introduced to another activity which is related to three drag and drop exercises. These exercises are based on the content of the video since each one of them reinforces one part of it; the first exercise is about exercising, the second one is about balanced diet and the third one is about quality sleep. Then, each group of students is assigned a drag and drop exercise according to the topic they are working on. Every drag and drop exercise consists of six expressions and six pictures which illustrate these expressions. Students are required to double click each expression and drag and drop it on its appropriate picture. When students drag and drop an expression on its appropriate picture, both the picture and the expression disappear in an animated way. When students’ answer is wrong, the disappearance movement does not occur and students are allowed to make as many attempts as possible. As it is illustrated in figure 1, the first drag and drop exercise which is about exercising includes six expressions and six pictures about this theme. Concerning the answers, they refer to the expressions and the pictures on figure 1 vertically and they are as follows: exercise reduces stress matches the third picture (Saagara.com, 2014), feeling of worth and self-esteem matches the fourth picture (VEA Australia – New Zealand, 2012), exercise boosts brain power corresponds to the fifth picture (JWelches, 2014), exercise reduces illness refers to the first picture (Landro, 2010), exercise improves mood matches the second picture (Healthymind786.blogspot.com, 2012) and social health refers to the sixth picture (VEA Australia – New Zealand, 2012). It is very important to note that the fourth picture about feeling of worth and self-esteem and the sixth one about social health are both taken from the video about exercising. This is done on purpose in order to reinforce the content of the video in students’ minds and at the same time help students in finding the right answer.
The second exercise reinforces the second part of the video about balanced diet and it also includes six expressions and six pictures about this theme. The answers which follow a vertical order of pictures and expressions on figure 2 are as follows: unsaturated fat refers to the fourth picture (No Excuses Health, 2013), cereals matches the third picture (The Agriculture Research Service, 2001), low nutrients refer to the sixth picture (Flickr - Photo Sharing, 2005), calcium corresponds to the fifth picture (Oregonstate.edu, 2016), omega 3 refers to the second picture (huiledekrill.fr, 2015) and vitamins and minerals refer to the first picture (huiledekrill.fr, 2015).
The third exercise reinforces the third part of the video about quality sleep and it also includes six expressions and six pictures about the theme. The answers which also follow a vertical order of pictures and expressions in figure 3 are as follows: Tech-free zone refers to the first picture (Han, 2013), wake and sleep schedule corresponds to the fourth picture (Andrew Schriber, 2015), bedtime ritual refers to fifth picture (Melbourne Medisleep, 2013), insomnia matches the sixth picture (Maharg, 2015), stop watching your clock refers to the second picture (Melbourne Medisleep, 2013) and optimal sleep environment corresponds to the third picture (stormthisdrizzle, 2015). Concerning bedtime ritual and stop watching your clock pictures, they are also taken from the third part of the video for the same reason which is stated in the first exercise.

**Exercise 3: Double click on each expression, then drag it onto its appropriate picture.**

(When your choice is correct, both the picture and the expression disappear)

- Tech-free zone
- Wake & sleep schedule
- Bedtime ritual
- Insomnia
- Stop watching your clock
- Optimal sleep environment

**Figure 3 The third exercise about quality sleep**

(Andrew Schriber, 2015; Han, 2013; Maharg, 2015; Melbourne Medisleep, 2013; stormthisdrizzle, 2015)

As it has already been said, the second activity is based on the three drag and drop exercises. These exercises are aimed to strengthen students’ involvement in the topic they are working on. At the same time, students are provided with appropriate contextual language in order to be able to write their paragraphs. When groups of students finish their exercises, they are asked to write supporting details for their topic sentence according to the content of their assigned exercises. The teacher informs students of the possibility of adding other ideas of their own. While students are writing their supporting sentences, the teacher reminds them of some linking words in case they have dealt with them before or provides them with examples of linking words according to their needs. At this stage, the teacher is a monitor who guides students and who also provides assistance when needed. When students finish writing their supporting ideas, they are again involved in a brief discussion which directs them towards the expression of their opinions, reflections, pieces of advice or suggestions.
concerning their assigned theme. Subsequently, each group of students is required to write one final sentence which expresses that without explicit reference to a concluding sentence.

4.3 Post-writing
Once students finish the writing of their paragraphs, they are required to exchange them for editing. When the editing phase is over, a student from each group volunteers to be the speaker in order to read the paragraph aloud in front of his/her peers. This publishing stage is an opportunity for all students to enlarge the scope of the topic of healthy life style again and recall the ideas of the projected video. It is at the end of the writing activity that the teacher can provide a language summary about the different components of a paragraph. It is not necessary for the teacher to spend a long period of time explaining the summary to students who are expected to understand it very easily as it confirms their former practices. It is very important to refer to the fact that the writing process activity does not necessarily end in one particular session as it can initiate a research work for more information about healthy life style. In this respect, the teacher can ask students to do research on this topic. Students may even be encouraged to seek the help of teachers of other subjects like physical education and biology. By doing so, English teaching is not only confined to the EFL classroom, but it can also be connected to other specialties. Moreover, this process writing activity can initiate a future writing lesson on how to write an article since all the paragraphs of the body are ready and that students will only be introduced to the writing of an introduction and a conclusion.

This part of the article answers this paper’s research questions. It explains that new technology strengthens the implementation of the process writing activity through appropriate contextual tools and appealing illustrative devices. Besides, the added value of technology is not only related to writing instruction, but also to the roles of both teachers and students. Teachers become facilitators and monitors who guide students in the use of digital material. As for students, they are motivated and encouraged to become responsible for their own learning which is the writing of their paragraphs.

5. Discussion
The different stages of the writing activity are discussed and the focus is mainly on the use of technology and its added value in the teaching of writing and also in the new roles it assigns for both teachers and students.

5.1 Interpretation of key findings
Piaget’s (1955, 1972) theory of cognitive constructivism which focuses on the construction of knowledge can be referred to since the process writing activity of the present article stimulates the construction of knowledge by learners through real life contexts which are presented in the video. Consequently, learners are actively involved in the process of learning especially that “a technologically enriched environment is potentially consistent with the underlying assertions of constructivism in that the learner can be an active participant in the construction of knowledge” (Tan & Subramaniam, 2006, p.100). Concerning collaboration and interaction between students, the writing activity creates the appropriate environment for Vygotsky’s (1962, 1978) social context of learning. According to him, “the learning process involves interaction with other individuals where culture and society will influence the learning” (As cited in Tan & Subramaniam, 2006, p. 99). This is true since the process writing activity requires students’ interaction and collaboration in order to write a coherent paragraph. Concerning the design of drag and drop exercises, they are based on the principles of behaviorism which are stimulus-response, associative learning and reinforcement. The drag and drop
exercises focus upon the behavior of the learner which is either reinforced or changed. When students drag and drop an expression on its appropriate image, both the image and the expression disappear in an amusing way. The disappearance movement is a reward which reinforces students’ correct choices. In case students miss the appropriate image, the disappearance movement does not occur. The absence of that reward is referred to by Woollard (2010) as extinction which is the rejection of undesired behavior by the suppression of the expected response. That is to say, when the disappearance movement does not occur in the drag and drop exercises, learners understand that their responses are rejected. On the contrary, when the disappearance movement occurs, the conditioning is sustained between stimulus and response. As it is affirmed by Woollard (2010), “behavioral modification” refers to the change in learners’ behaviors when an appropriate behavior is reinforced and an inappropriate one is ignored.

In general, the use of technology in this writing activity stimulates students’ motivation and involvement as they are introduced to real life contexts. Thanks to technology, students are also given the opportunity to interact with knowledge through images which are appealing illustrative devices. Besides, groups of students interact and cooperate with each other since the drag and drop exercises are assigned as a group work activity. As far as teachers’ and students’ roles are concerned, the use of technology in this writing activity facilitates the task for the teacher who simply guides students throughout the different stages of the writing process. As a result, students are held responsible for the construction of their own knowledge which is the writing of coherent paragraphs. It is very important to note that students are involved in the writing of the three components of a paragraph in a very smooth way and especially in an implicit manner in order to keep away from instructions and explicit teaching which usually cause boredom to students and which are not always in favor of knowledge construction. The writing activity of the present paper, therefore, reconciles pedagogy to technology as it relies on new technology for the implementation of the process based approach to writing.

6. Conclusion

This article introduces a process writing activity which makes use of new technology. The integration of new technology in this writing activity is described as effective because of the new opportunities it offers for the implementation of the process based approach to writing. Thanks to technology, students are introduced to real life contexts which increase their motivation as well as their engagement in the writing activity.

The literature review of this paper refers to the importance as well as to the difficulty of the writing skill. Then, it introduces the process based approach to writing as an example which guides and assists learners in different writing stages. The use of technology in writing instruction is another criterion which strengthens the implementation of the writing process. As for the methodological part, it introduces a case study of a writing process activity which makes use of new technology. It has been found that the use of new technology in the process writing activity enhances its different stages through the active involvement of students and efficient guidance of the teacher.

6.1 Recommendations

The examination of this paper’s case study results in some recommendations. It is very important to note that technology is not confined to particular learning skills as it can be used not only for writing, but also for the teaching of other skills and topics. Technology offers a multitude of services and devices which do not only facilitate, but reinforce the learning process. Examples of these services are web 2.0 educational tools like animations and comic strips, audio editing tools,
bookmarking and online collaboration, blogging, games, quizzes, language learning tools, mind mapping, online storage, photo editing tools, presentation tools, video editing tools, social networking tools, publishing tools, etc.

Concerning the last stage of the process writing activity which is publishing, the case study of the present paper suggests reading the paragraphs aloud to classmates and producing final versions of the writing pieces. Gura (2011) affirms that “for today’s digital natives, publishing their work in this pre-Guttenberg manner is more than just ironic – it is disappointing” (p.7). This is true since technology offers a multitude of services for the development of this final stage in order “to equate publishing with real-world products” (Ibid, p.7). For instance, technology gives the possibility for students to share their products on blogs, forums, wiki spaces, social networking web sites, etc. Since students are involved in the writing of different paragraphs, which are supposed to be the body of a future article about healthy life style, the whole class can be involved in a class publishing project on one of the aforementioned online services.

6.2 Limitations

Undoubtedly, the use of technology in teaching in general and in this writing activity in particular does not only acquire technical skills, but pedagogical ones as well. That is to say, teachers must be in possession of adequate ICT skills which enable the use of new technologies, in addition to the basic principles for the pedagogical use of new technology. Therefore, the need for teacher ICT training which focuses on both the acquisition of ICT skills and the pedagogical use of new technology is required (Lamtara, 2014).

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In the Wake of Globalization: Exploring the Teaching of English Civilization to non-Native Speakers of English in the Digital Age

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Abstract
The current research paper is an empirical study to ponder over English civilization instruction in this era of fast achievements. Being ourselves a novice teacher of English civilization module, and in collaboration with an expert of the course for thirty-years, we noticed that digital equipment is indispensable to teach the English civilization courses to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, most of whom are brilliantly manipulating most of modern technologies. This study aims at answering two main questions such as whether or not teachers of English civilization at the Department of English (Batna 2, Algeria) use computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and how CALL approach can be constructively used in delivering the same courses to digital natives. The primary goal of this work is to find out the optimal way of teaching English civilization module to EFL students in the digital (D) epoch. We opted for the ‘mixed methods’ approach to proceed the present study. This can be achieved through administering a questionnaire to EFL students at the Department of English at the University of Batna-2, Algeria, and through interviewing teachers whose field of specialization is civilization at the same department. In doing so, consistency of results can be ensured. The findings showed that the CALL approach is vitally important in teaching civilization courses to EFL students who were born digital. And most interviewees were aware of the insistent inexorableness of CALL in teaching American and British civilization lessons to EFL students under the dominance of electronic brains.

Keywords: CALL, digital natives, EFL setting, English civilization instruction
1. Introduction

Technology is increasingly growing due to the effect of globalization. Education has benefited from the advantages of such technological advances. Accordingly, McGuinness (1999) claims that technology profoundly impacts teaching and learning in a positive way. The proof is the rise of computers that has radically changed the stream of foreign language pedagogy. In pre-computation, all the operations have been conducted ‘by hand’ as shown by Falissard (2012). A formidable array of software programs has been widely employed in EFL settings such as grammar checker, e-rater and other software programs that have been used to assess students’ pieces of writing in order to facilitate the teaching learning process. From this stance, a significant point must be recognized which is that the major components of language, pedagogy, and technology are inseparably interwoven and they cannot be dissociated from each other. Within the walls of this swift technological sophistication, English civilization, being an integral part of teaching English as a foreign language, can be taught and learnt in this golden age of computers and other world-technologies. Teaching civilization to EFL students who have not been yet acquainted with such a language and culture seems to be challenging for teachers as far as the parameter of being digital natives is concerned. Therefore, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is a necessity in a globalized world. As maintained by Garrett (2009):

The explosion of the Web and the concomitant increase in power and sophistication of the tools used for finding material on it has made this kind of CALL increasingly valuable to language teachers –at least to those who have a regular access to it in their classroom/lab. (p. 6)

A sort of technological instruments that are currently available and which are connected to CALL offers civilization teachers the choice of how to make the task at hand enjoyable as well as fruitful. Henceforth, CALL can be of great avail for civilization teachers in order to provide their students with thorough instructions.

2. Literature Review

English civilization has gained perennial interest during the last decades. A vast array of opinions on how these courses should be introduced to EFL students aroused. Schlereth (1982) concurs that material culture or artifacts were the best method to teach history. Within the framework of speedy evolution of technology, Snider (1992) claims that it would inevitably dominate the learning environment in order to ensure the attainment of high quality of education. Indeed, emphasis shifted to heighten the value of films in civilization classes. For Giroux(1997): “films appear to inspire at least as much cultural authority and legitimacy for teaching specific roles, values, and ideals” ( p. 53). It follows that Giroux (1997) demonstrates the fact of movies being more than a vehicle of entertainment. Correspondingly, Bach and Donnerstag (2007) put much burden on the role of Disney films which are more representative to educational messages with amusement. Yet, another communicative outlet for students, video games, came up to catch their attention and interest in learning civilization. As revealed by Squire, DeVane, and Durga (2008), students show their detestation to history courses traditionally delivered. Thereby, video
games interestingly urge students to learn civilization courses in which a substantial portion is granted to history. Little is known in Video game-based learning as Mayo (2009) quoted in the following words “the field is still in its embryonic stages” (p. 82). However, this does not prevent one from saying: video games based-instruction has been a salient issue in many discussions. Smith (2013) proposes wargames as an innovative approach to teach the American Revolution. Likewise, Robinson (2013) insists on the games’ work in engaging students to enjoyably learn history.

In the light of what is mentioned above and apropos how to digitally teach the English civilization to EFL classes, little is said regarding the rapid progression of software packages. For example, although Pettit and Mason (2003) defines what is meant by Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) being that online discussing room in which annotations over everything are allowed, no indication of implementing such a learning environment in teaching civilization to D-generation. Just as it happens with Moreno (2013); he refers to the contribution of Interactive White Boards (IWBs) in language teaching and learning, in general, without any precision of its chief role in English Civilization module. Even Alfaki and Khamis (2014) render a definition of IWB as an emerging trend in teaching learning broadly with no accurate accentuation on its magnificent worth in civilization instruction. Withal, Nebel, Schneider, and Rey (2016) come out with the belief of mobile-based game trivia, which includes two players who are asked to answer a set of questions on different topics, as an outlet of learning. Nonetheless, they did not incline its relevance to English civilization courses, most importantly, as long the recent cutting-edge technology and D-generation are taken into account. All what formerly discussed reveals that little interest was given to English civilization pedagogy, most importantly in this period of thinking machines.

3. Methodology

In order to gain insights into how CALL is central in teaching civilization courses, a survey research is the appropriate research method for such a pinpoint target. As Nunan (1992) points out: “The purpose of a survey is generally to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes and/ or events at a single point in time” (p. 140).

a. Population

This issue of civilization instruction in a globalized world is directly addressed to both teachers as well as students of English language at the University of Batna-2, Algeria. For this reason, all the teachers of civilization (American and British) at the University of Batna-2, Algeria and students of English at the same university were selected as the target population of the present study.

b. Sample

Teachers of civilization at the Department of English at the University of Batna-2, Algeria were few. Henceforth, sampling is needless. They were all included in our study (six teachers of British and American civilization were involved in the present research).
Concerning EFL students at the University of Batna-2, it did not seem practicable to conduct our research on the entire population. For this reason, it was imperative to resort to sampling under the condition that the sample should be representative to the large population. From this stance, we opted for random sampling technique as our population was considered to be homogenous and students nearly share the same characteristics. The majority of EFL students being chosen to take part in this investigation (94.45%) aged between 18 and 25 years old. 3.63% of them were more than thirty-two (32) years old, while 1.81% is confined to those whose age was between 26 and 33 years old. Another point is worth mentioning that is the prevalence of females. They represent the percentage of approximately 92.3 % of the population as a whole whereas males emblematized only 7.7 % of the entire population.

c. Survey Instruments
Students of English at the University of Batna-2 were numerous. Surveying them through a questionnaire was practical so that the collection of a considerable amount of data has been carried out in a short time and with less effort (Dörnyei, 2003).

On the part of teachers, they were interviewed to delve into their attitudes towards civilization pedagogy and how CALL approach is useful as an instructional tool in teaching civilization to today’s generation for whom technology flows through their veins. Semi-structured interview was administered to teachers of civilization at the Department of English at the University of Batna-2 as maintained by Fontana and Frey (2005), it is considered as one of the most popular and powerful methods that can be used to understand people. Semi-structured interview permits more flexibility on the part of the interviewer and it, accordingly, avoids what is referred to by Dörnyei (2007) as being ‘ready-made questions’ that restrict the profoundness of the respondents’ answers.

d. Description of Students’ Questionnaire
Students’ questionnaire is made up of three sections. It starts up with section one which confer an overview of students’ general information such as gender and age. Then, the second section together with the last one are endeavors to provide in-depth coverage of students’ perceptions of civilization courses and the overriding role technology has in their lives and learning.

e. The Administration of Students’ Questionnaire
Before administering the questionnaire to fifty-five third year LMD (License, Master, Doctorate) students at the University of Batna-2, it has been piloted to guarantee its adequacy and reliability. Piloting data gathering tools is useful in checking the appropriateness of language used and the ordering of questions (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006). After making sure that the questions were understood, adequately structured, the questionnaire was administered to a large number of third year LMD students at the Department of English, Batna-2 University, Algeria.
f. Data Analysis
   i. Students’ questionnaire analysis
Section I: Students’ general information

Table 1 Students’ gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>25.45%</td>
<td>74.55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of EFL students were females. They constitute 74.55% of the population. However, males were few, their proportion equals only 25.45 per cent.

Table 2 Students’ age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between 18-25 years-old</td>
<td>94.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 26-33 years old</td>
<td>3.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 33 years old</td>
<td>1.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it seems to be eminent from table (2), EFL students aged between 18 and 25 years old take the lion’s share.

Section II: Students’ attitudes towards the use of technology

Table 3 Students’ ownership of computers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>[18-25], [26-33], ≥33</td>
<td>[18-25], ≥33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the table stated above, results reveal that all males (100%) have their computers either personal or not personal computers. However, females at the Department of English at the
University of Batna-2 were divided into two groups, the one owning computers presents 80.39%, and the other group not possessing computers which is of minority takes 19.61%.

**Table 4 Students’ access to Internet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>[18-25], [26-33], ≥33</td>
<td>[18-25], ≥33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown from this table, all the males of different ages at the Department of English at the University of Batna-2 have a regular access to Internet. Unlike males, 1.97% of females at the same Department do not have a regular access to Internet.

**Table 5 Students’ usage of computers in learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>[18-25], [26-33], ≥33</td>
<td>[18-25], ≥33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>80.1%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Computers in students’ lives became a precondition. This is obviously clear on the basis of results obtained in table 5. Moreover, bringing to light the fact that the majority of EFL students’ learning at the Department of English, University of Batna-2 (80.1% of males, 85.8% of females) has been built upon CALL.
Table 6 Students’ employment of other technological tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>[18-25], [26-33], ≥33</td>
<td>[18-25], ≥33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As its name suggests, today’s generation so-called ‘digital natives’ do not solely adhere to computers in their learning. However, EFL students’ answers to the sixth question revealed that digital natives not only know how to use computers, but they best make use of digital instruments as well, as they are increasingly exposed to like mobiles and tablets.

Section III: Students’ opinions on English civilization instruction

Table 7 Students’ attitudes towards the English civilization module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>[18-26], [26-33], ≥33</td>
<td>[18-26], ≥33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>85.71%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to question (8) of whether students like or dislike civilization courses, a preponderance of respondents revealed their aversion or disinterest of American and British civilization courses. The ratio of 33.9% encompasses both percentages of males and females who show intolerance to English civilization lectures.

Table 8 Students’ opinions about the causes of their ill-feeling to English civilization courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males (25.45%)</th>
<th>Females (74.55%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>[18-26], [26-33], ≥33</td>
<td>[18-26], ≥33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 indicates that most students at the Department of English at the University of Batna-2 with differing ages and who were of two genders males and females relate their disrelish to English civilization courses and lack of understanding to the unconvincing teaching materials (c) and teaching method (b) being endorsed by the teachers of English civilization classes at the University of Batna-2. While the remaining few percentage (10% out of 74.55% females) signifies that due to the inadequacy of English civilization course content, respondents’ antagonism towards such courses.

Table 9 Students’ opinions about the use of computers in learning civilization Module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>[18-26[, [26-33[, ≥33</td>
<td>[18-26[, ≥33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 9, we can notice that all the respondents, males or females of mixed ages, heavily rely on computer-based instruction. Even those who do not constantly hold computers at their disposal. They found cybercafés/Internet café as a resolution. They acknowledged the inevitability of CALL in EFL learning situations.

Open-ended question’s analysis

Respondents’ answers to this question were not fully satisfactory as they just treated the question shallowly without accurately expressing what teaching material they prefer to be connected with the teaching methods of civilization teachers. Thus, they similarly insisted on the importance of technology in general in education. A number of students (33.9%), males and females of all ages, propound the mileage of TV as an instructional tool in teaching and learning civilization courses. Thereupon, students of English at the University of Batna-2 expressed the need of educational apparatus in terms of teaching through televisions.

4. Discussion of the results obtained from students’ Questionnaire

Results obtained from Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 confirm that a larger part of today’s generation is digital native for whom technology and internet are pivotal in their lives.

As can be seen in Table 7, 8, and 9, findings display an aversion to English civilization courses in which the reason behind such a prejudice lies in that disport between teaching materials which enclose the teaching method adopted and digital natives’ learning styles and preferences. This is what can be spotted with reference to the responses of EFL students at the University of Batna-2, Algeria to the last question apropos their opinions about how to prefer the English civilization course be taught. Hereof, students of English at the University of Batna-2
unveiled their called-for need to boost the learning and the teaching, of course, of British or American civilization lessons through grasping the opportunities offered by the expeditious advancement of technology.

5. Data Analysis of Teachers’ Interview

See Table 10 (Appendices C) for more information on the interviewees, their gender, age, which degree was held by them, besides their field of specialization. In this study, six teachers of British and American civilization module have been interviewed by the researcher. Three teachers were males whose ages were either between [35-45[, or more than 45 years old, and the remaining three others were females aged between either [25-35[, or [35-45[ years old. As for their qualification, all the three male teachers were doctors. Per contra the situation differs with the female teachers, two of whom are MA’s degree holders, whilst the other one is a doctoral student. Only one teacher (T6) whose field of specialization was applied linguistics and TEFL. The others (T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5) were specialized in civilization and literature. These information obtained about the interviewees were of a great benefit for the researcher. From here, the go-ahead was given to keep up on the possible effects of gender, age, background knowledge of teachers of civilization at the Department of English, University of Batna2- on teachers’ feedback in teaching British or American civilization modules.

Table 11 Teachers’ PCs ownership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings from this table revealed that all the teachers interviewed own computers. It does not matter whether it is a personal computer or it is not. What is important is that all the teachers of civilization at the Department of English, University of Batna-2 took possession of computers.

Table 12 Teachers’ attitudes towards the integration of technology into classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>Technology User</th>
<th>Non-User of Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>16.66%</td>
<td>83.34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is shown in this figure, only 16.66% of respondents were technology users. The remaining 83.34% of English civilization teachers do not bring technology into their classrooms. Teachers who were non-users of technology (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) reported that they almost do not
incorporate technology with their teaching despite the fact that they have computers. Yet, the same teachers declared that technology in our days is considered to be the centerline of education as a whole. However, under certain circumstances, hardship is the consequence when it comes to the real application of technology on the teaching field.

**Table 13 Teachers’ reliance on CALL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>Positive Attitudes towards Computer-Aided Learning</th>
<th>Negative Attitudes towards Computer-Aided Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the interviewed teachers of civilization (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6) shared a common view towards the use and utility of a computer in learning. They rehearsed that it is compulsory to have a laptop especially in this era of globalization. Regards to how and for what purpose teachers have recourse to CALL when teaching the English civilization to EFL students, six teachers of English civilization at the University of Batna-2 upheld nearly similar views which obviously bear some resemblance. The only teacher who is technology user (T1) disbelieved in traditionally teaching EFL students about civilization, which is a broad term in its meaning, without making use of any sort of modern contrivances. Furthermore, teachers known to be non-users of technology (T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6) dismissed the idea of blindly depending on lecture method to teach either American or British lessons in EFL contexts. This is very evident in T6’s speech: “... what a ridiculous thing for any teacher to stand up in front of her students; just talking about what happened and purely recounting the events of history without glamorizing them with any technological supplies. Alas, it is absurd!” Along with T6, T4 and T3 added “…it is awkward to speak of, or imagine the civilization course being British or American in a century of modernity without at least glimpsing to technology; however, it happened several times under certain circumstances at our department to do so”. Almost all the teachers of civilization agreed upon the point of implementing technology in civilization instruction as an obligation and they did not deny the fact that they all enormously rely on CALL, even those who were non-technology users inside their classrooms. Their self-learning was highly appertained to CALL. On that account, they all did not neglect the utmost contribution of CALL in their learning about civilization as well as in their preparation of course plans.
Teachers’ justification for not using technology inside classroom was the huge challenge of its applicability in large classes of more than 150 students per class. All the teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6) credited the restrictions of employing technology into classrooms to the administrative conditions. They made mention of the lack of computers and overhead projectors which may directly hinder the teaching learning process in general and the completion of English civilization schedule in particular. In addition, they all ascribed the over crowdedness of classes as one of the major constraints in delivering the English civilization instruction through technology. Furthermore, one teacher (T6) confessed that because of she is a misassigned teacher. She has not received hands-on training in both technology and in teaching English civilization to EFL students as a discipline. Wherefore, she became demotivated to enthusiastically teach civilization studies by contextualizing theoretical facts accorded to civilization.
Table 15 Teachers’ opinions on time allocated to English civilization module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ answers</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Insufficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>00%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With reference to table 10, all the teachers of civilization module (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6) stated that studying British civilization module for one hour and a half per week is unsatisfactory. Then as well, the allotment earmarked to American civilization courses is deficient making allowance for the necessity to exalt the ways of promoting civilization instruction through incorporating technology. In an EFL context, learning about the civilization of others principally in this time of digitalization is not an easy task to handle (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6). Nearly similar perspective towards time apportioned to English civilization module(s) was shared by almost all the teachers of English civilization at the Department of English, University of Batna-2, Algeria. They all agreed on the point that time allocated to both British civilization American civilization modules per week was insufficient to cover at least what is basic.

Table 16 Teachers’ viewpoints about how to teach the English civilization module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ suggestions</th>
<th>Teaching civilization through online courses</th>
<th>Teaching civilization through electronic booklets</th>
<th>Teaching Civilizatio in a classical way</th>
<th>Teaching through collocations as games installed in computer s</th>
<th>Integrating classroom learning environment and virtual learning environment</th>
<th>Teaching the English Civilizatio modules through computati onal thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
<td>01 (T1)</td>
<td>02 (T2+T5)</td>
<td>01 (T3)</td>
<td>01 (T4)</td>
<td>01 (T5)</td>
<td>01(T6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each respondent held a different perspective towards the optimum way about how the civilization instruction should be delivered. T1 believed that online courses are sufficient to teach
civilization in this span of technological advances. According to him, such a technology device sounds powerful in terms of lowering distance and facilitating the teaching learning process doubtlessly in an EFL environment. On the same path, T2 and T5 respectfully proposed electronic booklets as an effective instructional means to be ratified by most teachers of English civilization. T5, in addition, suggested another instructive tactics that is the integration of inside classroom instruction and virtual learning environment. In contrast, T3 firmly stuck to the traditional way of teaching as the suitable and fast teaching method to convey a considerable amount of data in a record time. Furthermore, T4 claimed that teaching through collocations as games installed in computers tends to be the best strategy for creating a native like environment whilst learning the foreign civilization and at the same time this strategy amazingly attracts the attention and the interest of EFL students to learn English civilization courses. Finally, T6 bore in mind a splendid idea which is instructing English civilization courses by accentuating computational thinking that rightfully suits digital natives’ requirements.

6. Discussion of Data Obtained from the Interview

All the teachers of civilization exhibited positive attitudes towards the vital role of Computer-assisted language learning in teaching civilization courses as far as learning requirements of today’s generation who were born digital are concerned. One teacher (T1) notified that “CALL is a must in education; but in the teaching/learning of civilization to EFL students is a double must”. As a matter of course, the other teachers reaffirmed the substantiality of CALL in teaching and learning British and American studies to EFL students. Findings extracted from this interview with teachers of civilization at the Department of English, University of Batna2, Algeria provide evidence that there is a pressing need for the amalgamation of inside classroom instruction and computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Creating spaces of interaction, for instance blogs, seems a pertinent solution to our study’s problem under investigation.

7. Conclusion

To date, technology is a must in teaching, and is a double must in teaching civilization to EFL students. Dissociating technology from education appears like dissociating a soul from a body. It is incrementally becoming the air we breathe. There is consistency of results obtained from the triangulation method used in the present research paper, encompassing two instruments the questionnaire and the interview, in order to ensure that the weakness of one research instrument can be compensated for by the strength of another research tool. In both cases, a necessitous demand of implementing highly developed technology in teaching civilization to digital natives was seemingly evident. Thence, we feel the paramount need to sensitize teachers of English language in general and civilization teachers in particular to intensify their efforts to explore the newest strategies and teaching instruments so that an efficiently teaching of civilization courses in this D span to D generation can be assured.
8. Recommendations for Further Research

In this paper, we distill a number of implications that address the future of English civilization instruction within the framework of technological evolvement and research in civilization pedagogy in general.

Bringing on a virtual learning environment through tablets-based instruction or mobile-based instruction would substantially engage students to learn civilization courses. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning for instance can be asset in delivering the subject matter of civilization with regard to the crucial role of mobiles in our lives. Phones, mainly smart ones, can not only be means of communication, but rather, they serve particularly other functions. Smart phones are equipped with a myriad of applications (apps) and that of games is one. ‘A mobile-based game trivia’ may be the best example to illustrate how it is possible and useful to teach civilization courses by exploiting such innovative creations resulting from the fleshing out of technology.

Another point is worth mentioning which is the utilization of Interactive White Boards (IWBs) in combination with tablets to learn civilization courses. Indeed, IWB is a smart board that can facilitate teaching and learning in English language classes through driving today’s generation of ‘digital natives’ to digitally learn the foreign language. Similarly, tablets proffer the possibility of learning and receiving a great amount of information with just one tap of finger on the screen enables every single individual to watch videos, images, and whatever needed database. Consequently, drawing on all what is referred to above, one may deduce that Interactive White Boards can be outfitted with tablets. In the sense that tablets are more practical in educational environments, for example without moving from seats, students are able to share with either each other or with their teacher any kind of data/input. What must be recognized from what is previously spoken of is that tablets and Interactive White Boards promote collaborative learning between teachers and students through providing digital instruction on the touch screens. In this case both these two instruments, tablets and Interactive White Boards, make use of various types of databases, and meet students’ requirements to effectively learn. Subsequently again, it is essential to shed light on the eminent role of such finger-driven devices that would certainly help EFL students for whom technology is a must-have in enriching and cultivating their knowledge background of the English civilization without which it tends to be hard to widen and stretch the boundaries of their knowledge as foreign learners of English language.

Moving on to another suggestion that seems to be of no less value that is the delivery of online instructions. That virtual space in which learners share their ideas, thoughts, and express themselves with no restrictions is referred to as being a virtual learning environment. The term of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) might be used interchangeably with another term called Managed Learning Environment (MLE). Nevertheless, there is a difference between them. At the one extreme, in VLE, the choice to decide upon students’ position is entirely theirs which means students themselves who decide whether to opt for individual interaction, or a group one or to actively interact with the teacher or even all of them. At the other extreme, MLE englobes
the VLE and other administrative areas like enrolment and so on. Switching from one learning environment to another without dropping the entire MLE might be useful since VLE can at least partly compensate with MLE. The whole community can be brought together through VLE. Hence, it encourages more reflection and in doing so, shy students who barely push themselves to participate in face-to-face classroom interaction are given a chance to exploit the potentials. Online courses together with managed instructions would productively accomplish the primary goals of English civilization task.

**Bout the Authors:**

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**References**


### Appendices

**Appendix A: Students’ Questionnaire**

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed as a part of an investigation carried out in an attempt to pinpoint how the American and British civilization courses are taught at the Department of English at the University of Batna-2, Algeria in this era of swift growth of technologies. Your answers would be mentioned anonymously in our research paper. Please you are kindly asked to answer the following questions as frankly and thoughtfully as possible.

**Section I: General Information**

1. **Gender:**
   
   Male [ ]
   
   Female [ ]

2. **Age:** Is your age:
   
   Between [18-25] years old
   
   Between [26-33] years old
   
   More than 30 years old
Section II: Students’ Attitudes towards the Use of Technology

3. Do you have a computer?
   Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Do you have a regular access to internet?
   Yes ☐ No ☐

5. Do you use computers in learning?
   Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Do you rely on only computers/laptops when you learn?
   Yes ☐ No ☐

7. If no, what are the other technological devices you use?
   Mobiles ☐ Tablets ☐ Both ☐

   Others …………………………………………………………………….

Section III: Students’ Perceptions about the English Civilization Courses

8. Do you enjoy American and British civilization courses?
   Yes ☐ No ☐

9. If no, why?
   a/ The course content is all about historical facts ☐
   b/ Teachers’ teaching method is uninteresting ☐
   c/ Teaching material is inadequate ☐

10. Does your teacher of English civilization (whether British/ American) bring up technology into classroom?
    Yes ☐ No ☐

11. Do you use computers in learning about the English civilization (British or American)?
    Yes ☐ No ☐

12. How do you prefer the English civilization courses be taught?
    __________________________________________________________________________
    __________________________________________________________________________

Thank you a lot for your cooperation

Appendix B: Teachers’ Interview

Dear teachers,

I am currently conducting a small-scale research that strives to gain insights on how the English civilization module (whether British or American) is taught to today’s generation being
surrounded by multiples of electronic thinking brains. Your answers will be mentioned anonymously to fulfill the aims of the researchers’ investigation. You are kindly asked to answer the following questions as frankly and thoughtfully as possible.

1. Do you own a laptop?
2. Do you integrate any kind of technology in your teaching?
3. Why do not you constantly rely on technology-based instructions inside your classrooms?
4. Is time allocated to English civilization module per week sufficient to cover the essence of such courses?
5. In your opinion, is Computer-Assisted Language Learning beneficial in English civilization instructions?
6. In your opinion, what teaching material do you suggest is best to be used in teaching civilization courses to D generation?

Thank you a lot for your cooperation

**Appendix C**

**Table 10  General Information about Teachers of English Civilization**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers of civilization module</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[25-35]</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[35-45]</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>66.66%</td>
<td>66.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>PhD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers of civilization module</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>00%</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field of specialization</td>
<td>Civilization and Literature</td>
<td>Civilization and Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50.02%</td>
<td>33.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you a lot for your cooperation
The Integration of Professional Translators’ 21st Century Profile in Teaching Translation at Batna University

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Abstract
The present study aims at developing a translational language teaching model that focuses on both linguistic knowledge and other 21st century skills. Translators are alleged to possess a specific profile that is compatible with the demands of the current epoch. Ergo, this study is targeted towards inquiring (1) whether the 21st century translating competences required abroad apply to the Algerian milieu, (2) the translating skills that Algerian professional translators possess, (3) the role of these skills in improving trainee translators’ translating competences, and (4) whether equipping translation trainees with these skills compensate for the non-mastery of languages used in translation. As a start, this article pinpoints the variegated roles of translators in the wake of globalisation. Moreover, it highlights the concentric role of Competency-Based Approach in designing a feasible curriculum for translation. Therefore, after ascertaining the fact that Batna Translation Department adheres to the traditional teaching of translation, and after examining the profiles of Algerian public service, freelance, and part-time translators through questionnaires, we devised a Translational Language Teaching Model that incorporates both the teaching of languages and 21st century translation competencies. Doing so may enhance learners’ translation profiles to be multilingual decoders who can perform other mediatory tasks in three languages similarly. Yet, Algerian translators’ mother tongue is Algerian Arabic, and none of the aforementioned languages plays that role, for they are all taught as second/foreign languages. Thus, the suggested Translational Language Teaching model is deliberated to be a ‘realistic’ programme for teaching the translation whose initial aim is to overcome translators’ weaknesses.

Keywords: 21st century skills, competency-based approach, curriculum, linguistic knowledge, mother tongue, translational language teaching model
1. Introduction
The 21st century coincides with the advent of globalisation. Indeed, facets of globalisation, such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), are gathering momentum each day which urges humans to keep pace with this development. Translation is one example where different institutions (companies, offices…) are reckoning with recruiting professional translators who possess competencies that are compatible with the demands of the century.

It is beyond all disputes that new translators are linguistically knowledgeable, and may be acquainted with the particular information knowledge especially when it comes to translating technical texts. However, they tend to lack the required profile that goes hand in hand with the current growing markets. In a world where every aspect of life is interconnected as if it is a small village, professional translators are supposed to be knowledgeable, communicative, technologically-oriented, autonomous, and aware. Therefore, they need to transcend the act of rendering texts from source languages to target ones to performing and mastering these skills.

Nonetheless, new Algerian trainee translators find themselves doing the job inefficiently because they are taught the linguistic knowledge and structures of languages. They (1) do not master the languages (Arabic, French, and English) they are taught since none is their mother tongue, and (2) they are not well-equipped as far as other competences are concerned such as communicative competence, cultural competence, pragmatic competence, and so on. The current empirical study is based upon other studies namely Sakwe’s (2015), which tries to elicit professional translators’ 21st century profile. This study aims at ascertaining that competences based upon abroad do exist in Algeria, and at eliciting the required skills that Algerian professional translators rely on in their profession.

Doing so acknowledges the concentric role of these skills in keeping pace with the velocity of the century, and to find ways to bolster translators’ training by means of integrating 21st century competencies in curricula design for translation.

Our principal objective is to propose a rational Translational Language Teaching Model that, in addition to teaching languages, takes into account the need for balanced mastery of languages and variegated competencies and language-specific skills in all languages in order to better train translators and to prepare them for professionalism.

2. Literature Review
The substance consulted in the literature reveals the nature of translation as an evolving concept. As different people do not know all languages, translation is resorted to in order to facilitate understanding among and across languages, and to ensure transferability of information among and across different nations throughout different generations. Translation is defined in the Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary as “The process of changing something that is written or spoken into another language.” In the same vein, Namdari and Shahrokhi (2015) define
translation as a tool of rendering a discourse, be it written or spoken, from a source language (SL) to its equivalent mode in a target language (TL). Yet, these definitions cover both modes of language (writing and speech) despite the fact that changing speech from one language into another is the job of the interpreter.

Translation is not an easy task. Indeed, it is not accessible by all individuals since it undergoes a complex process that only translators master such as finding terminology, possessing knowledge of the topic, finding equivalences, being linguistic, communicative, cultural, textual, pragmatic, stylistic, and so on. However, the majority of translators tend to know, but not necessarily master, the languages they are translating into, and they may lack different translating skills that donate value to translators in the current world. That is why translators are believed to be “performative translators” (Uwajeh, 2001) because they transformed from being ‘translators’ of texts into ‘outperformers’ by adopting additional competencies.

The most challenging task in translating is when translators do not find equivalences in the TL. Indeed, this is attributed to the nature of languages which, according to Culler (1976, as cited in Namdari & Shahrokh, 2015), vary in terms of their concepts due to the fact that each language “organizes the world differently” (p. 68). Discourse is shaped differently in different languages that overlap with different cultures and with different social communities; therefore, it is commonly believed that the more complexity in concepts is, the more challenging translation becomes.

2.1. Evolving Concept

The concept of translation is in constant change. It was viewed as being (1) translator traitor, (2) equivalence, and (3) printed book, which shifted into totally distant extremes which are respectively: (1) chief negotiator, (2) cultural turn, and (3) digital (Sigismondi, 2016).

First, the role of the translator was considered to be merely ‘renders’ of texts from SL to TL by giving it away secretly and from distance without being apparent; that is translators used to be absent in the TL. However, Venturi (2008, as cited in Sigismondi, 2016) claims the concentric role of translators as invisible connectors who need to navigate and connect the different layers of texts; they are encouraged to have their impressions in TL.

Second, transferring meaning from SL to TL used to be entirely dependent on equivalence, for the essence of translation was pondered over to be analogous in the sense that translators are alleged to find the corresponding terminology in TL that matches that of the SL. Nevertheless, the pendulum swung to another tradition that posits the prospects of the dynamic transfer between languages. Indeed, translators can be creative especially when exact equivalences do not exist, or when they generate equivocal meanings. Therefore, since language and culture are inseparable, translators are encouraged to account for culture when translating, for something in the source culture is better transferred by referring to what matches it from the target culture (such as sayings, idioms,…) instead of simply exchanging languages.
Third, the evolving position of technology ushered in the digital nature of translation instead of the printed book. Nowadays, an amalgam of technological software and tools are resorted to in order to ease the task of translation in terms of time and effort. Thus, instead of wasting time and putting more effort on writing the translated text, technology save it all and allows translators to do the job from distance. Ergo, the tradition of printed works almost vanished and is substituted by digital ones (Doherty, as cited in Sigismondi, 2016).

2.2. The Roles of Translators in the 21st Century

The 21st century is shaped to keep pace with the requirements of our interrelated world. The role of translators shifted as well from transferring meanings between languages to a more sophisticated cluster of professions: they become ‘language services providers’. Indeed, the requirements of this epoch dictate to translators to be performative actors who possess a set of skills and competences that shape their 21st century profile. Gouadec (2007, as cited in Sakwe, 2015) pinpoints some of these skills:

an information management expert, technician, terminologist, phraseologist, translator, adapter, proof reader, reviser, quality control expert, post editor, editor, graphic design expert and Web page designer, technical writer, Website designer, Web page integrator, file manager, macro-command writer and in some cases IT specialist, all rolled into one. (p. 88)

Besides, Haller and Ulrych (2005) opine that professional translation involves “multiple forms of communication once considered as lying on the periphery of what was considered ‘translation proper’: activities such as technical writing, editing, language consultancy and screen translation, for instance, are becoming core components of a translator’s day-to-day practice” (p. 21).

Therefore, Sawke (2015) depends on these definitions to claim that translation requires not only language skills, but authentic situations as well where translators improve their translation skills through “experiencing realistic professional working methods” (p. 88). That is why it is evident to train translators on the basis of preparing them to the real world, through exposing them to languages that they master especially their mother tongue, and through embedding the required competencies in the training programme. Doing so in the institutions calls for Competency-Based Approach.

2.3. Competency-Based Approach

Competency-Based Approach (CBA) is an approach used to teach and learn concrete competencies in order to generate performers who possess and master valuable skills and knowledge (Everhart, 2014). Teaching/learning through CBA requires a great commitment from the part of the teacher; s/he is responsible to achieve one component of the desired learning goal which is developing learners’ competencies. Doing so requires focusing upon, and dealing with,
the required competencies separately and thoroughly.

This approach is applicable to many fields among which we mention translation. Translation has been taught traditionally in the sense that instruction is directed towards the use of languages used in translating texts. However, mastery of these languages and the skills needed to practice the profession of translation are missing in the training period. Ergo, translators have, then, to self-improve in accordance with the requirements of the job.

Hence, CBA coupled with the integration of what professional translators are experiencing in the globalised 21st century in curricula design for translation, is a first step towards allowing learners to have a sound training that they need in developing their professional skills to be prepared for the job. This objective is framed in the proposition of a Translational Language Teaching Model wherein language skills are intertwined with other mediatory tasks.

3. The study

The current study is an empirical investigation on the applicability of the 21st century profile required abroad to Algerian translators, and on extracting Algerian professional translators’ required skills in order to incorporate them in teaching translation and in translators’ training. It is an attempt to design a realistic Translational Language Teaching Model that focuses upon conquering translators’ fallacies, and that bolsters the teaching of the required competencies in all taught languages.

4. Methodology

The researcher needs to refer to triangulation of approaches since text analysis is subjected to qualitative analysis; whereas statistical data processing undergoes quantitative analysis. First, curriculum designed for 3rd year students of translation at Batna University and students’ competences revealed in Mansouri’s study (2005) are qualitatively analysed through text analysis. This allows us to ascertain the fact that translation is taught in terms of linguistic knowledge only. Second, the study entirely relies upon data gathered via case study opinion questionnaire administered to 38 professional translators among whom 33 are contacted via the professional network “Viadeo”, and five are from the researcher’s wilaya (Tebessa). This is established in order to detect whether the skills derived abroad (Sawke, 2015) are applicable in Algeria, and in order to extract Algerian language services providers’ skills needed in the 21st century. Thus, we adhere to the quantitative approach where results are obtained through statistical methods and processed through SPSS.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) consists of six sections. The first gets the profile of professional translators, the second, third, fourth, and fifth sections consist of elements adapted from Sawke’s study in order to answer our first question and to elicit, respectively, language-specific communication skills in professional translation, Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools used by professional translators, types of translated materials, and language activities as add-ons. The last section tries to answer the second question by extracting Algerian professional
translators’ required competencies that are not mentioned in the previous study.

After having identified the deficiencies in translation curriculum and defined sub-competencies needed in the translation process, principles for sound training are set and relationships between them are established in order to incorporate them in a teaching/training programme that allows future translators to achieve translation competencies and professionalism with a 21st century profile.

5. Analyses and Discussions
5.1. Analysis and Discussion of the Curriculum

The curriculum designed for 3rd year students of translation at Batna University consists of the following subjects (modules):

Table 1 Curriculum designed for translation-3rd year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects (Modules)</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation Arabic-French &amp; Arabic</td>
<td>Translating texts between Arabic-French-Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation Arabic-English &amp; English-Arabic</td>
<td>Translating texts between Arabic-English-Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic &amp; French Lingual Improvement</td>
<td>Improvement of oral proficiency in Arabic &amp; French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic &amp; French Specilisation</td>
<td>Languages for Specific Purposes &amp; focus on technical terminologies and jargons of different specialised texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Linguistic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies to Translation</td>
<td>Methodological aspects of translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informatique</td>
<td>Using Computer-Assisted Tools in translation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that the translation curriculum focuses mainly on language patterns, technical translation, technological aids, and oral proficiency. It is beyond all disputes that it deals with the core knowledge; however, it overlooks a variety of skills that translators (3rd year students) may need in doing their job such as communicative, pragmatic, stylistic, and cultural competences. Besides, though these students are taught, in a way, some of the computer-based technologies, they still lack the adequate mastery of the tools that meet the requirements of translating.

5.2. Analysis and Discussion of Students’ Competences (Mansouri, 2005)

In her Magister thesis, Mansouri (2005) relies upon 3rd year first semester exam in Arabic-English-Arabic Translation in order to dissect 30 students’ skills after three years of instruction (under-graduation). She analysed students’ translations of both texts by means of Waddington’s holistic method of evaluation (2001). She evaluated students’ competencies on the basis of two five-level scales in both translations (Arabic-English-Arabic) (Tables 2 and 3)

Table 2 Description of Arabic-English translation levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Accuracy of transfer of ST content</th>
<th>Expression of the target language (TL)</th>
<th>Dealing with translation problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The Integration of Professional Translators’ 21st Century Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Comprehension of the ST</th>
<th>Accuracy of transfer of ST content</th>
<th>Expression of the target language (TL)</th>
<th>Dealing with translation problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Complete and deep understanding of the source text’s content and characteristics</td>
<td>Complete transfer of source text information; only minor revision needed to reach professional standard.</td>
<td>Almost all the translation reads like a piece originally written in English, there may be minor grammatical, lexical, or spelling errors.</td>
<td>successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Almost Complete understanding of the source text’s content and characteristics; only some subtle details are overlooked.</td>
<td>Almost Complete transfer; there may be one or two insignificant inaccuracies; requires certain amount of revision to reach professional standard.</td>
<td>Large sections read like a piece originally written in English, there are a number of grammatical, lexical, or spelling errors.</td>
<td>Almost completely successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Many comprehension gaps are perceivable.</td>
<td>Transfer of the general idea(s) but with a number of lapses in accuracy; needs considerable revision to reach professional standard.</td>
<td>Certain parts read like a piece originally written in English, but others read like a translation; there are a considerable number of grammatical, lexical, or spelling errors.</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Considerable comprehension gaps.</td>
<td>Transfer undetermined by serious inaccuracies; thorough revision required to reach professional standard.</td>
<td>Almost the entire text read like a translation; there are continual number of grammatical, lexical, or spelling errors.</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Failure in comprehension of the source text.</td>
<td>Totally inadequate transfer of ST content; the translation is not worth revising.</td>
<td>The candidate reveals a total lack of ability to express himself adequately in English</td>
<td>Totally inadequate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Waddington (2001, as cited in Mansouri, 2005, p. 143-144)

Table 3 Description of English-Arabic translation levels

According to Mansouri (2005), 3rd year students’ competences are poor since students in translating the first text seem not to transcend the third level of Table 2. Besides, in translating the second text, they show serious errors, inadequate expression, poor style, and poor comprehension of the ST content. She attributes the failure in the latter case to the fact that the TL is the students’ mother tongue. This is true to the extent that students do not have a firm command of the Arabic language since we consider it as a Second Language and since the Algerian students’ mother tongue is Algerian Arabic.
5.3. Analyses and Discussion of the Questionnaire

- **Description of the sample**

  The sample consists of 38 translators among whom 42.1% are females and 57.9% are males (Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4 Participants’ gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five respondents (13.16%) are from the researcher’s Wilaya (Tebessa), and 33 (86.84%) are from other Wilayas. Their ages range from 25 to 71 years old, and they have been working in the field of translation for 1 to 42 years. They have different qualifications among which magister is the most frequent one (71.1%). The sample is a variety of translators (public service, part-time, in-house, Freelance...) from different institutions (companies, Public Offices of Official Translation...). The majority (89.47%) of the sample translators work for Professional Office of Official Translation; whereas the others (10.53%) work for a variety of companies and ministries. (See Table 5 in Appendix B)

- **Language-specific communication skills in professional translation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5 Professional translators’ attitudes towards language-specific skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample professional translators’ responses rank language-specific communication skills as being very important (41.70%) and important (44.94).
Figure 1 Importance of language-specific communication skills

All language-specific communication skills are important with varying degrees, but the major important ones are linguistic accuracy (81.58%), terminological correctness (73.68%), and textual conventions (71.05%)

Figure 2 High-frequency practiced skills

- Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools

Table 6 Professional translators’ responses on the use of terminological software

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>28.95</td>
<td>71.05</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of translators (71.05%) disagree with using technological software, for, according to them, they cannot replace human translators, and since they are not adequate in the sense that they provide word-for-word translations. Besides, they agree upon the fact that translators’ indubitable competence and command of their expertise determine the good profile of translators. Nevertheless, only 28.95% acknowledge the beneficial role of terminological software such as Google Translate, Power Translator, Babylon, and Word Magic; since they assist them in difficult situations and in practice.
The majority of translators (76.32%) respond that they do use technological tools such as Dictionaries (Oxford, Cambridge, technical, medical…) and Global and Meta-glossaries, because they find them helpful in finding appropriate and specific terminology. However, the other portion of the sample (23.68%) does not use them since some consider themselves experts in their fields while others practice translation as a hobby.

### Table 7 Professional translators’ responses on the use of terminological tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>76,32</td>
<td>23,68</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this section reveal that these types of texts are sometimes carried out in the field (25.15%) while 22.22% are often encountered.

### Types of translated materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Types of texts</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage of high-frequency skill (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34,21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Writing reports</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>57,89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Contracts and agreements</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39,47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Scientific reports</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44,74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Budgets</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>65,79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Press releases</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Bid notices</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42,10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Programmes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>65,79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Précis writing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>65,79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Speeches</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60,53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63,16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34,21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Treatises</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28,95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Diplomatic notes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47,37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Laws and decrees</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42,10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>interviews</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47,37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Press agency reports</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44,74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Exposés</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55,26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Average Total is 144, 152, 172, 85, 131, and 684.

| Percentage (%) | 21,05 | 22,22 | 25,15 | 12,43 | 19,15 | 100   |

The results of this section reveal that these types of texts are sometimes carried out in the field (25.15%) while 22.22% are often encountered.
The Integration of Professional Translators’ 21st Century Profile

Figure 3 Frequency of translating types of texts

The frequently translated materials are correspondence (34.21%), writing reports (57.89%), contracts and agreements (39.47%), speeches (60.53%), presentations (63.16%), laws and decrees (42.10%), interviews (47.37%), and Exposés (55.26%). However, scientific reports (44.74%), budgets (65.79%), press releases (50%), bid notices (42.10%), diplomatic notes (47.37%) are rarely or never practiced.

Figure 4 High-frequency of translating types of texts

- Language activities as add-ons

Table 9 Add-ons practiced by professional translators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Translation Add-ons</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage of high-frequency skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Writing reports</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Re-writing texts</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Writing administrative correspondences and business letters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Writing of scientific reports</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Localisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>DTP page layout</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Terminology work</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>68.42%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Special language studies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Writing original texts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63.16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Technical writing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>78.95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>71.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Managing new language technologies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55.26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Add-ons that translators practice in addition to their job are sometimes (23.83%) adhered to while they are very often (21.49%) carried out.

**Figure 5 Frequency of Language add-ons**

The frequently carried out add-ons are writing reports (34.21%), re-writing texts (36.84%), writing administrative correspondences and business letters (39.47%), terminology work (68.42%), interpretation (71.05%), public relation work (68.42%), supervision of trainees (65.79%).

**Figure 6 High-frequency practiced add-ons**

- **Other skills**

  **Table 10 Other or no other skill**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Other skills</th>
<th>No other skills</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>13.16</td>
<td>86.84</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost all translators (86.84%) do not mention any other skills, apart from those mentioned in the questionnaire by the researcher. Only 13.16% of them add some necessary skills of the 21st century translator; they are:

- Cultural Knowledge especially when working with different countries which have different accents.
- Reading all kinds of books
- Listening to TV and radio in foreign language
- Learning new neologisms
- Experience
- Respect deadlines given to clients
- Secrecy of translated information

6. Summary of Findings

- Going through the content of curriculum designed for translation uncovers the fact that it focuses mainly on linguistic dimensions, technical terminology, and oral improvement in two languages but English. Exposing learners to such content and improving their pronunciations are insufficient. The curriculum should focus instead on training them to have firm mastery and good command of the three languages taught, be it written or oral, without prioritising some over the other(s); and on generating a good quality of translation graduates’ proficiency, adaptability and employability (Gabr, 2001a).
- The results drawn from Mansouri’s study confirm the reflection of the ‘poor’ curriculum.
- All sample translators have qualifications and training in translation (Arabic, French, and English) or Language Sciences. This means that they all have language background, and that the field of translation is not interdisciplinary because it does not enroll people from other fields.
- All sample translators revealed the absence of any activities that have to do with publishing. This is an indication that translators do not have enough training as far as writing and research methodology are concerned.
- The results show that the major important language-specific communication skills are linguistic accuracy, terminological correctness, and textual conventions (71.05%). This indicates the impact of the curriculum which focuses on linguistic aspects of the languages.
- Professional translators opine that they practice other add-ons; however, these activities are carried out because translators have training within linguistics and oral improvement subjects. It is undeniable that the regular practice of these activities stimulates language competences, but there are other vital competencies that reflect self-aware autonomous translators. Therefore, the teaching of the other new skills within the scheme of Competency-Based Approach is pivotal in translator training.
• Although translator training includes teaching CAT, still the majority of translators refuse, and are not familiar with, the use of terminological software. However, the majority uses print terminological tools mainly dictionaries and glossaries. This fact dictates embedding technologies as an integral competence in teaching translation.

• Few professional translators (13.16%) proclaim reading, listening to TV and radio, and learning new neologisms as essential activities. This reveals the paramount importance attributed to learners’ autonomy in teaching translation.

• Few translators (13.16%) add that respecting deadlines given to clients and secrecy are important factors that should be accounted for since translation, like any other job, has its ethics. Therefore, Ethics of the job should also be part of translators’ training.

7. Discussion of Findings

Acquainting trainee translators with the linguistic background, pronunciation improvement, and some computer training as done in the investigated curriculum is not enough to generate well-equipped translators. Ergo, the need for integrating 21st century profile is patent in this study.

The current inquiry reveals that only ‘few’ skills, from Sakwe’s study (2015), are possessed by Algerian professional translators. Nevertheless, Sakwe, other several researchers (Hurtado, 1996; Hatim & Mason, 1997; Neubert, 2000; Schaffner, 2000; Olivia, 2000; Kelly, 2007; Šeböková, 2010 and PACTE, 2011), and the European Master’s in Translation (EMT expert group, 2009) proclaimed that all competences mentioned in the questionnaire were positively established in the sample professional translators they have dealt with.

As pointed out by Uwajeh (2001), translators should be trained with transformative skills that fit the 21st century translation market. Today’s translators are alleged to be ‘language services providers’; that is, in addition to linguistic competences, translators should possess extra skills such as communicative, pragmatic, cultural, intercultural, and technological competencies.

Therefore, a variety of language competencies should be the principal concern of translation institutions in general, and of Batna Translation Department in particular. This is clearly revealed in many studies; Gonzalez (2004, as cited in Sakwe, 2015) posited that it is high time to adjust to the demands imposed on translation through teaching trainee translators “not only through written texts, but also in the oral and non-verbal” (p. 98). This claim scaffolds our assertion of fostering the aforementioned competencies that account for the element of native culture and target culture. It can be achieved by teaching through authentic materials such as TV and radio talk, shows, e-mail, reading, and so on. To cut it short, in their Training the Language Services Provider for the New Millennium, Haller and Ulrych (2002) stated that “Nowadays students need to be trained for the much wider variety of roles summed up in the phrase, ‘language services provider.’” (p. 9)
Knowing that translation goes beyond the act of transforming texts between languages, it is imperative that we make up our fallacies, and that we avoid falling in the trap of reductionism (Sakwe, 2015). Ergo, these considerations throughout this paper shape and determine the way translation ought to be taught/learnt. In addition, the present study found patent results that would add new insights and data to the literature.

8. Recommendations

Though the results drawn from Sakwe’s study and from a professional translators’ questionnaire are not totally adhered to in the Algerian milieu, they are of paramount importance in translators’ quality and professionalism. Our aim is to integrate the required 21st century skills in translation curricula by founding a rational, authentic, and contextualised Translational Language Teaching Model. It does not account for aspects of the “academic cocoon” (Díaz, 2004, p. 201) only, but for dimensions of the hands-on experience world as well.

Doing so, translators’ needs, rather than their products, are emphasised in order to assume potential solutions, rather than to evaluate ready-made translations, to the problems encountered by translators. Moreover, it is imperative that curriculum design (objectives, content, teaching methods, and evaluation) should be constantly reexamined. Furthermore, the ‘Holistic Approach’ should be brought to the ground to assure a holistic development of the necessary skills and sub-skills, and to improve translators’ training programmes, proficiency, and accuracy (Cao, 1996; Mansouri, 2005). Thus, translation should abide by integrating the range of “literary, ‘ordinary’ or ‘general language’, or language for special purposes” (Snell-Hornsby, 1988, as cited in Sakwe, 2015, p. 3). These approaches delineate the blueprint of some pedagogical implications in professional translational language teaching.

- **Translational Language Teaching Model**

The proposed curriculum aims at training translators with translational language competence. It is an attempt to embark upon a multifaceted approach to curriculum that suits the market. This model is based on both Translation Theory and Applied Linguistics in the wake of globalisation. They all influence the development of translators’ 21st century profile. Besides, curriculum design calls for assimilating interdisciplinary approaches and putting them into practice. This would allow establishing equilibrium between enhanced (taught) skills and separate ones (real-world skills).

Figure 7 represents a model upon which we envision a curriculum that includes seven core modules. They approach language teaching as form, meaning, function, and skill. This model is a competency-based one that encompasses different types of written and oral activities that are appropriate to translators’ qualitative training.
**Text Comprehension and Analysis**

This module is an opposition to curricula that instruct learners to translate texts from one language to another; it rather entails training learners to read or watch, comprehend, and analyse discourse in order to assimilate the different forms, meanings, functions, and skills. It is a module where learners can develop the different aspects of the reading skill (graphs recognition, meaning inference…), linguistic, communicative, and higher order thinking skills such as analytical thinking, critical thinking… by deploying their intellect in individual or collaborative learning.

**Writing**

Writing is a very important skill because most of the learners’ evaluations are pursued on their written productions. Indeed, this is applicable to translators who execute most of their
translations in the written mode; therefore, the writing skill should be part of the translation curriculum. Translators need writing not only to translate, but to perform other translator-specific writing tasks (Sakwe, 2015) such as writing articles for publishing. It is evident that anyone can pen written compositions, but not everyone can craft a well-structured cohesive coherent text. Thus, teaching writing should focus on different aspects of writing such as structure, punctuation, cohesion, coherence, and so on. Besides, translator learners should be well-acquainted with the different types of texts that fit their profession mainly academic and technical writings.

**Oral-Aural Proficiency**

The third module is targeted towards developing translators listening and speaking skills, for the job of interpreters requires a great deal of attention and rapidity. Therefore, this module would allow learners to master all aspects of listening (hearing, attention, categorisation of sounds, word recognition, comprehension, activating schemata, remembering and interpretation...) and those of speaking (accuracy, fluency, sounds articulation...).

**Lexico-intercultural Communication**

In this module, terminology is focused upon, be it general, academic, or technical. It also attempts to introduce the Lexical Approach that advocates the teaching of pre-fabricated chunks such as collocations, idioms, proverbs, and so on. This has to do with introducing the aspects of the target cultures of the languages taught. Doing so in a manner that allows learners to establish differences between their native cultures and the target ones guides them to develop culture-related competencies such as pragmatic, cultural, intercultural, intercultural communicative, and intercultural pragmatic competences.

**Language-specific Technological Tools**

The fifth module depicts the integrative role of technology in translators’ career, for it assists them in doing the job. It is true, as posited by the sample professional translators, that technology cannot replace humans; nonetheless, technological software and tools play a great role in aiding translators in difficult situations. Therefore, embedding technological tools in translators’ training, especially translation memories that store previous translations, would help and consume time and effort.

**Research Methodology**

This module is an initiative that permits translators’ training to embrace methodological skills that allow them to embark upon a research to write articles for publishing. This is proposed because not everyone can undertake a research since research is not an ad hoc activity; it is rather a systematic process that undergoes other complex processes. Therefore, these processes have a concentric role in translators’ training.

**Ethics of the Job**

Taking into consideration the dimensions of ‘Competence’, ethics and values are of a pivotal role. They include: personal values (morals), professional ethics (e.g. deontology), group values (e.g. social, cultural, organisational, gender, age), and universal values (e.g. respect for human rights). This module implies teaching/learning of the ethics of the job of translators in order to familiarise them with the moral principles that control their behaviours. Such ethics include, among many others, punctuality and secrecy, for instance. Translators should be (1)
punctual in the sense that they should respect the deadlines they arranged with their clients and return translations on the predetermined time. Therefore, they should be taught how to respect and manage time. They also should be (2) very secretive about their work.

9. Conclusion

This study is an empirical attempt to propose a Translational Language Teaching Model in teaching translation. It mingles the balanced teaching of linguistic knowledge in all target languages and other 21st century translator-specific skills such as communicative, pragmatic, cultural, intercultural competences. It is based on the analysis of the curriculum designed for translation at Batna Translation Department, on results revealed in Mansouri’s (2005) study on 3rd year students of translation at the same department, and on Algerian professional translators’ questionnaire. These approaches allowed us to ascertain the poorness of the curriculum since it focuses mainly on linguistic knowledge, and on surface improvement of pronunciation. This is also reflected in the results of Mansouri’s study that showed poor performance and achievement. Moreover, the results obtained from the questionnaire confirms the fact that competences extracted in Sakwe’s study do not apply to the Algerian milieu, and that Algerian professional translators apply what they have been taught with the exception of some who adhere to other skills rather than translation only. Last but not the least, teaching trainee translators the needed competencies should overlap with teaching the mastery of the languages.

About the Authors:

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Dr. Amel BAHLOUL is the president of the scientific board of the faculty. She has been a teacher at the University of Batna (Algeria), Department of English since 1998. She got her Doctorate degree in 2008. She is specialised in theoretical and applied linguistics. Her main interest is investigating new ways to teach students the skills they need, to understand Foreign Language Acquisition, and to promote change at the university level. She contributed to the supervision of a wide range of Doctorate, Magister, and Master Theses and dissertations. She participated in, and organized, conferences.
References


Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary.


Appendix A. Professional Translators’ Questionnaire

The present questionnaire, which is part of our seminar research paper entitled “The Integration of Professional Translators’ 21st Century Profile in Teaching Translation at Batna Translation Institute”, is designed to get Algerian professional translators’ opinions and attitudes towards the skills and competencies required in professional translation in the 21st...
century. It aims at gathering the skills, you 21st century translators, use and master in order to incorporate them in teaching translation.

In this respect, you are kindly requested to devote few minutes to answer the following questions. Thank you for your time and collaboration.

Doctorate student Manel MIZAB
Batna-2 University/ Algeria

I. Section One: Professional translators’ profile
1. Please, specify your gender
   a) [ ] Male  b) [ ] Female
2. Please, specify your age: ……………
3. Please, specify your Wilaya: ……………
4. What is your qualification?
   a) [ ] Licence  b) [ ] Magistar  c) [ ] Master  d) [ ] Doctorate  e) other …………………………………………………
5. How many years have you been practicing translation as a profession? …………… years
6. What type of translator are you?
   a) [ ] Public service translator  b) [ ] Freelancer  c) [ ] In-house translator  d) [ ] Part-time translator  e) other ……………………………
7. Who do you work for? (Name the institutions)
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

II. Section Two: Language-specific communication skills in professional translation
8. Tick (✓) the box corresponding to the extent to which the following aspects are important in professional translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not particularly important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terminological correctness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexico-syntactic equivalence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic accuracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative appropriateness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic equivalence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textual conventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textual competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of readers’ characters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Section Three: Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools
9. Do you use translation software?
   a) [ ] Yes  [ ] No
 Justify
10. If yes, state the translation software you use

11. Do you use terminological tool(s)?
   b) ☐ Yes ☐ No
   Justify

12. If yes, state the terminological tool(s) you use

IV. Section Four: Types of translated materials
13. How often do you translate the following types of text?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts and agreements</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press releases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bid notices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Précis writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speeches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws and decrees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press agency reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposés</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Section Five: Language activities as add-ons
14. How often do you practice the following activities in addition to your job of translation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Section Six: Conclusion
15. Are there any other skills to improve the translator’s 21st century profile?

Thank you!

Appendix B. Table 5. Translators’ type and institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Wilaya</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Type of translator</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Tebessa</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Public-service Translator</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Tebessa</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Public service &amp; freelance Translator</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Chlef</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Public service, Assistant translator &amp; interpreter</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Sétif</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Freelance translator, Translation services provider, proof-reader, &amp; interpreter</td>
<td>Sonatrach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Oran</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Public service Translator &amp; interpreter</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Sétif</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Public service, Freelance translator &amp; interpreter</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Guelma</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>In-house &amp; Freelance translator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>El-Beida</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Public service, Freelance Translator &amp; interpreter</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Bab El-Oued</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Public service assented translator</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>Type of Translator</td>
<td>Institution(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Algiers</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Public service, proof-reader, &amp; interpreter</td>
<td>OPTO, University of Technology (OPTO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Sétif</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Public service Translator &amp; interpreter, Part-time teacher</td>
<td>OPTO &amp; University of Sétif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Algiers</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Public service, freelance translator &amp; interpreter</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>El-Eulma Sétif</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Public service, freelance translator</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Algiers</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Freelance translator &amp; Head of Ads Agency</td>
<td>Community Manager of a Web Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Amizour</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Public service &amp; freelance translator</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Algiers</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Public service assented translator</td>
<td>OPTO &amp; Ministry of Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Algiers</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Public service assented translator, Teacher, &amp; administrator</td>
<td>OPTO &amp; Secondary School, &amp; Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Amizour</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Public service &amp; freelance translator</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Alain Sétif</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Public service &amp; freelance translator</td>
<td>OPTO &amp; University of Constantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>El-Khroub Constantine</td>
<td>Magister</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Public service assented translator</td>
<td>OPTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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An Exploratory Study of Students’ Lived Experiences in a Blended-Flipped Writing Class

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Abstract
During the past few decades blended instructional approaches have aimed to provide learners with an enhanced learning experience. Supported by a flipped approach to teaching, blended instruction provides an opportunity for an effective utilization of classroom time. This article reports the findings of a mixed-methods study which involved 57 students enrolled in Level 3 academic writing course offered as part of the General Foundation Program (GFP) in a non-public higher education institution in Oman. The purpose of the study was to explore the lived experiences of EFL (English as Foreign Language) learners in a blended flipped writing course with specific focus on their perceptions of the benefits and challenges of being instructed in this method. The study informs both EFL educators and learners, as well as other stakeholders, about this method of teaching and triggers further discussions of its potential and limitations in EFL instruction. This study utilized students’ self-report questionnaire, teacher observation, and focus group interviews as data collection methods; and value thematic qualitative data coding and descriptive quantitative data analysis as data analysis procedures. The study revealed that despite the challenges of increased workload and technology-related difficulties, participants in the blended-flipped academic writing class experienced increased involvement, development and use of deep learning strategies, and maximization of learning through constant collaboration. The study recommends that further experimental studies are conducted to explore the potential of blended-flipped instruction in teaching other English language skills and the correlation between the learners’ perceptions of this instructional model and their academic performance.

Keywords: Academic writing, blended learning, EFL teaching, flipped instruction, student involvement.
Introduction

Blended teaching is an instructional model which has existed for several decades now. However, the way blending is conceived of and implemented by academicians differs in accordance with the educational environment as well as the emerging technologies accessible by both educators and learners. Overall, this concept is used to refer to any educational system which incorporates technology supported or computer mediated instruction in traditional face-to-face instruction (Graham, 2006). The major purpose of a blended educational system is to enhance students’ learning experiences (Class, 2009) by exploiting available technologies to serve a variety of learning purposes.

Flipped instruction, on the other hand, is defined as a teaching approach in which the traditional order of activities is reversed (Yarboo, Arfstrom, McKnight, & McKnight, 2014). In this approach learners complete homework and review input materials prior to class and engage in discussions and other forms of meaningful interaction which involve higher order and deep thinking skills in class. Such instructional approach is believed to increase learners’ levels of engagement and motivation, and ultimately leads to an ameliorated academic performance (Moravec, Williams, Aguitar-Roca, & O'Dowd, 2010). Several studies carried out by English as Foreign Language (EFL) educators including Han (2015), Hung (2015) and Wong & Chu (2014) proved that flipping English language instruction develops learners’ autonomy, improves their learning attitudes and participation levels, and boosts their confidence as well as commitment levels.

The third Level of academic writing is a 12-week long course which is delivered to all students enrolled in the General Foundation Program (GFP) offered by Middle East College in order to equip them with the required language skills to cope with the demands of the undergraduate courses. In addition to academic writing, GFP students enrolled in third level take three other English language courses namely listening, speaking, and reading. Upon the successful completion of the four courses, students exit the program and are therefore qualified to pursue their undergraduate studies. The academic writing course aims to develop the students’ capacity to compose different types of essays, specifically compare and contrast, description, and evaluation essays, and to produce different chart descriptions. The course also develops learners’ vocabulary and grammar skills which are essential to produce the afore-mentioned types of writing successfully.

The academic writing course has for several years been taught mainly in a traditional face-to-face format which involved lecturing students about the different types of essay formats and the key vocabulary and grammar associated with such types, followed by writing practice which students often completed as homework due to time limitations. The potential of such instructional model to raise students’ interest and motivation in academic writing and to enhance their performance in exams has been extremely limited. In fact, a close examination of students’ exam results showed that the pass rate in this module did not exceed 45% in three different semesters in the 2014-2015 academic years. For instance, in the 2014 fall semester only 37% of the students enrolled in the academic writing course passed, while only 45% and 32% qualified to pass the course in the 2015 spring and fall semesters respectively. These results have raised the concerns of various stakeholders in the institution including instructors.
There is a general agreement among scholars and academicians that Arab-speaking EFL learners in general face several challenges in academic writing (Al Seyabi & Tuzlu­ko­va, 2014). Among many others, Al Mansour (2015) identifies six issues which students in similar contexts to Oman, specifically in Saudi Arabia, often face in the academic writing skill. These include the lack of ability to order ideas in a logical manner, inadequacy of vocabulary repertoire, limited knowledge of the topics to write about, poor grammar and spelling skills, as well as limited knowledge of English language written patterns. Such difficulties and others are also faced by Omani students which affects their understanding, involvement in the course, and exam results negatively.

In an attempt to address these concerns the researcher has adopted a blended and flipped instructional model which has shifted the lecturing aspect of the lessons outside class in order to create an opportunity for enrichment and further practice, and for more individualized instruction and assistance whenever required during class. This paper reports on the results of a study which aimed to explore the impressions of 57 students enrolled in a blended-flipped academic writing course and their perceptions of the biggest gains associated with this instructional model.

Background

Krause (2005) argues that along with individual factors, the role which the instructor plays in students’ learning is crucial. Several aspects of the instructor’s role have been underscored in the literature since they either enhance or impede students’ academic involvement and progress. Günüç and Kuzu (2014) and Hashim, Alam & Yusoff (2014) have emphasized on the value of both the amount and quality of teacher interaction on students’ learning. Similarly, Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris (2004) and Parsons & Taylor (2011) stress on the influence of the kind of rapport a teacher establishes with their students and argue that teacher’s support and respect raise students’ interest which influences their performance positively. Most importantly, it is argued that instructional models which support problem-based learning and encourage learner autonomy raise students’ interest, increase their involvement, and yield better academic results (Ahlfeldt, Mehta, & Sellnow, 2005; Reeve, Jang, Carr­ell, Jeon, & Barch, 2004). Furthermore, it is believed that students’ learning is reinforced when they are provided with ample opportunity to utilize higher order cognitive skills such as reflection, analysis, critical thinking, and so on (Coates, 2006). Added to that, recent research studies served to spotlight the significance of technology-rich educational settings for students’ learning. According to Markwell (2007) and Parsons & Taylor (2011), such learning environments create opportunities for students to be challenged as well as encouraged to actively collaborate with each other which enhances their learning experience. Likewise, Brown, Thomas and Thomas (2014), Han and Finkelstein (2013), and Lock (2015) claim that the integration of technology in instruction increases students’ engagement levels and promotes their academic achievement. Thus, along with adopting positive attitudes towards students, utilizing adequate instructional methodologies is of paramount importance for students’ involvement and success. Blended learning and teaching and flipped instruction are two instructional approaches which scholars like Ba­epler, Walker and Driessen (2014), Davies, Dean and Ball (2013), Gruba and Hinkelman (2012), and Thorne (2003) advocate as models which affect students’ learning positively. For this reason, the two approaches were adopted in this research study.
What is Blended Learning?

The way blending learning is conceptualized has evolved in time. Early conceptualizations focused primarily on the integration of technology, specifically computers, in teaching. Such conceptualization is reflected in the definition offered by Graham (2006) who uses the term to refer to “systems that combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction” (p. 5). Other definitions; however, have emphasised on the spatial flexibility of a blended educational system which allows content to be accessed regardless of the location (Williams, Bland, & Christie as cited in Poon, 2013). On the other hand, the integration of the internet has been highlighted in Harrington (2010) and Isiguzel’s (2014) conceptualizations. The authors consider a blended system any system which incorporates both off-line and online activities. That said, it is clear that a uniform definition of what blended learning and teaching is; is yet to exist. For this reason, this study adopts a more generic conceptualization which considers a system in which off-line and technology-mediated instruction are merged and which comprises of synchronous and/or asynchronous learning activities a blended learning system (Diaz & Brown, 2010; Graham & Dziuban, 2008).

The psychological assumptions of blended learning

Graham (2006) classifies blended learning systems into three major categories: enabling, enhancing, and transforming blends. Such learning blends are grounded in three important learning theories namely cognitive theory, constructivism, and behaviourism.

According to cognitive theorists, learner agency is essential in the learning process. In other words, a reciprocal relationship exists between the learner and the learning environment where the learner both reacts to and acts on the surrounding environment in a process of knowledge creation (Bandura, 1999). On the other hand, learning for social cognitivists is socially situated (Leondari, 2007). This means that learning is not only influenced by individual factors, but also by social factors (Niles, 1995). As a matter of fact, some scholars including Merklejohn (as cited in Osguthorpe& Graham, 2003, p. 231), Perkins (2006), and Smith (2009) claim that learning is predominantly a social act in which the learners construct knowledge as they interact with their teachers and peers.

Blended learning is also rooted in constructivist, specifically social constructivist, views of learning which advocate collaboration, dialogue, and cooperation as the basis for learning to take place (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Although their effect has reduced in intensity with the rise of cognitivist and constructivist views, early behaviourist theories of learning are still reflected in learning blends which encourage repetition as well as regular training as a method to internalize information (Higgins & Johns, 1984) and ultimately to aid learning. The principles of the three learning theories discussed above encourage the adoption of certain teaching pedagogies especially cooperative learning, learner-centred, and active learning pedagogies.

The implications of blended learning psychologies for pedagogy

First, cooperative learning refers to a learning situation in which a group of students support each other to achieve a specific shared objective. This instructional method is based on social constructivist principles of learning and is believed to boost learners’ motivation (Stacey,
1999); increase retention (Perkins, 2006), and to enhance the learners’ academic learning experience (Springer, Stanne, & Donovan, 1999). What is more, Johnson and Johnson (2014), Stacey (1999) argue that creating opportunities for learners to collaborate and cooperate with each other helps them to develop their interpersonal skills and to grow cognitively.

Second, learner-centred teaching is one of the implications of cognitive learning theories on pedagogy. It places the learner in the centre of the teaching-learning process and ensures individual learners’ differences, learning styles and preferences, as well as cognitive abilities are taken into consideration in the design and implementation of a blended learning atmosphere. In addition, this instructional method ensures that learners in a blended system receive input through various means like digital and printed formats (Graham, 2006) and are given the opportunity to exercise agency over their learning (Cottrell & Robison, 2003).

Finally, blended systems encourage active learning pedagogies as well. Active learning engages students in reflective activities on a regular basis and requires them to frequently evaluate their own understanding as well as degree of skill at dealing with the key concepts in the discipline (Collins as cited in Edwards, 2015). In active learning, knowledge is not fed into the learners’ brains but rather is attained through participation and contribution to a variety of activities inside and outside class such as information gathering, reflection and problem solving, which enable them to remain mentally active in their own learning and consequently to maximize their learning experience gains (Laurillard, 2009).

**Potential and limitations of blended EFL learning**

Blended learning has recently emerged as a substitute to the stand-alone traditional models of instruction (Poon, 2013) and has been facilitated by the spread of digital technologies, the proliferation of the internet, and the rise of a digital native student population. Blended EFL learning is not a novel practice and the potential of technology integration in English language learning has been discussed extensively in Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) literature (Levy, 2009).

Among several other benefits, Egbert, Paulus, and Nakamichi (2002) list ten major benefits of CALL technologies. The authors argue that CALL technologies can:

- support experiential learning and practice in a variety of modes,
- provide effective feedback to learners,
- enable pair and group work,
- promote exploratory and global learning,
- enhance student achievement,
- provide access to authentic materials,
- facilitate greater interaction,
- individualize instruction,
- allow independence from a single source of information,

Conversely, it is argued that technology integration per se does not guarantee the achievement of such benefits. Gruba and Hinkelman (2012) point out that “the integration [in
language classrooms] is best achieved if it is purposeful, appropriate, multimodal and sustainable” (p. xv). In other words, an instructor in a blended language classroom should select actions, tools, and networks in a principled and informed manner which gives the time, location, and group being instructed special consideration.

The blended academic writing course the study focuses on was designed in order to enhance the students’ learning experience by engaging them more actively in their learning process not only through the integration of various technologies, but also through the implementation of a flipped approach to instruction.

**Definition of Flipped Teaching**

Flipped instruction is considered one type of blended systems which incorporates technology in face-to-face and online instruction in order to engage students in complementary learning tasks before, during, and after class (Diaz & Brown, 2010). Strayer (2012) defines flipped teaching as a model of instruction in which:

- content is transmitted to learners prior to class through different technologies and modalities
- learners are involved in various learning tasks which target their lower-order thinking skills such as comprehension and remembering before class
- learners are engaged in enriching learning activities which target their higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and creation inside class
- technology is integrated in pre, in-class, and out-of-class learning activities in a regular and systematic manner

Several authors have highlighted the positive impact of the flipped instructional design on the teaching-learning process. According to Velegol, Zappe, and Mahoney (2015), flipping allows teachers not only to cover large content areas in short time but also to enhance learners’ understanding by involving them in more interactive tasks in class instead of spending much of class time in lecturing. Mok (2014) argues that this model of instruction also enhances learners’ motivation and involvement in the course. Furthermore, some researchers including Baeppler et al. (2014) and Schlingensiepen (2014), to name but a few, claim that the flipped instructional model ameliorates students’ learning outcomes and pass rates. By contrast, flipped instruction is not challenge-free since it necessitates students’ buy-in (Strayer, 2012), teacher and student adequate technology skills (Kim, Kim, Khera, & Getman, 2014), and constant access to technology, specifically to the internet (Missildine, Fountain, Summers, & Gosselin, 2013).

That said, the design of the academic writing class in focus integrated the principles of blended and flipped language instruction in a systematic manner in order to achieve the learning goals of the course and at the same time to provide students with a transformative learning experience (Graham, 2006) which raises their interest in the course and improve their performance.

**Design of the Blended-Flipped Academic Writing Class**

The academic writing class comprises of three main phases: pre, in, and post-class phase. Each of the three phases engages students in various learning activities which are well-integrated and which complement each other.
**Pre-class activities**

The main goal of the activities which students completed before class was to introduce key concepts in the discipline such as thesis statement, topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence, and so on. These concepts were often introduced through YouTube videos and/or recorded Power Point presentations that served the purposes of the different lessons. Added to that, students completed short quizzes to check their understanding of the content they viewed. Students also engaged in discussions in a virtual learning environment (VLE) called Edmodo which was utilized to record all the teacher and student activities such as sharing materials, concerns, and ideas. The discussions included, but were not limited to, sharing information about specific essay topics to be discussed later in class.

**In-class activities**

The activities which students engaged in inside class were connected with the activities they completed outside class and actually supported each other to maximize learning. These activities targeted the students’ higher-order thinking skills such as analysis of sample essays, the evaluation of different aspects of writing like the use of cohesive devices, the creation of different kinds of writing for a variety of purposes, etc. Mobile phone applications and programs like PADLET and Socrative were used inside the class as brainstorming and knowledge checking tools respectively. Such tools served to engage students in reflective and self-assessment activities. Every face-to-face meeting with the students ended with the production of a first draft of one type of writing either individually or in groups. The first draft is thoroughly checked by the instructor who provides detailed feedback about the students’ performance in terms of accuracy, coherence, and cohesion, and lexis.

**Post-class activities**

After class students reflect on their mistakes, figure out possible ways to improve the various aspects of their writings, type the second draft in a Microsoft document and use the spell-checker to correct their spelling mistakes. The second draft is then submitted in the assignment centre available in the VLE before the next class starts.

**Research Methodology**

The current study adopted a mixed-methods design and convenience sampling as participant recruitment strategy. It involved 57 participants (38% males & 61% females) who studied in full time (56%) and part-time (44%) mode. The majority of the participants’ age falls in the 18 to 23 (61%) and 24 to 29 (25%) age category. About 11% and 4% fall in the 30-35 and 41 and above age categories. Most of the participants reported having either very good (35%) or good (47%) language skills. Overall, the participants’ technology skills were good (62%) and even excellent for some of them (30%). The study participants were taught using the blended-flipped instructional method in the academic writing course for a total of 50 hours (5 hours per week) which extended over a period of 10 weeks.

**Data Collection Instruments and Procedures**

The purpose of this study was to explore the participants’ lived experiences in the blended-flipped academic writing course as well as their perceptions of the most significant gain from being instructed using this method. The following questions were posed to achieve this purpose:

1. What are the students’ impressions of studying in a blended-flipped academic writing course?
2. What are the students’ perceptions of the benefits and challenges of studying in a blended-flipped academic writing course?
3. What are the students’ impressions of the biggest gain of studying in a blended-flipped academic writing course?

Multiple methods were used to collect data namely teacher observation, focus group discussions, and self-report questionnaires. Participants were observed twice during the 10-week period, one time before the mid-term exam (in week 7) and a second time after the mid-term exam. Observations were recorded in the form of a checklist of the tasks which participants completed outside class, as well as their level of involvement in the lesson and the various activities during class.

The self-report questionnaire focused on what participants perceived they gained most in the blended-flipped academic writing class and was administered upon the completion of the course in week 10. The return rate was 100%. The survey instrument comprised of a total of 14 items which were measured on a 6-point Likert scale each, ranging from 6 which is positive (very much) to 1 which is negative (not at all) with so-so forming the middle category. The scale demonstrated a high level of internal reliability (α=.92).

The focus group interviews involved seven to eight participants in each session and each one lasted for about 25 minutes. The interviews were conducted a week after the course ended following a schedule set for the purpose in collaboration with the participants. The interview questions required participants to describe their overall learning experience in the blended-flipped academic writing course with specific focus on the benefits as well as challenges they faced as a result of participating in the course.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

The main purpose of the study was to explore the participants’ perceptions and lived experiences in the blended-flipped academic writing class. Thus, several qualitative and quantitative analytical procedures were followed to ensure the major themes the data was trying to express were captured.

First, the focus group interviews data was transcribed, then value coding was performed focusing on the participants’ attitudes and beliefs about the instructional model adopted in the course. Adu (2013) argues that value coding is the best coding procedure to follow in order to be able to capture the participants’ realities and to answer exploratory types of research questions. However, multiple coding methods could also be applied to the same data set in order not to miss any significant ideas (Adu, 2013). This is why ‘theming’ was also used in this study. Phrases and sentences were used to capture the essence of some of the data (Saldana, as cited in Adu, 2013). The codes were then sorted and grouped into identical categories which allowed the generation of the following themes: (a) involvement; (b) deep learning; (c) cooperation; (d) workload, and (e) technology.

Second, the quantitative data was first fed into SPSS quantitative data analysis software and then descriptive analysis was performed on the data to identify the item means, median, and
standard deviations. The results obtained from the analysis were compared with and linked to results obtained from the focus groups and teacher observations.

Findings and Discussion

To begin with, it is of paramount importance to obtain a general understanding of the participants’ overall perceptions of this learning atmosphere, before discussing the specific benefits they obtained and the challenges they faced, as well as their perceptions of the most significant gain from being taught in this manner.

Generally speaking, students who enrolled in this course soon realized that the blended-flipped teaching method differed considerably from the traditional method they were accustomed to either in school or in previous foundation levels. Despite the challenges which they reported, and which will be discussed below, the participants felt that the method was ‘positive’, ‘useful’, ‘successful’, and ‘great’. In fact, they believed that blended-flipped classes were ‘better’ than classes taught in the traditional method and that their experience in those classes was ‘excellent’. The themes that emerged from the qualitative data analysis and which depict the participants’ impressions of the benefits of this instructional model and its challenges are discussed below.

Involvement

The theme of involvement describes the level of behavioural engagement which students experienced while studying in the blended-flipped classroom. Involvement was first reflected in the amount of time the majority of students reported they had spent preparing for the writing class (between 5 and 15 hours per week). Moreover, students realized the difference between the blended-flipped teaching-learning model and the traditional model and the necessity to prepare before coming to class on a regular basis. The teaching activities which students engaged in were very well-structured and integrated and required students to prepare in advance to be able to cope with the demands of the in-class as well as the post-class activities. One of the participants commented “I learned how to prepare for class before I attend it so that I don’t face difficulties if the teacher asks me questions and to understand”. Another participant added “…now if I don’t prepare I will be lost in class. Before if I didn’t prepare the teacher will explain to us before we start to write but now it’s different”. Furthermore, the students realized that they have to be active participants in their learning process. One of them commented “it’s our responsibility to prepare before coming to class”. This shows that the teaching model adopted encouraged student self-reliance and autonomy.

Added to that, the research participants recognized that the method used in the writing class improved their learning. One of the participants explained that since reviewing the study materials before attending class was compulsory, they were able to understand the lessons better and found dealing with the tasks inside the class much easier. In fact, the researcher observed that the students who completed the assigned pre-class tasks participated more actively in in-class activities and were more comfortable than their counterparts. What is more, those students assisted their group members during the lesson to understand and to complete the tasks successfully. This entails that the cognitive load, i.e. the mental effort which students put inside class was lower in the blended-flipped writing class. This was also facilitated by the fact that students should access the learning materials after class as well. One of the participants
acknowledged “It was nice since we watched videos and when we faced issues later on we could go back to them to check the lesson unlike the traditional way…we cannot bring the past back”. In line with this, another participant explained “my notes are available with me and I always use them when I write essays and even when I write in another subject”. It appears that this blended-flipped instructional model allowed the participants to be more involved in the academic writing class in the sense that there was an increase in the time the participants spent preparing for the module and at the same time a reduction in the students’ cognitive load inside the class, which resulted in reducing the pressure they used to face in the academic writing class. The feeling of comfort and relaxation aided learning.

**Deep learning strategies**

The theme of deep learning strategies describes the various deep learning, as opposed to surface learning, strategies which the blended-flipped teaching method enabled the participants to use. First, as the participants reflected on their experience in this class, they pointed out that dealing with different kinds of materials in audio, video, and printed formats and understanding them necessitated that they utilize various thinking skills and strategies such as identifying key information, summarizing it, keeping a note of them, and remembering them for future use in and after class which, they reported, were not used to in previous levels where they were taught mainly in the traditional method. One participant explained “I used my own way to summarize the main ideas in lessons and write down all the interesting points…unlike in level 2 when I got it ready from the teacher”.

Reflection was another deep learning skill which the participants reported they had used in the blended-flipped writing class. First, the participants reflected on the best ways they learned and utilized that knowledge to enhance their learning experience. For instance, one of the participants pointed out that the teaching method suited her learning style best and explained “I like to know what the lesson is about before coming to class and I like to prepare before class”. Another participant explained that she was ‘auditory’ and therefore listening to people explaining content in the videos she watched was extremely useful. In addition, the participants admitted that they started to reflect on their own performance in the module in light of their performance in the quizzes taken before class and the thorough feedback they received inside the class, which led them to put more effort to better their understanding. For instance, one participant said “The quiz helped us to know which information we did not understand, and we could then ask you”. Likewise, another participant reported “…the fact that you gave us our essays back with feedback and mistakes to correct was good…we knew what our mistakes were exactly. That was useful”.

Moreover, increased interest in and development of research skills was also reported by the participants in the blended-flipped writing class. This particular theme is also connected with the theme of involvement since involved students put additional effort in preparing for the class. The participants explained that they “used to watch the video and search the internet for additional information” which they used to check their understanding and consequently to retain the information contained in the study materials.
Cooperation

This theme describes how the participants worked with each other prior and during the academic writing class in order to achieve different purposes. Unlike in the traditional class in which students normally complete homework after class, the blended-flipped method allowed students to work together before and during class. Students reported that this was facilitated by the utilization of technology, specifically the VLE (Edmodo). Before class, the participants reported cooperating to understand the lesson materials. They pointed out that they assisted each other to identify the most important information in the materials they reviewed. One of the participants explained “…I also asked my classmates and they explained things to me”.

Furthermore, one of the participants emphasised the usefulness of the discussions they engaged in prior to class in the discussion forums created for the purpose. The participants also commented that they learned better when they completed the learning tasks in pairs, in small groups, and as a whole class during the lesson. For instance, one of the research participants explained that the class brainstorming tasks on PADLET which took place prior to essays writing were extremely useful and stated that “it helped me personally because it made me think of different ideas and understand more”.

The participants also realized that the out-of-class activities in this instructional model required them to use low order thinking skills. By contrast, doing in-class tasks such as writing the essays necessitated the use of higher order skills. Being taught in this manner, the participants pointed out, was easier and gave them the opportunity to “help each other understand”. The participants explained that if done otherwise, they will not “have anyone to ask” and that “even if [they] had someone, he/she would not know what is required exactly”.

The researcher also observed that group work facilitated collaboration and maximized learning. It was clear that students supported each other to put the knowledge they acquired outside class in practice when completing the in-class activities. Furthermore, some of them played leadership roles within their groups ensuring that ambiguities are cleared and that all the group members understand and complete the tasks successfully.

Workload

The theme of workload describes the participants’ impressions of the amount of work they had to complete before and after class. It is apparent from the participants’ responses that the workload in the blended-flipped writing class was the biggest challenge the participants faced. The workload in this class was apparently higher compared with what the students were used to in the traditional classes they attended in level 2 as evidenced by one of the participants’ statements “there was not plenty of time to watch the video daily and solve the quiz, or to summarize the lessons because we have more than one module”. Due to time constraints, some of the participants explained that they had to review the study materials while driving to college and participate in discussions just a short time before attending class. This seems to have increased the level of stress among the participants as voiced by one of them who said “…honestly there is a lot of pressure especially as part-time students since we are busy throughout the day and all the time”.

On the other hand, despite the increased workload and stress level, the participants expressed their satisfaction with this instructional model which they felt benefited them a lot since it helped them to become “more focused”, “more careful and attentive to the choice of words and how to use them”, “learn how to write”, and facilitated their understanding and revision”. The researcher’s observation confirms the participants’ claims since it was clear that the performance of participants who were more regular in completing all the pre- and post-class activities improved as they progressed in the course. One of the participants commented “my level improved from my experience in level 3…I did not know at all how to write an essay…I feel I have benefited a lot”.

**Technology**

The theme of technology describes the hardware and software the participants utilized in the blended-flipped writing class. The participants reported that dealing with technology in this class constituted a major challenge especially for the participants who were living in the hostels. First of all, constant access to the internet and to a computer was essential in the blended-flipped class where most of the materials were in digital format and therefore accessible only through the VLE and where the majority of the out-of-class tasks were performed online. However, that was not always the case. One of the participants reported having to spend more time in the college after classes to be able to complete the required tasks because the internet connection in the hostel was too slow.

Second, one of the participants perceived the utilization of technology in teaching negatively. The participants complained that she hated using technology and explained that she preferred pen and paper to study. Involving students whose attitude towards technology is negative constitutes a challenge both for the instructor and for the student. All the same, some other participants admitted that their technology skills, including their English language typing skills, developed a lot in the writing class.

Third, it was also observed that some students did not have the necessary basic technology skills to be able to perform simple processes like creating an account, logging on to the VLE, resetting a password, replying to comments, and contributing to discussions. This is why training was essential to assist them.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, the participants responses to the survey showed that they have gained quite a lot from being taught in this method and that their interest in the writing module was to a certain extent greater than before (M=4.30). This aligns with findings from other research studies which indicated that students’ attitude towards blended English language courses is generally positive (Chen, 2015; Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010). In order to explore what the research participants perceived of as the biggest gain, quantitative descriptive data analysis was performed to the survey data. What is interesting in the results is that they support the qualitative data findings which showed that increased involvement was the biggest gain of being instructed using the blended-flipped model. Three items in the scale measured participants’ involvement with the writing class namely hard work to ensure comprehension, perseverance when faced with difficulties, and extra care when dealing with the various tasks assigned to them. The means of the aforementioned items were 4.96, 4.93, and 4.88 respectively. The mean score of the three items was 4.92. In fact, researchers including Mok
(2014), Moravec et al. (2010), and Shahrokni & Talaeizadeh (2013) argue that a blended model of instruction impacts positively on the involvement of students. To a smaller degree, the participants also felt that the instructional model followed in the writing class allowed them to employ deep learning strategies and to develop new skills (M=4.66), which is in line with findings from the qualitative data analysis.

To summarise, both the qualitative and quantitative data analysis revealed that overall students were quite involved in the blended-flipped academic writing class which, according to them constituted the biggest gain from being instructed in this manner. Developing new skills including technology and deep learning skills were also reported as important gains of this instructional approach.

Limitations and Implications of the Study

Despite the participants’ encouraging responses, the study has two major limitations. First, although the participants conceptualized of the blended-flipped instructional model in light of their previous learning experience in traditional classes, an experimental design which exposes students to both methods of teaching within the same semester would enable them to develop a clearer image of what a traditional academic writing class looks like, and consequently to be more confident when describing their experiences in the blended-flipped class.

In addition, it could be of great help to both academicians and researchers to identify the impact of blended-flipped instruction on students’ performance in exams. Although a causal relationship is difficult to establish in this case this would help depict a clearer image of how student performance could be influenced by this instructional model. An investigation of the correlation between the participants’ perceptions of this model of instruction and their performance is also recommended. This instructional design was implemented over a short period of time. Thus, an exploration of its impact on student perceptions and specifically involvement, over a longer period of time is desirable.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, we could conclude that despite the increased workload and technology challenges they faced, overall the participants had positive impressions of blended-flipped instruction. The qualitative and quantitative study analysis indicated that this instructional model can enhance the involvement of EFL students with academic writing. Moreover, it creates opportunities for cooperation and helps develop students’ ‘deep’ rather than ‘surface’ learning strategies. Technology challenges, however, should be carefully considered by educators in the design of a blended-flipped writing class, as limited access to technology, especially the Internet, could be counterproductive and could have debilitating effects on students.

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Afef Ahmed Gasmi is a senior EFL lecturer at Middle East College, Oman. Her areas of interest include syllabus design, English language assessment, and program evaluation. Her research interests involve technology-assisted language instruction and assessment. She is particularly interested in exploring the impact of technology integration on the engagement and academic performance of EFL learners.
References


Implementing Hybrid e-Learning on English as A Foreign Language in Islamic College

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Abstract
The implementation of hybrid e-learning in English as a foreign language course could perhaps be a promising approach for teaching and learning particularly within Islamic higher education. Hence, this paper attempts to explore the initiative effort of familiarizing hybrid e-learning among Islamic college students in a Speaking four course. This study took the duration of five months to complete. Instructions were delivered via both face-to-face and online learning: seven times for face-to-face classroom meetings and five times for online classes. Nicenet, an internet classroom assistant was used as a virtual classroom. Online rubric was made available for self-assessment both in their mid-term test and final test. Eighty-five pre-service teachers took part in the study. They were asked to do online task instructions either independently or collaboratively with their course mates. Questionnaire and t-test were used to analyze the data. The study indicated that hybrid e-learning is applicable in the college. It promoted motivation and collaborative work for the students. In terms of test results, there was no significant difference in hybrid e-learning approach. The research suggests the instructions and materials need to be adjusted in order to meet the learners’ need.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, hybrid e-learning, Islamic higher education, online learning.
Introduction
In general, the advent of educational technology has presumably influence the way English was taught and learnt. This may have affected specifically the traditional learning process of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The traditional face-to-face class needs to be injected with innovative teachings. This could be achieved by integrating internet technology that is considerably viable. In this case, as advocated by Ahmad (2010), the freely accessible web 2.0 platform of the internet could be integrated with traditional class for hybrid e-learning. It would be most currently appropriate if this hybrid e-learning model could be considered and implemented within the context of Islamic college.

As mentioned earlier, the hybrid e-learning does not require high cost for software application (Chandran & Kempegowda, 2010; Huang, 2010; Tsai, 2011). Most web 2.0 tools platform enables instructors to design and provide their lesson plan freely. This has triggered instructors to upgrade and improve on delivering courses in class. On that note, this study should also attempt to find answers to questions in terms of students familiarization with regards to their preparation, motivation, collaboration, course material, and course assessment in encountering the hybrid e-learning. Having answered that, it was hope that a possible way could be offered in tailoring hybrid e-learning. In a way, this paper also discloses the practice in delivering English as a foreign language, particularly in Speaking course that is incorporated with internet technology at Islamic college.

The Prospect of Hybrid Approach in Teaching and Learning
This study looks at the prospect of hybrid e-learning approach as a successful teaching and learning method incorporating online and traditional face-to-face learning that leaves impact on learners’ acceptance.

Apart from the idea of interconnection between people and association between artifacts (Clark, 2005), the term “hibridity” is also characterized as the merge of different entities such as computer technology and face-to-face to produce a new entity (Salam, 2012). Evidently, they further elaborate the idea that this new entity could become a promising methodological approach to facilitate teaching and learning, thus, knowledge building. Relating to this idea, there have also been other studies scrutinizing hybrid approaches in teaching and learning process. The significant impact on teaching and learning proved by Mackenzie, Promnitz-hayashi, Castellano, & Hinkelman (2011). The study focuses on blended learning spaces for instructor specializing in foreign language learning at a Japanese university. They compare lessons between hybrid or blended and non-hybrid e-learning. The results are different lessons goals, different patterns of interaction, different types of homework, more variety of media, and more variety of input and output. Moreover, their study indicate signs the increase of both learner autonomy and motivation. Tsai (2011) supports the idea of improving teaching and learning process. His study focuses on integrating learning theories into hybrid e-learning model. He proves that there is a great interest of a possibility to combine different learning theories into hybrid e-learning. Ansari, Shabbir, & Kazim (2012) offer the benefit and challenge for implementing hybrid e-learning in educational environment. They make use web 2.0 platform for web-based learning. The result of their investigation proves that by introducing this kind of learning the students are able to improve their learning environment significantly such as evaluation, research capability, and communication skills.
Some models to deliver courses has been adapted in order to disseminate hybrid e-learning into the higher level of education. EL-Deghaidy & Nouby (2008) study the effectiveness of blended e-learning as an approach to course. The model proves significant practical implication for teacher. Ijab, Anwar, & Hamid (2004) mention hybrid e-learning concept in designing and teaching courses. They implement this concept as a model into their institution. The finding indicates that the model provides a convenience to the students. Furthermore, they underline the factors that indicate success in implementing hybrid e-learning such as the access and level of technology adoption, language proficiency, reliability, scalability, security of Learning Management Systems, and the relevancy of the syllabus and contents. In addition, Yuen (2010) claims that the trend of hybrid e-learning has become comfortable. Teaching approaches incorporating hybrid e-learning model become pedagogical practices. Approaches such as online discussion, online resources, course management and delivery, and specific pedagogy support were used for the learners’ acceptance.

There are factors that significantly and directly impacted the learner’s acceptance of hybrid e-learning courses. Ahmed (2010) assesses hybrid e-learning to the learners by using three critical factors such as instructor characteristics, information technology infrastructure, and organizational and technical support. Kobayashi & Little (2011) evaluates a blended learning in EFL skill. They sum up that instructors have to consider for many variables to improve EFL skill. Those are the proficiency level of students, the length of time they have used the program, the limitations of the program’s interface, and the learner’s own level of computer literacy.

**The Context of Study**

This project was carried out in the Islamic college context in Indonesia with participants from pre-service teacher training program located in a rural area of Bone regency, South Sulawesi. The name of college is The State College for Islamic Studies or STAIN Watampone. It is a state-owned Islamic college managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The college has two faculties, namely Syariah or Law and Tarbiyah or Education Faculties. The pre-service training program is administered by Education Faculty namely *Tadris Bahasa Inggris* or English Education Department (EED).

Eighty five students attended this course and were further distributed into four groups. Their age range between 20-22 years old with English language competencies of high beginning to low intermediate took part in this project. The students of EED are to be required to attend English courses. One of the courses which is discussed in this paper is Speaking four course. It is preceded by series of Speaking 1, 2, and 3 courses. The Speaking four course is delivered within 14 weekly meeting, which consist of 90 minutes for each meeting. The course assessment is based on the criteria for each attendance (25%), assignments (10%), mid-term test (30%), and final examination (35%). This compulsory English skill course is available in the third year of their study. So far, this course goal is to improve students’ one way speaking skills for public speaking in any occasion. The class meeting in this study is combined with seven times face-to-face and five times e-learning. Basically, the prior course is delivered solely traditional face-to-face course.

At present, there are 12 lecturers teaching in EED by 2016. They are given the task of teaching education courses as well as English courses. They have to teach some subjects such as,
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psychology in education, philosophy, Islamic education knowledge, and sociology in education. Most of them apply face-to-face in delivering their courses. Out of seven lectures to teach English skills and linguistics courses. Furthermore, three of them are trying to combine face-to-face and Information Communication Technology for their classes. However, they still have not a certain model for teaching material of hybrid e-learning. The educational background regarding to teaching English for those seven lecturers are five of them magister in English teaching. The other two are magister in linguistics.

The language interaction in a class is both English and Bahasa Indonesia. English is not solely to be used in all class interactions. It causes as English in Indonesia is used to communicate as a foreign language. The use of those languages depends on the content of the subject study. For example, English skills and English knowledge are mostly in taught in English. Conversely, the courses such as Islamic values and teaching subjects are commonly taught in Indonesian language. The Speaking four course is delivered in English both for face-to-face class and online class.

In terms of accessibility for online resources, the college provides wireless fidelity, which enables both lecturers and students to access the internet in the classrooms. This effort has been done since two years ago. Even though, it sometimes could not be used effectively as the bandwidth issue and a service is often interrupted. On the other hand, the EED students have started to have their own personal computer or laptop for fun or social networking as well as a supportive tool of their study. Some other students who do not have a laptop go to internet café searching for supporting resources. This fact actually gives a chance and enables the lecturer and students’ access and makes use web 2.0 tools for the class or of their class assignment.

Methods

The method of investigation followed in this research was exploratory research aimed at initiating ways to improve English speaking skills by introducing hybrid e-learning among pre-service teacher training students of the state College for Islamic Studies (STAIN) Watampone. Exploratory research allowed the researchers to meet an issue that had not been clearly defined yet and aimed to open up directions for future research (Prapinwong, 2008). As the little is known about using web 2.0 tools to support hybrid e-learning in the context of Islamic college so exploratory research seemed suitable method for the study. In other words, the exploratory research was to explore the lecturer and students’ class interaction in hybrid e-learning. While, the inferential statistic of t-test was used to see the comparison of assessment score between face-to-face class and online class. This five months hybrid e-learning project requires face-to-face class once a week of seven weeks and online learning in virtual class also one time in a week of five weeks. The students were then asked to do the midterm projects presentation after face-to-face class and other was final project presentation after online class. Then, the students were given a survey to see their perception on readiness, motivation, collaboration, and course material after attending hybrid e-learning class project.

Speaking four course is a two credits hour course which requires the students to have a class once a week. This course encompasses skill and knowledge for public speaking. Web 2.0 tools such as Nicenet and Rubric incorporate face-to-face Speaking four course class to support this hybrid e-learning project. Web 2.0 tools is an available online resource that provides...
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students with many types of learning opportunities beyond simple information access (Smaldino, Lowther, & Russell, 2012). This affordance has made asynchronous communication valuable to EFL teachers and students (Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson, & Freynik, 2012). Furthermore, this tool enables students and educators to work collaboratively (Elam & Nesbit, 2012). The class assignments are designed so that students can work individually and also together with their friends. It allows creating an active learning environment, which focuses on students centered. Besides, most of the web 2.0 tools are offered free for public use. This makes it as a powerful tool and a widely used for academic purposes.

Nicenet is an internet classroom assistant that allows virtually any classroom (Nicenet, 2003). It is an online discussion board or discussion group. Nicenet is an electronic forum in which facilitate people or group of students to share their ideas, comments, or questions on specific topics (Bikowski & Kessler, 1999). The asynchronous communication nature of Nicenet is able to facilitate the online class for lecturer and students. The lecturer could make online his class instructions, material, or task to the students. Hence, the students who attend Speaking four course project read the online instructions in Nicenet and do the class activity individually or collaboratively whenever and wherever they are. Besides, Nicenet is easy to be accessed. The students have other options to open Nicenet as it is not only through their laptop, but also by using their mobile phone. This kind of learning offers flexibility and different atmosphere for the learner in this college.

Rubric is a set of assessment criteria for appraising or judging student products or performances (Smaldino et al., 2012). A rubric normally consists of rating scale as a direction to measure achievement of performance criteria. The rubric helps the students to have a clear understanding of what they expect for achieving a score and successful in a course. This project makes use the online rubric Rubistar, which can be accessed in http://rubistar.4teachers.org. This online rubric is expected to give direction to the students for preparing and attending self-assessment after joining hybrid e-learning class. The scoring of this rubric is modified from Rubistar web and intended to be used both for midterm project presentation and final test project, which have same criteria and scale.

Basically, the criteria of performance and rating scale in this rubric project are focused on oral presentation. The criteria are divided into five categories of performance and four rating scales. The ratings counted as the lowest score is 1 and the highest one is 4. The first category is intonation. All the ratings in this category concentrated on voice volume of the students in presenting oral presentation. It shows the rating 1 for volume often too soft to be heard by all audience members. Rating 2, volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members at least 80% of the time. Rating 3, Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members at least 90% of the time. And, rating 4, Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members throughout the presentation.

The second category is enthusiasm, which focused on facial expression and body language. It appears rating 1 for very little use of facial expressions or body language. In addition, it did not generate much interest in topic being presented. Rating 2, facial expressions and body language are used to try to generate enthusiasm, but seem somewhat faked. Rating 3, Facial expressions and body language sometimes generate a strong interest and enthusiasm about
the topic in others. Rating 4, facial expressions and body language generate a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.

The third category is a time-limit which concentrated on how long the students spend their time for delivering their speech or oral presentation. Rating 1, presentation is less than three minutes or more than six minutes. Rating 2, presentation is three minutes long. Rating 3, presentation is four minutes long. Rating 4, presentation is five minutes long.

The fourth category is posture and eye contact. This category informs the criteria of how the students stand up and perform eye contact to audience. Rating 1, slouches and or does not look at people during the presentation. Rating 2, sometimes stands up straight and establishes eye contact. Rating 3, stands up straight and establishes eye contact with everyone in the room during the presentation. Rating 4, stands up straight, looks relaxed and confident. Also, establishes eye contact with everyone in the room during the presentation.

The fifth category is content, which paying attention on including four items in speech practice. Rating 1, does not seem to understand the topic very well by mentioning the items in header, introduction, body, and conclusion. Rating 2, shows a good understanding of parts of the topic by mentioning the items in header, introduction, body, and conclusion. Rating 3, shows a good understanding of the topic by mentioning the items in header, introduction, body, and conclusion. Rating 3, shows a full understanding of the topic by mentioning the items in header, introduction, body, and conclusion.

Procedures
The instructional design and development of hybrid e-learning in this project is guided by Analyse, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate (ADDIE) approach (Branch, 2009). This approach was chosen due to the suitability of the elements that govern the steps considered in this research. ADDIE consists of five main steps. The first starting by analyze, in which the researcher identifies the probable causes for a performance gap or the problem that the lecture wishes to solve. The second is design, which describes overall purposes and point of the instructional unit. It could also verify the desired performances and appropriate testing methods. The third is develop, which the researcher creates the actual learning material, generate and validate the learning resources. The fourth is implement, which prepare the learning environment and engage the students. Finally, evaluate, which assess the quality of the instructional product.

Analyse
Some of English lecturers in EED at the college of STAIN Watampone tried to make use various sources from the internet to support their class material in order to enrich the content of their face-to-face class (Yauri & Sidin, 2013). However, their efforts were not effective to encourage the learners to be the independent learners. Actually, online learning system should promote students-centred learning. Even so, this expectance is being far from the reality. This might be caused by their lack of knowledge on how to develop online material, and because they are not familiar with which the best tools for incorporating face-to-face class. So, the problem is that how to develop a hybrid e-learning in the course to support students to be more independent learners. In this case, the researcher tried to initiate hybrid e-learning of EFL, particularly in Speaking four course.
Design
The purpose of Speaking four course is to improve students’ speaking skills, particularly for public speaking in various kinds of an event. The content of course material in this project is divided into two modules, which include skill and knowledge for delivering a speech. The first module regarding skills of speaking delivers in form of face-to-face class. The students are asked to understand, discuss, and practice the part of the module which consists of an outline of speech, technique to arrange speech, master of ceremony speech, practicing to speech, technique to develop idea in speech, and practicing to develop idea. Whereas, the second module is mostly concerning knowledge of speech, which covers pattern of speech, favourite speech, the strategy of English speech (1), the strategy of English speech (2), and behavioural aspects in the speech. The class instructions within the second module are created on the internet by means of Nicenet. Then, the students are asked to join Nicenet class to read instruction, follow the suggested link for reference, answer the questions, and do collaborative activity by practicing speech with their friends.

Develop
This phase describes learning resources, tools, strategies, instructions, and selected media to facilitate learning process in hybrid e-learning are put into action. Books and articles from internet were resources for learning materials. The materials for face-to-face class were mostly delivered as instructor explained more to the learners or teacher talking time before students took part practicing speech. In online class, the instructions were asked to the students in form of questions to make sure that they had done the activities. For example, the instructor provided the link for course material and asked the students to do the activities such as read, share ideas, and speech practice. The kind of questions was just to check whether the students had done the suggested activities or not.

Implement
This phase regarding to prepare the learning environment and engage the students. The implement phase is actual learning environment where the student can begin to construct the new knowledge and skills required to close the performance gap (Branch, 2009). After attending a series of face-to-face class, the researcher introduces and asks the students to log in Nicenet by giving a class key. For the further class, the students attend Nicenet class as a medium of online discussion and to provide them with instructions and learning tasks. This class is fully online before they are giving a final project.

Evaluation
The students are required to attend face-to-face class and do their project to pass first module. The requirement is also the same for Nicenet class. The students have to attend online Nicenet class and undertake the project of the second module. The evaluation for the first module was Mid test and Final test for the second module.

Result and Discussion
Survey questions about the readiness of students to attend hybrid class or blended learning mode course generated a series of responses. More than a half of respondents (84%) have laptop or netbook and only 26 % have personal computers. All respondents (100%) made use a computer for typing course assignment in word processor program and accessing the internet. In terms of the effort to access internet weekly, under a half of the respondents (41%)
accessed it by one to three times in a week. More than one fourth (33%) of respondents come to access it for seven times or above in a week. Just under a quarter (20%) accessed it within four to seven times in a week. However, very few (1%) claimed that they had never accessed the internet within a week. (see table 1)

Table 1: *The readiness of the students attending hybrid e-learning class*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a personal computer?</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have laptop or netbook?</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you use computer to type and internet access?</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many times do you access to the internet in a week?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One to three times</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four to seven times</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than seven times</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked to rate their experience related to motivation and collaboration in attending hybrid e-learning class, the majority of respondents (93%) claimed that this sort of class motivated them for learning. This could also be related to their willingness to do the class assignments in a course. High amounts (84%) of the respondents were more enthusiastic in doing the course task. Besides, the high number (90%) of students agreed that by attending this class needed collaboration to solve the problems in a course assignment (see table 2).

Table 2: *Motivation and collaboration*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is hybrid e-learning got more motivated you?</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I did my course assignment more enthusiasm</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I needed collaboration to find solution</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all students’ responses (97%) the need of material adjustment after experiencing hybrid e-learning course. In another word, a prior course material for face to face class was deliberated to modify as online course material (see table 3).

Table 3: *Adjust course material*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is course material by hybrid e-learning needed to be adjusted</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was the first test or mid test term required to the participants for each 4 groups after attending seven times meeting face-to-face class. It was followed by the second test or final examination after the participants attending five times online class. T-tests in Data Analysis of
Microsoft Excel software were decided to use for determining significant difference between mid-term test and final test. The formula is p value > α then Ho is accepted. The p value refers to score in Mid and Final. The level of significance α is 5% or 0.05. Ho is Mid test score = Final test score. Then, Ho is accepted means that there is no significant difference between Mid and Final. However, if Ho is not accepted means there is a significant difference. The results are shown in Table 4 to 7.

### Table 4: t-Test paired two sample for means of Group 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MID</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>74.375</td>
<td>75.83333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>135.4619565</td>
<td>147.1014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(T&lt;=t) two-tail</td>
<td>0.525462967</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Critical two-tail</td>
<td>2.068657599</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were 24 participants in Group 1. The data shows the mean score for Final is slightly higher than Mid test. Even so, t table or as t Critical two-tail shows 2.068657599 with p value 0.525462967. Furthermore, p value is higher than α 5% or 0.05 means that there is no significance different between students’ score in Mid test and Final test. In other word, the result of Final assessment of online learning was hoped higher than Mid test of face-to-face. In fact, the result was almost same with a previous Mid test.

### Table 5: t-Test paired two sample for means of Group 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MID</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>79.76190476</td>
<td>75.71428571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>176.1904762</td>
<td>353.2142857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(T&lt;=t) two-tail</td>
<td>0.433730413</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Critical two-tail</td>
<td>2.085963441</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants in Group 2 were 21 students. The table displays the mean of Mid is higher than Final. The t Table is 2.085963441 and p value is 0.433730413. As the p value is still higher than α 0.05 so there is no significant score difference between Mid and Final.

### Table 6: t-Test paired two sample for means of Group 3
Table 6 provides information of 20 participants. The mean score in Mid is higher than Final. The t table is by 2.09302405 and p value shows 0.192138111. Based on data findings, the p value appears higher than α 0.05. Therefore, there is no significant score difference for Mid and Final in this group.

Table 7: t-Test paired two sample for means of Group 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MID</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>117.3684211</td>
<td>206.5131579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(T&lt;=t)</td>
<td>0.748136975</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Critical</td>
<td>2.09302405</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-tail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-tail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants in this group were 20 students. The mean score is the lowest of all four groups. The progress of mean score for Mid and Final remains the same. The data shows that the t table is 2.09302405 and p value is 0.748136975. The p value is higher than α so there is no significant difference between Mid and Final score.

The data from all four groups show various results of mean score. There is no high range of a gap between mid and final. Group two and three show the score in mid-term test is higher than Final one. Group one is final slightly higher than mid and group 4 is almost same. Furthermore, p values in all groups are higher than the level of significance α. This indicate that the comparison score within between face to face class and online class of hybrid e-learning have no significant different. This fact might be meant that the participants were still familiar with face to face class rather than online class. Therefore, the content of material for online class should be modified to fit the students need for virtual class.

Conclusion

The paper has described the initiating work to familiarize hybrid e-learning particularly English speaking skills subject in Islamic college students. Even though, the students still
familiar with face to face class than new introduced hybrid e-learning. This model provides convenience for the students. It also promises high motivation and collaborative work to students in learning English skills. These evidences support the applicability in familiarizing hybrid e-learning in Islamic college for the future. From this study, it is suggested that the content of material and instruction for hybrid e-learning need to be accustomed to fit it shape.

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References


Using Cartoon in Language Classroom from a Constructivist Point of View

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Abstract
This paper aims to explore how animated cartoon as a pedagogical material can be employed in language classroom from a constructivist point of view. Through examination of existing literature, this study outlines the numerous pedagogical values of using cartoon. It presents the characteristics of cartoon that bring much valuable effects to language learning. The paper discusses both the efficiency of animated cartoon as an authentic audiovisual learning material and how it can be employed in language classroom in order to satisfy the intended pedagogical outcomes of the 21st century. Although many teaching approaches can be utilized in order to promote the effectiveness of authentic materials for second language teaching, the model of constructivism enables learners to get benefits of educational technological resources, mainly, animated cartoon. Constructivism is a social-based teaching approach that encourages learners to construct knowledge from the surrounding social context throughout a process of investigation. In relation to the concept of cartoon, it works as incentive tool that enhances learners’ social involvement within both collaborative discussion and the content of animated film. The paper concludes by drawing some implications of the concept of using cartoon in language classroom from a constructivist point of view.

Key words: animated pictures, cartoon, sociocultural theory constructivism, motivation, social interaction, cognition
Introduction:
Nowadays, the world of educational technology has been rapidly improving with the development of audiovisual tools and means which awards educators with many possibilities to construct activities and utilize techniques around the use of authentic materials in language classroom. Nunan (1999) has acknowledged that it is necessary for second language learners to be exposed to authentic learning material, because motivates them through making interconnection between the content of that authentic material and the topic which is being discussed. In addition, it enables learners to connect between the learning atmosphere in the classroom and real world. Various audiovisual learning instruments have the potential to be employed as sources of authentic language input, such as T.V programs, videos or cartoons. Animated Cartoons as a source of authentic audiovisual material have proven its effectiveness in second language learning acquisition.

Animated Films are ones in which individual drawings, paintings, or illustrations are photographed frame by frame (stop-frame cinematography). Usually, each frame differs slightly from the one preceding it, giving the illusion of movement when frames are projected in rapid succession at 24 frames per second. (Animated Films site page: http://www.filmsite.org/animatedfilms.html)

Animated cartoon as an authentic material has been considered as an effective tool that assists language learning, mainly, in EFL learning context as it clarifies abstract concepts and add humor to a topic.

Keogh and Naylor (1996) first believe that utilization of cartoon as an educational tool has an immediate impact in the classroom. Both wanted to encourage teachers to use purposeful approach to practical and instant influence in the classroom. It has been emphasized that the concept of cartoon served second language learning process, by offering several developments, such as, a shift from negatively-worded to positively-worded statements and a transfer from usage of single alternatives to multiple alternatives.

Using animated cartoon as an educational tool in language classroom not only has an influence on second language learners’ performance, but most importantly the methodology of utilization cartoon in classroom also has an effective impact. However, innovative learning tools must not be separated from creative teaching strategy. Consequently, the aim of this paper is to discuss how animated cartoon as a pedagogical material can be employed in language classroom from a constructivist point of view.

Constructivism as an approach does not only enable students to learn, but it also enhances students’ order thinking skills. Constructivism allows students construct knowledge by encouraging them to connect prior experiences to further new concepts that they elicit from a social learning context. In relation to cartoon usage in language classroom from a constructivist point of view, cartoon is intended as a starting point to enhance group discussions in order to derive new concepts. Because cartoon represents habitual daily life, students can easily combine cartoon content and animated pictures with their similar experiences. In other words, teacher needs to encourage students to generate ideas towards the cartoon film in the classroom. Students are stimulated to debate by asking proactive questions and they are permitted to collaboratively
interact until they produce their own knowledge and share their ideas with others. During this process, the instructor will be a facilitator who motivates students to think, reflect, express ideas and discover knowledge by themselves. Successful application of constructivist approach in language classroom will not be beneficial enough to improve students’ language performance, unless instructors select an appropriate cartoon film which is completely integrated to the learning material.

**Theoretical Background of Constructivism:**

Constructivist Approach can be defined as “teaching and learning approach that is based on students' active participation in problem-solving and critical thinking regarding a learning activity which they find relevant and engaging”. (Constructivism Page: https://constructivisminelt.wikispaces.com). Phillips (2000) writes about many constructivist traditions. He focuses on the theoretical framework of the two most popular who tackled the constructivist approach which they mainly are:

1: personal constructivism attributed to Jean Piaget
2: social constructivism associated with Lev Vygotsky.

Piaget, the founder of the constructivism, argues in his theory that humans can generate their knowledge and meaning by interaction between their own experiences and ideas. When an individual is exposed to new experience, he/she filters the concepts through a mental structural process (Schemata) which correlates an individual’s previous knowledge, perspectives or beliefs with new concepts he gets (Phillips 2000). Piaget (1973) theorizes that understanding is produced by discovery. Unless an individual understands he/she will mainly depend on repetition. So, learner would lose innovation and productivity. Piaget was first who introduced that children are permanently testing their understanding of the world. He believed that children don’t own logic thinking as the adults do.

Vygotsky’s (as cited in Rice & Wilson 1999) sociocultural theory possibly gives the most credence at the children’s cultural background and their interactions with peers which probably has its significance on the child’s overall cognitive development (ZPD). He believes that cultural and social perspectives have an influence on the child’s mental development. Vygotsky presented the concept of the zone of proximal development which mainly focuses on the difference of child’s capability of accomplishment in isolation than that which can be accomplished with assistance. To illustrate more, a child has better ability to solve and dissect complicated structures at a particular age of mental development if he gets an assistant from teachers, peers or parents than that he can do separately (Rice & Wilson, 1999).

Constructivism is based on constructing knowledge by making interconnection between learner’s previous experience and that knowledge he/she receives form a social interaction. Dewey (1997) describes learning as an action where knowledge and ideas are promoted by interaction with other learners in a social context. So that, they would draw conclusions by connecting their previous experiences which has significance and a sense with that knowledge they get while investigating. Dewey believes that a child’s cognitive development is enhanced through social interaction in a community. He also believed that a child is by nature motivated to learn actively, and the education he gets facilitates learning and makes it more possible.
The constructivism approach reinforces the individual creation of knowledge and structuring new concepts. Constructivist approach assumes that a learner’s existing knowledge is of great importance in the learning and in that process which occurs through cognitive and social interaction (Matthews, 1997).

Based on Vygotsky's theory (1978), cartoons enable learners to socially interact which helps in the cognitive process of language learning. However a numerous factors affect successful acquisition of second or foreign language. Gardner’s socio-economic model (1982) identifies various factors which are interrelated within the process of learning a second language. Gardner says these include: “the social and cultural milieu, age, attitude, etc.), the setting or context in which learning takes individual learner differences (motivation, place. Cartoons, if used carefully, can cater for most of the factors. Children are particularly interested in cartoons. Rate and success of second language acquisition are strongly influenced by the age of the learner”.

**Constructivist Design Model:**

Gagnon and Collay (2006) develop the model of constructivist approach which consists of six elements that must be considered while preparing a lesson plan. The elements focus on constructive activities that allow students to develop critical thinking towards the content learning material rather than teacher’s demonstrative behavior in the classroom. Most teachers' classical lesson plans concentrate on oral instruction or visual demonstration of the learning topic which is usually followed by students’ practice, however, constructivist approach grants the students the opportunity of discovering knowledge. The six elements of the constructivist approach were designed to promote teacher’s ability to construct activities that provoke students’ curiosity and skills to discover knowledge. These six elements are the followings (constructivist page: [https://constructivisminelt.wikispaces.com](https://constructivisminelt.wikispaces.com)):

- **Situation:** teacher develops the situation for students to explain.
- **Grouping:** teacher organizes groups and selects the process of grouping the material (whether they want the learners to work in whole class or in collaborative thinking teams of two, three etc.)
- **Bridge:** teacher should build the bridge between students’ prior experiences and what they might learn while tackling the lesson (This may involve simple problem to solve, whole class discussion, playing game, or making lists)
- **Questions:** teacher tries to provoke students to ask guiding questions that will stimulate students to discover knowledge. Teacher should not provide the students with the final explanation of the situation.
- **Exhibit:** in this stage, students should present their findings and conclusions in any form that they prefer. This can be done in writing description, verbal presentation, visual representation (acting out, role play, making video tape, photographs, etc.)
- **Reflections:** this stage include students’ reflections on their learning for example, what they have learned, what were their feelings when finalizing the exercises, what their expectations towards the final explanation to the problem to be, etc.
Figure 1 Model of Constructivist Approach

This model is very useful contribution and even the newest of instructors can use it as it provides a structured format for helping instructors design constructivist learning opportunities. It offers comprehensive advice on numerous issues, starting with establishing a teaching situation, grouping students and drawing on their interests and past experiences, promoting authentic exhibits of their learning and concluding with reflections.

The advantages of using animated pictures in teaching EFL/ESL learners:

Watching cartoon films in foreign language classroom has various pedagogical advantages. Clark (2000) concludes that, unlike other audiovisual materials, watching cartoon film as source of authentic language enables teachers to involve students, attract their attention, create a non-threatening atmosphere to present information, and it has the potential to enhance critical thinking processes and discussion skills.

Cartoon as an authentic language input would facilitate language practice in the classroom. Sarko (2008) states that exposure to authentic language would serve learners to practice language not only in the classroom, but also in outside where they can utilize language
input to learn more about cultures by their own. Nunan (1999) acknowledges that exposure to authentic language material has a vital role in motivating language learners to correlate the content and subject matters to their life. In other words, it enables them to make the interconnections between knowledge they get in language classroom and real world outside the classroom setting.

- **Enhancing the process of second language acquisition:**
  Penfield and Roberts (1959) argues that the ideal age for a child to acquire a language lies within the first ten years of life. During this stage, the brain retains plasticity, and therefore language acquisition takes place easily. They emphasize the role of watching cartoon films inseparably from teaching practices in the classroom. That will increase student’s ability to learn language quickly and easily during that stage. They also argue that using cartoon films in language classroom will encourage students’ integrative motivation which supports them to improve second language acquisition.

  Moreover, when students watch cartoon, they can gain the stimulus to speak the target language. Hull (1943) in his “behavioral theory”, argues that four main factors influence second language acquisition; stimulus, association, reinforcement and imitation. Watching cartoon films creates an opportunity for the students to employ vocabulary they gain in different contextual situations, because they are able to get the stimulus needed for building up vocabulary and using language in different forms. Unconsciously, students can utilize the vocabulary they learned from cartoon films in different life situations, if that is accompanied by teacher’s reinforcement of these forms in language classroom.

  Generally, cartoon films are essential source of authentic language input that match the purposes of second language acquisition. However, teachers must be more cautious while selecting a cartoon film for second language learners. Cartoon films that suit students’ level encourage learners to absorb language input and motivate them to utilize linguistic knowledge in different communicative contexts, if they are accompanied by practical teaching strategy.

- **Facilitating understanding of subjects:**
  Rule (2008) emphasizes that the utilization of animated cartoon is an effective technique for sharing cultural perspectives. Using computer-animated pictures has become uncomplicated due to the facilitation that either a teacher or a student can get through numerous media tools. Lin, Chen and Dwyer (2006) also confirm that presentations of animated in classroom facilitate understanding knowledge which has a superior effect under specific conditions. Animated cartoon has the potentiality to improve students’ comprehension of various subject matters or that of distinct cultural backgrounds. Educators can simply represent abstract ideas of the curriculum into visual animated pictures which mainly aims to enhance students’ capabilities to recognize solid concepts (p. 203).

- **Enhancing and facilitating immediate and delayed achievement in the EFL classroom:**
  Cartoon films have the potentiality of offering students immediate meaning of language in the classroom. Canning-Wilson (2000) noted that cartoon films were beneficial not only of clarifying messages, but they also enabled learners to have immediate understanding of a language point in a positive way. In addition to that, Lin et al. (2006) state that computer-
animated pictures are more effective in assisting student’s retention of complex knowledge or structures than recalling information that student build from classical instruction (p.203).

- **Increasing EFL/SFL Vocabulary:**
  Sarko (2008) conducted a study that aims to investigate the impact of watching cartoon films in language classroom. It has been concluded that students’ ability to acquire vocabulary and transfer these words or expressions in their daily life has been notably increased. The study showed that students were very much influenced by animated cartoon. They become prone more than the others to pick up many words and sentences from cartoon films and utilize words and dialogues in their daily life. They often tend to switch codes in real life conversations.

  Animated cartoons included authentic language input which considered as primary tool for second language learning process. Learners are able to increase vocabulary input by watching cartoon film which speeches are embedded with paralanguage effects such as singles of hands, facial expressions and musical effects which all facilitate understanding. Teachers also can demonstrate vocabulary and illustrate idiomatic expressions that are included in cartoon films by preparing tasks aim to help students to analyze such expressions.

- **Enhancing listening comprehension:**
  Danan (2004) has worked on the pedagogical impact of audiovisual materials in language classroom. He claims that cartoon films can be powerful tool in foreign language classroom because of several reasons. First, it is able to improve students’ listening comprehension skills. Moreover, it facilitates the learning process by visualizing knowledge that students hear immediately. Furthermore, it develops cognitive abilities by generating deeper understanding of knowledge. Heffernan (2005) concluded in his case study that students who were exposed to authentic videos and who watched cartoon films have notably improved their listening comprehension skills.

  Animated cartoon can provide opportunity for students to improve their listening comprehension skills. Listening practices are usually developed when teacher design activities that encourage students to carefully listen to cartoon's content, in order to accomplish tasks prepared by teacher. Regardless of the purpose behind doing tasks; to argue, to state point of view, to response or answer questions, students need to be cautious of what is being said to finalize activity. In addition, when students are exposed to authentic spoken language in cartoon films, they would be able to gain correct pronunciation of words and the English accent. Because cartoon films represent every day experiences in different contexts, students’ pragmatic acquisition of contextual language would be improved, as well.

- **Enhancing EFL / SFL writing skill:**
  Baralt, Pennestri and Selvandin (2011) confirm that the use of animation wordle which is the most popular form visualized data, positively affect students’ writing skill. The visual representation of frequent text or tag cloud influence students’ writing capability because of the followings (p.12):
  1. It involves students to participate in a classroom discussion using key words included in the word cloud.
  2. It enables students to use animation Wordle as a reflection tool for writing projects.
3. It encourages students to utilize word clouds on other writing topics.
4. It encourages students to produce ideas for new writing topics or themes.

Cartoon films stimulate learners’ power of imagination that can be reflected in written or spoken discourses. When students write a response or an essay about a cartoon film, they tend to employ vocabulary they get from film into a meaningful writing tasks which the cartoon film is the main focus. They respond by imagining situations and characters that reflect their own view towards a social context. In addition, cartoon creations enhance students to imagine and write characters’ speeches in the wordles.

- **Enhancing EFL/SFL Speaking Skill:**
  Doring (2002) concluded in his study that aimed to investigate the impact of using cartoon in language classroom on foreign learners that students who were exposed to cartoon films can produce oral answers more than those who weren’t. Students became more confident to practice English language in the classroom; as a result of low affective learning atmosphere that watching cartoon creates.

  Cartoons can open doors for valuable contribution of interactive conversation, if it’s accompanied by good teaching technique. Employment of cartoons in language classroom enhances students to discuss or argue regardless of student’s level of proficiency as cartoons are embedded with language and paralanguage facilitating tools which need less comprehension skills than that needed to analyze solid learning texts or materials. Constructivist approach is based on social interaction that allows students to discuss and relate content of cartoon to learners’ prior knowledge in collaborative group works. All students would be able to express themselves or reflect upon cartoon film with in constructivist groups.

- **Enhancing EFL/SFL Reading Skill:**
  Ouda (2012) conducted a study to investigate the impact of utilization cartoon as a method to enhance students’ reading comprehension. The study concluded that students who were exposed to cartoon films for six weeks, gained better reading skills. They were able explain complicated meaning and difficult terminology. It improved learners’ capability to make inferences, get the main idea, and allow them to achieve high results.

  Watching cartoon film as a pre-activity of reading class would be facilitative tool that allows students to interpret and analyze reading text more effectively, if teacher utilizes suitable cartoon film. Cartoon as a learning tool would support affective and cognitive aspects in language classroom. Cartoons display vivid reading comprehensible texts that are embedded by motion, sound and colors which allow students to live with plot of the film and share roles and attitudes. This facilitates leaners’ interpretation of text, getting main idea and making inferences. Learners’ power of imagination and predication would be notably increased as a result.

The impact of using animated cartoons on learners’ attitudes:
Watching cartoon films in language classroom would change students’ attitude from negative to positive. Clark (2000) argues that students may have positive impression towards the use of animation in language classroom due to the novelty which can be created in the classroom. Moreover, Bates (2000) states that utilization of animated cartoon in language
classroom would develop students’ language performance. Many researchers agreed that computer-animated cartoons do not only have the potentiality to improve language proficiency, but they also enhance students’ positive attitude to learn English. However, other study reported students’ negative impression towards computer-based instruction. That’s because of poor lab conditions the students were involved in, such as, overcrowded lab with outdated, unreliable hardware and software and the change of instructors midway through the learning course (Yunis, 1991)

Why cartoon as an authentic learning material?

- **Pedagogical Values:**
  
  Rule and Auge (2005) conducted a research to investigate the pedagogical value behind cartoon usage in language leaning. The result is also indicative of the fact that students prefer cartoons in language learning, because cartoons create low affective filter atmosphere which causes high degree of motivation. On the basis of their research, the researchers claim that the students who use cartoons can improve different language skills and achieve higher test scores.

  Another quantitative study found that low level language learners can achieve a significant language proficiency improvement through exposure to cartoons. They learned number of vocabularies from cartoons, and they used these in real life (Bahrani & Sim 2012). They emphasize the importance of being exposed to cartoon films as a source of authentic language. They also concluded that using cartoon in classroom makes learning faster, because the speech is attached by a movement or sound effect which requires less cognitive process for comprehension.

  Cartoon films can probably enhance interactive teaching and learning practices in language classroom that both have significant pedagogical values towards language performance and learners’ personal skills. Utilization of cartoon films encourages teachers to improve pedagogical practices by constructing activities that allow students to interact within dialogic exercises in classroom. Because cartoon films represent everyday life experiences, students can easily evaluate their skill of reconceptualising previous knowledge and that they share with peers. Cartoons enable students to employ vocabulary they gain from cartoon in collaborative discussions and accomplish learning task based on that film. Teachers, simultaneously, keep rethinking of manageable and meaningful methods that stimulate students’ dialogic practices in law affective learning context and assessing students’ skills of employment of linguistic knowledge.

- **Audiovisual attributes:**
  
  Animated cartoon doubles information storage in the brain. Information in an animated cartoon film is coded verbally and visually which is more likely to be remembered than abstract information that students receive by exclusive listening to teachers’ instruction in classical classroom. Watching cartoon in language classroom can provide variations in the brain. Bahrani and Sim (2012) encourage using cartoon in language classroom; because it allows the two hemispheres of the brain to fully work in the same time. In the classical learning, student receives instructions orally. Spoken language engages only the left side of the brain. After a period of time, listening typically leads to boredom and less concentration. Whereas audiovisual
utilizations in the classroom can enhance the right hemisphere to dissect pictures and the left works to understand spoken language in the same time.

Furthermore, animated cartoons award students with two different visual attributes: images and motion. Both image and motion are essential for understanding and information retention. Barak and Fisher (2002) state that animation maximizes the potentiality of presenting information regarding a continuity of motion. Yunis (1999) states that movement in animated cartoons is the most important element of a film, because it increases a learner’s capability to confirm information which is being stored in the brain.

Because watching cartoon films allows the two hemispheres of the brain to fully work, and because they are embedded with facilitating tools such as music, sound, colorful attributes, cartoon films would be meaningful leaning material that need less comprehension skills and keep the classroom manageable and orderly. Cartoons, usually, attract students’ attention and don’t allow learners to get released out of the learning context, as they include satisfying tools and comic speeches. In this respect, cartoon as an audio visual learning material can make valuable contribution of immediate understanding that doesn’t require higher cognitive skills.

- **Using sounds and music effects**:
  The use of sound and music effects and how they are presented in animated cartoon adds to cartoon film’s qualifications as an instrument of teaching. It increases students’ ability to analyze and interpret information, because the sound supports the image and event in an animated film (Barak & Fisher, 2002).

  Animated cartoons encompass live actions that are integrated with music, voice-overs and texts that all support language learners’ vocabulary acquisition. The sound and music effect would deepen students’ understanding of meaning and content, as it facilitates learners’ ability to recall information and analyzing of cartoon messages. In other words, if teachers select proper cartoon films that suit learners’ age, cartoon will be satisfying tool that enables teachers to achieve pedagogical purposes due to the nature of cartoon itself.

- **More creative fun/ satisfying tool**:
  Many case studies confirm the importance of using animated cartoon in language classroom because it’s not only a source of authentic material, but it is also more satisfying and engaging than traditional learning modalities (Barak & Fisher, 2002). Furthermore, they state that the use of audiovisual as educational material in classroom like animations and movies encourage team building and group work that both help students to success.

  Sarko (2008) confirms the pedagogical value behind using animated cartoon in language classroom, because of its ability to help learners to develop four language skills; reading, writing, listening and speaking. Utilization of cartoons in second language classroom provides learners with real-life language and image. Educators use animated cartoons in order to introduce new vocabularies that are attached with objects, pictures and events. Thus, students will be capable of acquiring new vocabulary and words by linking them to objects and events from real world around them.
Cartoon films include comical scenarios and scripts that attract learners' attention and keep them incorporated to the learning atmosphere. Cartoon can be a proper tool to teach students different kinds of social perspectives and immediate understanding of peoples' behaviors by observing body language and motion to dissect messages which remains with learners’ daily life. In other words, cartoons have dual learning functions, they facilitate understanding of solid or abstract concepts, and they encourage learners to analyze meanings and messages from characters’ behaviors or by reading their emotions in contexts. Students would be able to connect the messages they dissect from context to new vocabulary that refers to.

- **Informal Learning Settings**

  Cartoon can’t be exclusively assigned for formal learning contexts. The nature of cartoon has the ability to bridge the gap between formal and informal learning, because it is mainly established on everyday situations that encompass ordinary character practicing habitual daily life activities. For example, cartoon has been used in UK, Russia, and Sweden in public transportation system in order to enhance the public for thinking about scientific problems in different daily contexts (Heffernan 2005).

**Implications behind Constructivist View of Language Learning and the Concept of Cartoon:**

The constructivist view of using cartoon in language classroom has various pedagogical implications. Teachers focus on assisting students to expand their personal capabilities to discover knowledge by their own. As for learners, constructivism is based on enhancing students’ abilities to connect between their life experiences and knowledge they construct within collaborative group work. It will be feasible for teachers to apply the basics of constructivism while tackling cartoon films, because animated cartoons represent daily real life aspects in a comic and expressive way which will be easy for learners to understand and relate to their own prior experiences.

What brings more value to the research is that students learn about real-life social experiences in a collaborative setting regardless of the distinct backgrounds of learners. That goes beyond learning purposes. Students can easily transfer the linguistic content of cartoon film to the proper context in real-life communication. To illustrate more, it develops students’ ability to understand contextual language and enables them to employ pragmatic use in real-life situations. That’s because, students can easily acquire and understand cartoon concepts when these are attached by music and movements. What reinforces concepts and new words are: group discussion, collaborative work and reflecting.

Moreover, this strategy engages students in a meaningful and purposeful language learning context that minimizes the potentiality of misconception. Knowledge and concepts are embedded in the form of an exciting audiovisual material, rather those abstract or solid texts. The presentation of cartoon film allows learners to understand the idea clearly because they will not individually imagine a situation; it is already prepared for them. Learner should only connect between the cartoon content and their previous experiences. If learners misunderstand a notion or an idea, the group discussion or teacher’s facilitation would remove that misconception. When using cartoon in language classroom is accompanied by the applications of constructivist approach, educators can achieve their pedagogical purposes.
The following mechanisms are proposed to enable educators to translate the elements of social constructivist theory into a language class which employ the tool of cartoon as an authentic material in EFL classroom:

- **Engagement to a Context and Asking Questions:**
  Teacher needs to prepare students for the topic that the animated cartoon is assigned for and they should realize that the content of the animated cartoon film is integrated to the learning goals. Before tackling the cartoon film, it is important to establish a context by using visual cues or asking questions in order to provoke students to talk about their daily life experience or prior knowledge. Teacher should develop students’ ideas to promote their curiosity to explore knowledge. Through this primary stage, teacher must make sure that students have been involved to the context and linked ideas to their own lives. Now, they would be ready to decided what they will be discovering from the cartoon film, for example; learning new concepts to prepare for an assignment, exploring the author’s opinion on a subject, solving a problem, designing a plan or create a decision towards a phenomenon that the cartoon film presents. Most importantly, students should be encouraged to think beyond the cartoon film and they select their own purposes by themselves.

- **Bridging:**
  When students become provoked enough to explore knowledge, they will be allowed to watch the cartoon film. Students watch the cartoon film carefully and write down some notes that are essential to build up an idea that may be supportive for discussion. While watching the cartoon film, students observe the characters’ speech, word selection, tenses used, motion and general appearance of character or scene.

  Students write key words they think that these will construct main concepts. If a learner comes across a word he/she never heard before, the learner may immediately guess the meaning of ambiguous word when analyzing the motion or facial expression that is attached with spoken language. Students also may guess meanings through group discussion, look for that word after the cartoon film ends, or ask partners about if all trails fail to individually interpret the meaning.

  While tackling the cartoon film, students compare and connect that content to their existing experiences of a same subject matter, and then they evaluate their understanding of in group work. So they would construct knowledge by their own.

  After students watch cartoon film, they may also develop other questions that they never thought before. They may ask further questions, may be because they noticed a perspective, behavior or vague concepts in the cartoon film. In this case, students can bridge between knowledge they receive from cartoon film and their prior experience, however, that may remain ambiguous till the group discussion takes place.

- **Group Organizing:**
  The most feasible way to organize collective groups is to gather students who share the same interest. Students who become eager to look for the same area of inquiry are preferred to be involved in the same group. Teacher may name the groups by colors, numbers or symbolic names that relate to the content of the learning material etc. During group work, the instructor
doesn't interfere, but he facilitates work by offering advice if it is needed. Students are allowed to watch the cartoon film for another time if it is required.

- **Discussion and Argumentation:**
  Concept of cartoon in collaborative group work enhances both discussion and argumentation. Students discuss knowledge that they personally interpret by comparing concepts they receive from a cartoon film and their prior experience. After that, students socially develop their knowledge within classroom interaction. They share ideas which they build alone, with other group members in order to finally construct knowledge.

  Student may accept peers' perspectives, otherwise; the discussion transforms into a form of argumentation. Although students in the same group share the same area of inquiry, contrasting ideas would emerge due to different cognitive abilities, social backgrounds and experiences. Cartoon films enable students to argue without formal setting. Students need to examine words selected, negotiate pragmatic functions of expressions, study tenses usage, and relate music and movements that are attached to verbal speech in order to convince peers whom they disagree with.

  Argumentation among group members can be finalized into a common conclusion. The conclusion in collaborative group work is produced when members scaffold knowledge and concepts. Peer scaffolding is a step forward to “students’ roles” because it allows students to become effective decoders and users of cartoon discourse. In order to come out by a conclusion, students need to persuade the others with their ideas by making meaning from language used in the cartoon film. Students need to refer language items to its linguistic functions by analyzing speech components, such as, pronouns, prepositions, phrasal verbs, pragmatic meaning of words.

  Not only, verbal words can create meaning in a cartoon film, body language and music effects can also be expressive. Cartoon films enable students to construct meanings from paralanguage effects which are accompanied by spoken language. That empowers students’ social and cognitive skills which will remain within a learners’ daily life. Learners need to think and dissect characters' movement and body language to understand the cartoon messages.

- **Exhibition:**
  After the students construct their knowledge or concepts about the cartoon film, they need to present their conclusions. Presentations can have different forms such as, presenting orally, making posters, accomplishing an assignment, creating a movie etc. Regardless of the type of presentation that students tend to make, any type requires integrated language skills. Students need to transfer concepts, key words and vital phrases they gain from cartoon film to the form of the presentation. For example, if students need to represent a cartoon film about “A Journey to Hebron City” in a form of brochure, it’s required to analyze content of cartoon film and select proper words needed to inform a tourist about. Students must be selective of vocabulary and phrases, observing the format and layout, being aware of grammatical rules that they may analyze from the cartoon content and employ that rules within the brochure.

  Students need to write meaningful paragraphs that encourage a tourist to visit Hebron city. So, they have to transfer sentences, words or expression that attracted them in the cartoon...
film. Finally, students are asked to present the brochure in front of classroom and discuss the steps they follow to produce it.

- Reflecting:
  Students are asked to reflect upon their experience of using cartoon in language classroom. They need to respond to the cartoon film either by oral discussion or writing a reflective paper. Students need to reflect upon concepts they have already constructed. It’s feasible to talk about their own trail to persuade other peers by own ideas and the mechanisms they make use of to have mutual concluded concepts or perspectives.

Conclusion:
In conclusion, application of constructivist approach into language classroom that utilizes cartoon film as learning material provides second language teaching and learning with significant pedagogical values. Teachers design activities to enable students to construct knowledge from cartoon films in an interactive situation which will apparently stimulate students’ energetic participation and enhance their skills to discover knowledge, regardless of their different levels of achievements. To illustrate more, when constructivist approach is applied into animated cartoon as learning material, students’ language performance will be developed, due to many reasons. First, animated cartoon is a source of authentic language input that requires less cognitive processing for comprehension which would suit all students' levels. Second, cartoon is an expressive form of language. Cartoon introduces everyday experience in attractive presentation that includes sense of humor, colored senses and characters, music, and sound effect etc. Students facilely can learn and guess meanings because language and movement are correlative in cartoon films. In addition to that, the constructivist approach mechanisms reinforce knowledge they get or construct from watching the cartoon film by self-discovery of knowledge and collaborative discussion.

In other words, when constructivist strategy is employed into cartoon as a valuable learning material in language classroom, student’s language performance would be developed. It would create an exciting learning atmosphere which engages students’ and motivates them to discover knowledge by themselves. Both exposure to cartoons and constructivist elements have been claimed to enhance memory when connecting new and old materials experiences.

Recommendations:
The researchers highly recommend application of constructivist approach on cartoon as a learning material in language classroom due to several reasons:
- Cartoon as an audiovisual material of authentic language enables teachers to involve students, to attract their attention and most importantly to create a non-threatening atmosphere for presenting information. Cartoon films have the potentiality of enhancing their critical thinking processes and discussion skills.
- Cartoon films suit all students' levels of academic achievements, because they require less comprehension skills.
- Cartoons grant learners the opportunity to be exposed to authentic language in different contextual situations. When learners are regularly exposed to cartoon films, they would able to build unconscious knowledge of English language. So that, they will be unconsciously able to produce proper language that suits contexts.
- Cartoons not only build up students’ language skills, but they also stimulate their power of imagination.
- Cartoon films must be selected or designed to achieve learning purposes. In order to enable educators to consume time, they must be careful to the quality of the cartoon film which should be completely integrated to the content of the textbook.
- Constructivist approach has the ability to reinforce knowledge, because it enables learners to discover knowledge individually. Then, they would be able to construct a complete idea within collaborative group work.
- Combination of constructivist approach applications and Cartoon film as a learning material in language classroom supports pedagogical goals. Both of them are able to develop learners' linguistic knowledge, since they depend on every day’s experiences. Cartoon represents everyday activities or experiences. Also, constructivism allows the learner to connect between their prior experience and new concepts.

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References


Unveiling the Effectiveness of Massive Open Online Courses at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Algeria

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Abstract
Moving from the “Classical System” to the LMD one (Licence Master Doctorat), the Algerian University is facing several hurdles in teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) which prevent it to fulfil the demands of higher education and globalization. One key element which can foster knowledge and raise the quality education is the advent of MOOCs. Massive open online courses (MOOCs), which are a set of courses that take place online and are open for every single person who seeks the best teaching quality of leading prestigious universities for free, are a new educational phenomenon that have rapidly immersed into higher education. This paper aims to investigate the potential of MOOCs at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University Algeria, which can be brought to the Algerian University, as well as to scrutinize the students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards their integration- offline, in teaching and learning EFL. This research allows us to explore a new facet of learning and teaching EFL in the Algerian context. In this prospect, our main issue concerns the MOOCs’ implementation in the Algerian university. The study is conducted with 42 EFL students to get as much data as possible to validate or invalidate our main hypothesis. Accordingly, we have used a mixed method research using an experiment conducted in three stages to allow learners to self-direct their learning process. The findings show that MOOCs make students more productive and make teachers less centred. However, we recommend that teachers would promote for a good understanding of MOOCs.

Key words: Algerian University, EFL, MOOCs, Students’ and teachers’ attitudes
1. Introduction
Learning and teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in Algeria have attested an overwhelming number of limitations since the implementation of the Licence Master Doctorate (LMD) system in 2003. Many universities struggle to meet the students’ needs and respond to the LMD system requirements. Moreover, students’ learning process is far from fulfilling its demanding objectives such as autonomy, self-directed learning, the mastery of the macro skills, etc. Accordingly, many scholars and language experts consider that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a supportive tool to teaching and learning EFL can bridge the gap between deficiencies and brilliancy as it can promote significant changes in EFL classrooms for the benefits of both teachers and learners. ICT is regarded as being a catalyst for innovation and novelty in teaching and learning EFL. Moreover, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as being part of the umbrella term ‘ICT’ highly contribute to the change which education, especially higher education, has witnessed across the world today. Although MOOC is gaining popularity among European and American universities, it is still unfamiliar by an overwhelming number of students and teachers in Algeria.

Referring to the Algerian University, few EFL students and teachers are accustomed with this current educational trend which is shaping the learning and teaching processes of million individuals across the world. The Algerian university still struggles to meet the demanding goals of the LMD system such as the integration of ICT in EFL classrooms, allowing learners to become active and lifelong learners, the macro skills are not mastered effectively and so on. In this regard, we should accustom teachers and students with MOOCs to apply them at universities and cater for the expectations of new reforms in Algeria and adapt ourselves to exigencies of the globalized world.

Hence, we have raised three main issues to be investigated during our experiment. They are cited as follows:

- How can we take benefits of MOOCs once using them offline in the classroom?
- What are the students’ attitudes towards the incorporation of MOOCs in learning process at the department of English, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University?
- What are the teachers’ attitudes towards the incorporation of MOOCs in teaching process at the department of English, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University?

Before answering these main issues, we speculate that massive open online courses can be of a great benefit for both EFL teachers and students; they allow teachers to be less centred and involve more students in learning. Also, we hypothesize that EFL students can show interest towards the integration of MOOCs in the learning process though teachers may demonstrate reluctance to use them during their teaching due to lack of time and information about the way MOOCs should be applied, offline, while teaching.

Thus, the purpose of our study is to disclose the potential of MOOCs to the Algerian EFL students and teachers within a time where many universities, notably Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University hardly overcome their hurdles. In addition to that, this research aims at raising consciousness of EFL students and teachers about the importance of MOOCs and collecting their attitudes towards their integration in teaching and learning EFL.
We estimate, this study will also contribute to re-think the future of education in the Algerian university. In other words, it will contribute meaningfully and effectively to improve education and the quality of both learning and teaching EFL in many universities- in our case, the university of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis, Mostaganem-. The research work will also determine if the agents of universities are ready enough to welcome a new horizon of teaching and learning EFL in workplaces. In what follows, we will provide our readers with a brief overview of MOOCs in order to introduce them to this key concept.

2. MOOCs: An overview

The creation of MOOCs has not emerged coincidently. Several reasons encouraged scholars and researchers to create distinct online courses for everyone for free. (Schulze, 2014); the reasons for creating MOOCs are that many students across the world are looking for continuity in learning after finishing classes, to better understand a topic or a concept of a given subject matter and perform well in tasks, and this can be done through MOOCs. Likewise, the LMD system stimulates learners to behave autonomously and be fully engaged in the various educational opportunities and through individual work. Also, learners of the world are looking for access to reputable universities to benefit from a unique learning experience and a high quality of education; however, these students are not able to concretise such wishful thinking due to some substantial barriers as financial resources, accommodations, timetable, etc. In this prospect, MOOCs can be a powerful tool which universities can use to spread quality education throughout the world in order to allow learners develop and foster different skills, expand intellectual imagination, and mainly build a strong learning network (Pappano, 2012).

Originally, the term MOOC dates back to 2008 where two Canadian researchers – Siemens and Downes – developed a high quality of online delivery courses based on openness, massiveness, and free for every single individual who seeks the best teaching quality of some of leading prestigious universities. Initially, 25 students of their respective university enrolled and paid for their online course, but when the university made it open and free for everyone, another 2.300 students from different parts of the world enrolled to embark upon this online course for a couple of weeks (Schulze, 2014). The purpose of this experiment was to allow learners to self-direct their learning process as well as to connect with each other to develop new knowledge.

Afterwards, several educational platforms have mushroomed online over the past five years as Coursera, edX, FutureLearn, and others. After the success of the Canadian researchers, American universities have started to create online courses for free and for everyone, these courses include lessons, assessments, tests, etc via Coursera platform. In 2012, Coursera has acknowledged that two million enrollees registered to various online courses (Pappano, 2012). Also in 2012, FutureLearn, a British company launched by the Open University, England, is providing a set of free online courses in various areas of studies such as literature, education, science, etc. Participants study and complete the requirements of the course and can also obtain statements of participation or even have specialized degrees from these prestigious British universities.
3. Method

Our research is a tentative attempt to enquire into the effectiveness of massive open online courses and the perceptions of students and teachers towards their implementations in learning and teaching EFL. We have used both of qualitative and quantitative paradigms to transform individual’s responses into numerical form and obtain accurate results from individuals’ opinions and beliefs towards a given phenomenon. The qualitative method is used to seek individuals’ assumptions and attitudes about a particular matter which is unknown or unstudied as our present enquiry about MOOCs (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2010), (cited in Sarnou, H et al, 2012). On another hand, the quantitative method deals with the collection and analysis of information in numeric form derived from a large-scale of representatives; the data are organized and transformed into numbers in order to test one’s hypothesis –or hypotheses. Burns and Grove (1999) believe that quantitative method to research encompasses many key components as formality and objectivity. Hence, the quantitative paradigm helps the researcher to translate informants’ information into numeric one and thus analyzed statistically. (Polit & Hungler, 1995).

However, both of qualitative and quantitative methods are useful tools in this experiment. (Bryman, 1988) argues, “...both of qualitative and quantitative approaches should be combined.” As cited in Hughes (2006, p. 1). Creswell (2006) embodies these two research methods into mixed methods. He states, “Mixed methods research provides more comprehensive evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research alone” (2006, p.9); the researchers are allowed to use all the tools of data collection of both methods rather than being limited to one single type of data collection associated with either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell, 2006).

In this prospect, a questionnaire to students and teachers which includes both of open-ended questions and closed questions is distributed to our informants. Open-ended questions, which are a category of questions that enable respondents to answer questions in their own words, are being asked to collect the necessary data and written narratives. Such pieces of written words help to unveil a person’s belief, an assumption and what he/she wishes to convey. As for closed questions, they limit respondents with series of options to be chosen according to their perceptions; the informants can either tick one single response or many. Then, an unstructured interview was also used to reinforce the quality of our investigation.

In addition to that, the sampling method used in this study was purposive sampling which is suitable for qualitative method. According to (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2010), (cited in Sarnou, H et al, 2012) state, “Researchers who engage in some form of qualitative research are likely to select a purposive sample, that is, they select a sample they feel will yield the best understanding of what they are studying” (p. 431).

4. Context

The experimentation took place at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University- English department, Mostaganem. This location was selected because it fitted the criteria of our experiment: the availability of equipments such as projectors and lecture-rooms, familiarity with the policy of the university and the stuff. Thus it could provide us with significant data which would contribute to answer the study’s research questions.
a. Participant
For this study, 42 participants who are from the department of English at Abdelhamid IbnBadis University have contributed to the achievement of our investigation. These participants, who are third year licence (L3) EFL students, are not acquainted with MOOCs because of its newness, so they were selected intentionally. The reasons of their contribution in this research were to check if they support the use of MOOCs inside and outside the classroom to reinforce their learning process. Moreover, we have also selected five EFL teachers from the department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University. These selected teachers are accustomed with the concept of MOOC and its different application.

b. Data Collection Instruments
The data collection instruments used in this study is an experiment conducted in three stages and two questionnaires given to students and teachers to collect their responses regarding MOOCs’ incorporation in EFL classrooms.

c. Data Collection Procedure
For the procedure of our research, we have conducted an experiment with our case study- third year third year students of English at Abdelhamid IbnBadis University, Mostaganem- with whom we experimented a three-week offline course which is entitled “Developing Your Research Project”. It is taken from www.FutureLearn.com and has been applied during research methodology classes once a week from February 25th, 2016 until March 10th, 2016. We have shortened the course duration due to time constraints we faced. The questionnaire has been handed out to students and teachers once the experiment was done.

5. Data Analysis
After collecting the responses of both students and teachers, we start off analyzing their main responses towards integration of MOOCs in EFL classrooms.

a. Students’ Responses
Among the questions we have asked our participants, we have chosen to analyse four main questions which seem primordial and significant to be analyzed and discussed. They are as follows:

- Do MOOCs motivate you? Why?
- Would you like MOOCs to be integrated in teaching? Comment?
- What is the skill(s) which MOOCs enhance?
- What are your suggestions to teachers vis-à-vis MOOCs implementation in classrooms?

The following figure pinpoints the students’ motivation towards the use of MOOCs.
Figure 1. Students’ Motivation towards MOOCs

Figure one shows that 40 students (95.2%) acknowledge that they are highly motivated when being taught with MOOCs- their knowledge is reinforced and the courses are credible and reliable since they are adopted from prestigious leading universities. Nevertheless, 02 informants (4.8%) believe that MOOCs are not motivated because they assert that not all students are equipped with internet connection to access to the various online opportunities.

The following analysis has to do with the learners’ attitude towards the incorporation of MOOCs in teaching. So, the next figure clarifies the results:

Figure 2. Students’ Attitude towards MOOCs Integration in Teaching

As it is noticed, 28 informants (68.3%) think that it is high time MOOCs were integrated in the teaching process. Their comments disclose that MOOCs play a great role in shaping the way students learn because the course contents deliver a high quality of information and sources. Moreover, the informants acknowledge that MOOCs do develop and foster the study skills as well as they make learning process enjoyable and engaging. However, 12 of them (29.3%) could not decide upon the future of MOOCs in teaching EFL in higher education and 01 of them which
represents 2.4% rejects the fact of integrating the current educational trend in teaching because it is stated that students are lazy and will not bother themselves to learn online.

We will present now the analysis of the skills enhanced by MOOCs from our respondents’ point of view. Thus, we have come up with the following results:

![Enhanced Skills in MOOCs](chart.png)

**Figure 3. Enhanced Skills in MOOCs**

Twenty eight respondents (71.8%) reckon that listening is primarily enhanced in MOOCs, followed by speaking, writing then reading. Only 01 informant (2.6%) states that critical thinking is also a skill which is developed through these online courses.

The following analysis is concerned with the students’ suggestions to teachers vis-à-vis MOOCs’ use in their classrooms. From their comments, we have taken some relevant ones. They are as follows:

“I really encourage teachers to use MOOC because it will help students to enhance their ability in listening and speaking as well as get great benefits from the courses delivered.”

“Using MOOC is very important in order to motivate students.”

“Teachers have to implement MOOC in order to help students listen to an authentic language.”

“I endorse using MOOCs or teaching with the use of ICTs. They make students more engaged and interested in certain subject matters.”

“The MOOCs’ implementation in the Algerian university’s classrooms will be a revolution in our educational system and a jump to another level of creativity and self-reliability among students.”

Students have revealed that MOOCs make them discover a new facet of learning; this current educational phenomenon allowed them to be involved, improve their learning skills as well as
they can benefit from the course contents of reputable worldwide universities. All these forces come together to encourage teachers to use MOOCs whilst teaching any subject matter.

b. Teachers’ Reponses

From the teachers’ questionnaire, we have followed the same procedure as students’ survey. In other words, we have chosen the most relevant responses to be analyzed. Therefore, four questions appear noteworthy to display their results. They are cited as follows:

- How would you rate your attitude towards the integration of MOOCs in higher education? Justify
- How would you rate your learners’ attitude towards the integration of MOOCs in higher education? Justify
- What are your recommendations vis-à-vis MOOCs implementation in EFL classes?

Firstly, knowing the attitude of the teachers towards MOOCs’ use in lecturing is one of the major concerns of our investigation. Figure four demonstrates the results obtained:

![Teachers' Attitude towards the Integration of MOOCs](image)

In figure four, it is perceived that the majority of teachers support the idea of introducing MOOCs while teaching/learning EFL. Their comments reveal that MOOCs get students engaged, encourage them to deal with different technological devices and mainly create a network which includes native speakers and other speakers of English based on collaboration and sharing information. Moreover, MOOC is a new way of learning which especially attracts students’ attention since they are high-tech addicts. It also aids them become more autonomous as they have to concentrate, listen, understand and conclude. However, 01 teacher is neutral vis-à-vis MOOCs incorporation because it is mentioned that the Algerian university is not technologically mature enough to adapt such novelties. The negative attitude has not been selected.
The following analysis helps us to understand students’ attitude towards the use of MOOCs from the teachers’ perspective. The following statistics unveil that:

![Learners' Attitude towards MOOCs Integration According to Teachers](image)

**Figure 5. Learners’ Attitudes towards MOOCs Integration According to Teachers**

We can notice that teachers could not make a common response towards our question since the positive and the negative responses are equal. 02 teachers (40%) believe that students will demonstrate a positive attitude towards the use of MOOCs in the classroom since the majority of students are accustomed with ICTs and can literally show interest and engagement if they are applied meaningfully. The other 02 teachers (40%) assert that students will refute the idea of MOOCs because they are not familiar with the full virtualization of their learning.

For our final analysis, we have selected the main teachers’ recommendations on how educationalists and pedagogues benefit from MOOCs to help EFL students improve learning. Their comments are cited as follows:

“Integrate MOOCs in traditional classrooms to make courses more constructed and varied, - Provide learning materials to assure online content availability in EFL classrooms, - Expose students to different ways of teaching, - Expose students to different types of learning materials.”

“Using budgets for having equipped classrooms with computers and Internet. This is not difficult to have. Some faculties at the University of Mostaganem have these kinds of rooms for their students such as INES Faculty, Mostaganem. Also having real trained teachers for the courses of computing and making training to use technology in class compulsorily for all teachers.”

“The MOOCs would be such an interesting and effective tool in our university. However, teachers should be really skillful in performing a lesson with such a new tool. The use of such a course entails assessment to make sure students have understood thus they're following up.”

“As a future educational reform, MOOCs can work only with the one condition of equipping universities, faculties, departments and their libraries with full access to high speed internet.”

We have deduced that many teachers do encourage the incorporation of MOOCs, but with an intensive training to master their use in classrooms. Moreover, efforts have to be made to equip
classrooms and libraries with technological devices to permit both students and teachers look at some of the best universities’ course contents via massive open online courses.

6. Results and Discussion

Nowadays, many universities are moving away from a traditional teaching to relatively a modern one. Throughout our questionnaires, we have discovered that views are balanced regarding the integration of ICTs, and more particularly MOOCs in EFL classrooms as the core of learning and teaching.

Students believe that MOOC is a motivational tool for them. In fact, in a modern classroom where ICTs is the forefront of teaching/learning EFL, students experience a new facet of learning through exposing them through an authentic language, learning with accurate materials of prestigious leading universities, be it British or Americans, and overcoming the difficulties of learning a foreign language. In this prospect, the students support the integration of MOOCs during their lectures and tutorials to enhance a multitude of skills such as listening skill which is noticeably neglected at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University; as part of the LMD system, training the aural skill is regarded as a vital requirement while aiming to master a foreign language, but no phonetic laboratories are established to cover such aspect of the language, thus the use of MOOCs can train students and expose them to real English. Moreover, speaking is also enhanced through discussion, reflections and feedback; the teacher plays the role of a mediator and facilitator and students, themselves, contribute to a wide extent in making learning process successful. As for reading and writing, it is required to create an online learning community where the teacher creates a group in a social media network such as Facebook and invites students to participate, respond to questions, learn and prepare lessons to be done once in the classroom; the learning process, in this case, will have a continuity and thus can highly be beneficial and advantageous for students and positively influence the quality of their learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, there is a minority who reckons that the integration of MOOCs will not probably match the demanding goals of students, teachers and even the university’s system and this is due to several reasons; laziness and lack of interest may be obvious factors which will prevent teachers and authorities to implement MOOCs in the university. Moreover, although the world has become globalized and digitized, many students and teachers are still technologically ignorant and thus they do not master such skills which are tremendously needed nowadays.

Students are always in a constant need for teachers to provide them with help and guidance; they prefer to seek feedback, pieces of advice and answers from their teacher(s) as they need newness in their learning environment. They report that MOOCs can be the ideal tool to ignite the learning process, so they recommend teachers to consider this current educational fad by familiarizing them with other universities’ programmes and contents to widen their educational perspectives and avoid them being restricted to what is being presented and delivered by the university only. According to our learners, the MOOC of “developing your research project” during research methodology classes, has allowed them to comprehend distinct methodology-related concepts, share their opinions, match the new knowledge with the prior one and most importantly gain an in-depth insight concerning how Southampton University, United
Kingdom, deals and tackles with research methodology. Hence, they could have learned and reinforced an overwhelming amount of information and understand better academic research.

Also, through our analyses, we have discovered that teachers did share to some extent their students’ point of view regarding the incorporation of massive open online courses within the classroom. Teachers’ attitude towards the integration of MOOCs in teaching is mostly positive since MOOC’s use is viewed as a motivated and educated tool; students feel more autonomous and teachers are being less centered. Besides, some teachers argue that students are high-tech addicts and integrating MOOCs as an important part in learning can literally attract them and help them to concentrate, listen actively, understand, reflect and conclude. The learners can develop some meta-cognitive skills and be aware of what they already know and do not know, understand what they should need for a given task and have an idea of how to use the acquired skills meaningfully in learning.

We have also asked the teachers’ opinion concerning their students’ attitudes towards the implementation of MOOCs in learning and teaching. Their answers are indeed balanced; those who are pessimistic think that many students are still technologically illiterate i.e. they do not have a good mastery of computing skills, especially students who come from rural areas, even the courses they take online or offline are still about theory. Yet, the learners are not fully aware of their virtualization of their learning as they do not even possess internet connection at home or do not have computers at all; this is going to be difficult to deal with such type of students.

Unlike the pessimist view towards MOOCs, the supporters assert that MOOCs fit into learners’ needs. Students are always exited to try something new and beneficial for them, especially when it is related in all ways with what they have been learning and the use of ICT. They can even catch up what they have been missing in the classroom through consulting the lessons and instructions through online groups. In this regard, teachers encourage the ministry of higher education, the universities and to whom it may concern to adopt this educational phenomenon and include it in teaching and learning to vary the atmosphere during the class; this is going to help student to be engaged and have various insights about different course contents and universities’ approaches and methods, using budgets to equip classrooms and lecture-rooms with at least a performing projector, a secured internet connection and a good quality of speakers to expose students to a clear sound of English as well as train teachers so that they become technologically skillful in delivering a successful lesson based on MOOC.

These findings are results of huge efforts made all along the experiment to encourage and help both students and teachers believe in the potential of MOOCs vis-à-vis learning and teaching EFL and apply them meaningfully within a given course.

7. Conclusion

Throughout this paper, we have raised some crucial issues about unveiling the effectiveness of MOOCs and how EFL students and teachers consider them as an important component to foster knowledge about EFL and hone the quality of education. To reach such an aim, we have undertaken an in-depth scrutiny at the level of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Mostaganem. Thus, we come to acknowledge that the majority of EFL students and teachers support the incorporation of massive open online courses’ strategies and approaches into teaching and learning EFL because as it was mentioned in the previous sections, MOOCs, as a
revolutionary concept, spread high quality education delivered by prestigious universities; this is going to contribute meaningfully and significantly to foster students’ study skills and widen teachers’ pedagogical perspectives.

To sum up, MOOCs are able to afford a unique learning experience to EFL learners; they can help them to deepen and perfect their study skills. As for teachers, they can act as being facilitators and can foster their pedagogical/computing skills, especially in an era where a great deal of individuals are becoming digitized and are seeking novelties in various domains, such as higher education.

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Successful Online Learning Collaboration: Peer Feedback and Technology Integration in
English Composition Courses

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Abstract
The following paper describes learning processes that occurred in six classrooms of approximately 97 advanced and novice English composition students studying at an American university in the Middle East. The students came from multicultural backgrounds; including African, Middle Eastern, Asian, European and American. Due to scheduling issues (long breaks and accelerated lectures), students were highly encouraged to integrate technologies to extend their learning outside of the classroom and to develop collaborative learning groups. Assigned tasks required students to use a collaborative editor to provide support in synchronous and asynchronous learning contexts. Peer feedback on writing errors and content was requested. The learning objectives were to develop skills in locating and classifying data, summarizing literature, and reviewing and applying composition formatting and content information provided. Learners were expected to produce individual compositions in narrative form (Novice Writers) and academic report formats (Advanced Writers). Throughout the courses, self-correction of writing errors increased in quantity and quality. Autonomous Learning was evidenced in the individual compositions produced. Student Satisfaction was high with learning experiences across the groups described, as supportive of critical thinking and highly motivational. Retention and pass rates for the six courses reported were significantly higher than the average outcomes reported typically for those courses by the institution. A key factor in these successful outcomes appears to be the participation in online collaborative learning both self-directed and instructor assigned. Convenience factored greatly in what technologies were selected and used by individuals.

Keywords: CALL, error correction, learner autonomy, online collaborative learning, peer learning
Introduction

The research on collaboration and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) described in this paper came about through chance and pragmatic necessity. I was working, as an adjunct instructor, at an American university in the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), and had been assigned to instruct three advanced writing courses and three composition courses for novice learners. The three novice courses were scheduled back to back during the mornings and the classrooms were next to one another. I realized that the scheduling offered a convenient opportunity to extend to a much larger group of peer learners if needed. The advanced courses ran over two terms; the first in the fall, 2013 semester and the other two in the following accelerated summer session. Initial assignments for both groups were designed as a means of practicing summarizing and classifying literature and the students’ first attempt at writing a complete essay (novice students) and an academic research report (advanced writing students). Due to the fact that much of the work required of assignments would take place outside of the classroom, I encouraged students to interact in collaborative small group discussions in class and to form working partnerships with peers outside of class. A variety of computer tools were introduced to assist with continuing dialogues on readings, composition planning, and peer feedback, and were to be employed outside the courses, throughout the terms and over the scheduled breaks.

Review of Literature

Collaborative Writing

The collaboration described in this paper is focused on the outcome of students learning the basic skills of writing acceptable academic essays’. The subject matter taught in many ways, combines the old and new. ‘The old’, in terms of writing objectives, refers to the attention paid, by the instructor, learners, and learners’ peers, to the basic wording, grammar and writing of sentences. These are then developed into paragraphs that focus on main ideas which are supported by individual’s experiences. Finally, those paragraphs, through the use of transitions and other cohesive devices, are tied together in a composition. The final outcome is when the writer hopes to present their ideas and experiences in a united, cohesive manner that is comprehensible and interesting to the reading audience.

In terms of collaborative approaches, the class based research presented in this paper used a variety of collaborations, such as peer evaluations of individual’s drafts described by Ede & Lunsford (1990) as an old or traditional approach to collaborative writing, most commonly applied in expository and composition theory courses (p.15). A more recent trend, the ‘multi-authored’ approach, where learners work together, in groups, to develop a single text, is also used. This approach to rhetoric has been argued, by some, as being closer to real world writing or expected social collaborations in the work place (Coe, 2002). In a tertiary context, the newest collaboration used in the study would be the use of coordinated computer support where summarizing the literature and jointly planning the writing processes allowed learners to interact and work together in both synchronous and asynchronous environments. Arguably from a young collegiate student perspective the use of CALL and mobile technologies may often be viewed as the norm or expected communication tool applied in daily communications and not viewed as “new” at all. For those working in formal academic settings, however, the active integration of technologies in classroom and in extended outside learning contexts is still viewed as a new
phenomenon which has been rapidly integrated in teaching and learning contexts over the last fifteen years.

**CALL Participation, Interactions and Productivity**

In college classrooms today, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) participation has become the norm. In multi-lingual classrooms where spoken and written interaction continue to be the primary focus “the how” to use technology productively is still being explored. As Beaker (1995) claimed, the impact human/computer interactions have on productivity and collaborative learning has been at the forefront of Educational Research discussions for some time, yet the successful use of these technologies in educational planning is still developing. The rapid surge of CALL and other technology applications has come about through the affordability and portability of handheld devices and the prolific development of freeware or low cost software which has allowed computers to be actively integrated in tertiary classrooms (Bunts-Anderson & Campos, 2010; Snyder, 2008).

Over a decade ago, Ragoonaden & Bordeleau (2000) claimed that the interactive use of the internet, such as e-mail and hypertext navigation should provide learners with the chance to participate actively in the learning process and to communicate easily with others (para. 1). Today, easy access to online browsing, searching, and instant communication applications are available on most computers and mobile technologies. Thus the opportunities to extend and support online learning have become more evident and pragmatic. CALL has had a great impact on English composition writing in particular, due to the learners’ current ease in accessing information and composition models. For teachers, the need to seek out, understand and apply coordinated online support for the actual outlining and drafting required of writing processes has now become crucial (Erkens, Jaspers, Prangsma, & Kanselaar, 2005). For both instructors and students, it is this coordination of CALL and the active participation in collaborations both within and outside classroom contexts that is now viewed as a key component and skill required in the output of quality composition texts.

**Peer Review and Technology Integration**

The process of students reviewing other students’ work termed “Peer Review” is often used in educational contexts to achieve specific learning objectives. The change of roles from student to collaborative learner or teacher is thought to support higher order learning processes. In composition writing, the Peer Review process is believed to be particularly helpful in text development as it allows the writers opportunities to self-evaluate and evaluate others through exploration of texts from micro and macro perspectives. In education, there are a variety of forms in which peer reviews can be used. They may be planned from a traditional standpoint to mimic the scholarly review process used in the sciences to improve quality. Peer Reviews may also be organized around “team based” perspective where learners are viewed to benefit through the collaboration and mentoring opportunities provided by working with others. Some learners have also been asked to be “Peer Graders” and formally mark classmates’ work. This appears to work better for some projects or subject areas than others.

In the area of writing, the practice of peers grading peers tends to receive more negative than positive reviews from the learners. Generally comments such as differences in ability, differences in effort applied, lack of expertise, privacy issues and competitiveness appear to be
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constant in students’ reports of peer grading experiences. Despite the issues reported with peer grading, most reports continue to tout the benefits of self-assessment and peer-feedback to the writing students’ learning processes. Consequently, many teachers today, seem to agree that the assessment of students’ writing should not be limited to one instructor. Likewise, when the outcomes of peer reviews are reported either in the literature or through various instructors’ reports, the findings typically suggest that students who go through a peer review process tend to do better than those that don’t. The opportunities to comment, reflect draft and redraft appear to benefit students in assessing their own writing processes and progress. Graham (2008) argues the peer review process is especially powerful if students assess their writing performance in relation to self-or teacher-identified writing goals. According to The Teaching Center at Washington University at St. Louis (n.d.), participating in peer review can specifically help students in the following ways:

- Learn how to read carefully, with attention to the details of a piece of writing (whether their own or another writer’s);
- Learn how to strengthen their writing by taking into account the responses of actual and anticipated readers;
- Make the transition from writing primarily for themselves or for an instructor to writing for a broader audience—a key transition for students as they learn to write university-level papers and as they prepare for post-graduate work;
- Learn how to formulate and communicate constructive feedback on a peer’s work;
- Learn how to gather and respond to feedback on their own work.

(Using Peer Review, para. 1)

The use of peer-review in the class-based studies reported is particularly relevant in that assignments and tasks selected encouraged and required students to develop all five of the skills listed as helpful. The processes of completing these objectives were supported by the provision of easy access to a variety of technology tools. Students were asked to interact and extend their learning outside of the classroom through selecting technologies they viewed as most useful and helpful to achieving their individual course goals.

Technology integration is a broad term however, for the study reported it will be defined as the use of technology tools such as computers, and mobile devices like smartphones and tablets. This integration also includes the use of social media platforms, networks like Blackboard and Facebook, interactive software applications like Google Docs, chats and forums, and the Internet to support classroom practices. Successful technology integration is achieved when the use of technology is readily available for the task at hand, supports specific curricular goals and helps students to reach their goals in easy, pragmatic ways. Technology integration is at its best, when students or teachers do not need stop and think about why or how they are using a particular technology. Instead they are actively engaged in the process of learning and the tools used have become a natural, seamless part of the process (Snyder, 2008).
Methodology

Context

Participants in the first stage of the study described originally totaled 107 students enrolled in six courses, with 55 Novice Writers and 52 Advanced Writers. However, owing to the university’s policies of enrolment, withdrawals due to lack of attendance and low performance, only 48 novice and 47 advanced students remained enrolled after the first month, and only 45 novice and 44 advanced students completed the entire project. Novice students’ ages ranged from 16-22 and advanced students’ ages ranged from 17-27. The students came from mixed multicultural backgrounds, which included African, Middle Eastern, Asian, European and American learners. The university where the research took place is an American university in the Middle East named the American University of Sharjah (A.U.S.). The A.U.S. enjoys a reputation as a high quality institution of higher learning and students from all over the region, and abroad attend the university. The majority of students in both cohorts were international students, with 10 students from the local area enrolled in the novice level classes and 7 students from the local area enrolled in the advanced classes. Thus, across the total of both groups, 15.89% of the students were U.A.E. residents.

Students enrolled in the novice courses were placed in a writing bridging course based on the scores they received on the international TEFOL exam and on the university’s own entrance assessments. Students enrolled in the advanced writing courses had completed their Freshman English composition requirements and were typically enrolled to either gain research writing experience and did so purposefully or as a course requirement of their major area of study. The A.U.S. enrolls approximately 5,259 students annually and the campus is located in University City, Sharjah. Designed specifically as a location for multiple tertiary campuses, University City has very few housing facilities. Thus, the majority of students, enrolled in the courses reviewed, commuted between 30 minutes to 2 hours or more to attend classes. This commute and the distance between student residences factored highly in the need for the extended online collaboration reported. All courses at A.U.S. are taught in English.

The majority of students enrolled in both courses came from areas where languages other than English (LOTE) were spoken. Experiences with English varied across the group. Most often, English was the second language (ESL) of their home countries. For some, English was a foreign language (EFL) used primarily for international business. English oral language skills were limited with some of the novice students; however, all of the students enrolled in the advanced courses were fluent English speakers. A majority of the students across both courses had attended educational institutions which taught subjects in English previously.

Data Collection

Qualitative/Quantitative

Data for the six course study reported was collected in a number of ways using a mixed methodology approach. Enrollment data and course completion rates were reviewed and then compared and contrasted with the reported institutional averages for those courses. Peer feedback on two similar but level appropriate tasks 1) a summary of literature and, 2) and a critical analysis of literature were given to both groups and assessed. Additionally, an Ethnographic perspective was applied by collecting additional materials as they emerged, and were recorded throughout the course. This purposeful collection of various materials was done to
provide a rich, holistic perspective on the processes and outcomes of course collaborations and technology integrations. This methodological approach was inclusive of all perceptions gathered from participants. Therefore, oral reflections of individual learning processes described by students in their end-of-course presentations, instructor observations of classroom discourse and teacher notes were also collected.

Technology participation across both groups was measured and compared. The usage of collaborative tools provided by the instructor such as, (Black Board Collaborate, Facebook forum and chat, Blackboard group chats, institutional emails, Google Doc comments and Gmail chats were counted. Additional technologies, such as text messages, alternative chats and forums used by students were later provided to the instructor for course collaboration points and were also counted.

**Questionnaire and Independent Assessments**

In an attempt to assess the student satisfaction with their course learning outcomes and collect information regarding their opinions on CAL usage, a questionnaire was developed and institutional assessments, already in place, were used (Appendix A). The questionnaire asked students to specifically rate the usefulness or helpfulness of various technologies used in the course. These questionnaires were distributed individually to the students by the instructor in the one-on-one consultation time provided with their courses and returned at the end of the course. Responses were anonymous and questions on the questionnaire were written in English and Arabic to increase clarity, particularly for novice level students Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Question sample Technology Integration Questionnaire.](image-url)

This figure illustrates a sample question asking participants to rate the helpfulness of technology options provided in a learning environment.
When asked to evaluate the computer and electronic devices used to assist with out of class communications. Students from both levels claimed that these types of support were “very helpful.” However, when rating which tools or services were the most helpful the data collected for each class was not always consistent with the other two classes in that area. Comparisons between the two language levels were also dissimilar on various items. This is because for some segments, within classes, certain items were considered by the learners to be uniquely beneficial. For example, one group of peers who interacted regularly outside of class reported Black Berry texting as the “most helpful communication device” because they had all owned Black Berry phones and had found the texting option free and very convenient. The only other group of peers to mention texting in the Novice Level classes reported only that it was helpful in setting up face-to-face meetings outside of class. The novice courses as a whole reported only limited use of texting peers. In contrast, the advanced writing students, as a whole, classified texting as either the “most helpful or a “very helpful” communication device” for interacting with outside the classroom.

Another anomaly found was in the use of the Black Board Collaborate conferencing feature. Across both cohorts, students described Collaborate as “unhelpful” and too difficult to use. Some claimed that individual training would be required and that the system was not user friendly. Some students in all six classes admitted that the requirements to register, schedule meeting times and log in were too complicated and time consuming so they had not attempted to use it. However three students in one novice level class reported the Collaborate system as the most helpful electronic support and reported they had tried it and worked through the initial learning of the functions together. The Collaborate system was considered very helpful to this group because it allowed for live conversations with group members who had to travel overseas during the project.

Two outside independent sources of data were also collected and used. First, the Student satisfaction comments regarding course and CALL tools used in the course were collected from the students’ institutional course evaluations. These institutional evaluations were done on-line, anonymously directly by the institution and results were provided to instructors after the term had ended. Secondly, to further assess the quality of learning outcomes the researcher requested that the final compositions and research reports be reviewed independently by administrative course heads and directors of both departments to garner a third party perspective on the quality of the final compositions developed.

Course Assignments and Tasks Assessed

Group writing: Synthesizing & Classification Essay. One of the primary goals for the courses was to develop students’ academic writing skills, to a level that would be acceptable, as an academic essay, in their future courses. This was a complex task, as it entailed the synthesizing of a number of readings and developing new writing skills, for the students. Both groups of students would need to be able to cite information using APA for in text and end of text referencing, and they would need to use academic formatting throughout. Students were also asked to include the sentence types modeled in academic essay introductions, body paragraphs and conclusions. Both learning groups were also expected to use formal writing styles in the second or third person and proofread their work for errors particularly in wording and grammar use before submitting their final assignments.
Due to differences in writing and reading abilities the levels of reading materials and writing formats expected for both groups were different. For instance, the novice learners were asked to review a group three readings on a topic of their choice from narrative essays that had been published on the This I Believe site’s published essays as the material for classification (A Public Dialogue about Belief, 2016). The cohort as a whole was asked to select four topics from the numerous topics published on the site and use the site’s indexing feature to locate 3 articles on the topics they chose. In contrast, the advanced learners were asked to locate 5 academic readings from the university library including data bases on the topic they were researching for their final course project. The final course project would entail a literature review and a report of findings on primary data they collected over the course. The research topics and readings were individually chosen by each student. Two of the readings selected had to be studies reporting findings in the area they were interested in.

Once the novice level students had located their three readings they were asked to summarize what they had read and write an academic summary paragraph. The advanced level students were asked to read the 5 articles they selected and then categorize and summarize them then write out summaries in a five paragraph classification essay. Initially, both groups would do this task in a written draft form and share with their peers online for interactive feedback. They would then apply the feedback and share a second draft with their instructor. The instructor would review the draft and provide feedback to individual students which they would then apply before submitting their final drafts of the task for a grade.

**Group Writing: Narrative Essay & Academic Research Report**

The second assignment assessed for the Novice Writers was a five-paragraph essay in narrative form. The students were asked to follow the guidelines published on the *This I Believe* site and to tell a story, about what they believed, writing in first person in 500-600 words. Students were asked to clearly name their belief, to remain positive and be personal in their essays (A public dialogue about belief, 2016). The second assignment for the Advanced Writers was a 5 page persuasive academic essay which acted as a proposal for their research projects. The proposal needed to include all the sections presented in the course and specifically required a section that built upon the literature earlier reviewed, a section that explained how the data for the primary research would be collected and, a section that described their plans and a tentative schedule for their investigation.

Both groups of students were given opportunities to receive feedback from their instructor on a rough draft and had the option of sharing their written work with peers for face to face in class and electronically through interactive technologies they were required to give and receive collaborative feedback, prior to final submission. In addition to submitting their written compositions for a grade the students were also asked to share individual essays and reports with the class in final presentations. The novice students were asked to read their essays out loud, and the advanced students were asked to present their reports to the class orally and visually in PowerPoint or another visual option chosen by them, to the class.

To assist with outside dialogues, the instructor developed asynchronous forums on Facebook and through Blackboard and through using Gmail, the university email system or private services for the individuals to comment and communicate. The shared document feature
provided through Google Docs was used by groups to share and provide feedback on each other’s’ work interactively. Synchronous learning opportunities were available through video conferencing options on Google chat live and private services and institutionally provided through Blackboard’s ‘Collaborate’ web conferencing feature and folder sharing features. Students were also asked to email and text each other if they found that convenient. Peer communication outside of class time, was also encouraged by the awarding of points, for active participation, in the group collaboration.

Online collaboration can be broken down into two types according to Zhu (2012) this can be viewed as task based collaboration (teacher assigned) and non-task based collaboration (student selected). To provide easier access to task based collaborations the instructor designed interactive features on group and course pages (Appendix B) with click icons based on topics the students had selected to write about. Live URL links were included to easily navigate to institutional provided technologies, assigned peer-feedback tasks and to easily locate schedule updates and class contact information.

Analysis & Findings

Data Technology Use: Benefit

Data for the six course study reported was collected in a number of ways. Peer feedback on two tasks 1) a summary of literature and classification essay, 2) and peer comments on a narrative composition and research proposal were shared online were assessed (see samples Appendix B and C). Additional technologies used by students not as part of an assignment and later provided to the instructor for course collaboration points were also counted and included such as text messages, and alternative chats and forums. The two most popular communication tools across the group as a whole were the shared document function in Google Docs and the use of emails to communicate. Respondents were then asked to rate the items they had used in terms of benefit to their learning Figure 2.

![Figure 2. Evaluations of novice and advanced learners self-selected technology support.](image-url)
Successful Online Learning Collaboration: Peer Feedback

This figure illustrates actual technology collaborations of students in three novice classes and in three advanced classes over a term.

Of all the collaborative tools used, evaluations indicated that both groups self-selected Google Docs interactive support most frequently to collaborate on their written work outside of class. Within Google Docs they also used the chat and comment options frequently. This is understandable as this support tool allows for direct feedback and asynchronous communication on writing with peers and instructor. Both novice and advanced groups consistently used email to interact with one another and it was the second most used tools in both courses. Evaluations of the usage showed that the university supplied emails and personal emails were selected with similar frequency. Black Board Collaborate the only synchronous or “live” service option supplied by the university was reported as least used by both groups. This suggests that many individuals selected which email and networking tools to use based on convenience and preference rather than maintaining or using assigned services which provided institutional labeling.

There was some indication that when more than one technology was offered that provided similar services. Students’ selection could be influenced by whether collaboration was task based or not. For example, the Novice Learners rated the Blackboard chats as being twice as useful as the Facebook chats. The two reasons given for this were that the Blackboard chats were automatically awarded bonus points for participation and the group forums were private from the rest of the class members. Facebook was rated positively, as many students already had accounts. However the Facebook forums were criticized for not providing the privacy that Blackboard did. Again, convenience was factored into the selection decisions of students as it was faster to have points automatically added than to take the time to provide the instructor with collaborations for course points later.

Another difference across the groups was in the use of social networking tools. The novice group used chat options much more frequently than the advanced group. The novice group used Facebook a similar amount to chat options however the advanced group did not use Facebook at all. Variance was also found in the use of texting and smartphone communications. The advanced group used their smartphones much more frequently (30 discussions) to collaborate than the novice group (5 discussions). A likely reason for this is the difference in the amount of contact groups had with one another. For example the Advanced Writers who took summer courses (Classes E and F) met daily often scheduled meeting to discuss their work, in person, before and after class. Whereas the novice groups who took their courses during the regular term met less often, had different scheduling requirements and less opportunities to meet in person. Thus they may have had the need to rely more on online communication tools.

This heavier reliance on online technology tools by the novice groups was also indicated through the technology participation on tasks, assigned by the instructor, and was measured across both groups. The usage of collaborative tools provided by the instructor (Black Board Collaborate, Facebook forum and chat, Blackboard group chats, institutional emails, Google Doc comments and Gmail chats were counted Figures 3).
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Figure 3. Measured technology use of novice and advanced learners on assigned tasks.
This figure compares and contrasts technology use over a term and with assignment and task weighting.

Overall, the Novice learners used supportive technology on assigned coursework more than the Advanced Learners (Figure 2.). In Figure 2.2 the bar graph indicates that while the novice groups’ use of collaborative technologies remained generally consistent throughout the course the advanced groups’ use of collaborative tools peaked when individual tasks, essay drafts and final projects were presented. There were also differences in when the technologies were used during the courses. At the start of the course, the usage for both groups was high however; during the course Advanced Writers’ usage fluctuated greatly whereas the usage by Novice Writers remained more consistent. The usage pattern across groups were similar in that usage peaked around the midterm however at the end of the course there was a sudden surge of technology activity on assignments by the advanced learners (Figure 2.).

The Advanced Writers had higher language abilities, more experience with composition writing and higher developed study skills than the Novice Writers. Thus, there are a couple of possible reasons for this sudden surge in advanced groups’ online usage; 1) Collaborations may have been focused on time periods when class points required usage or when course assessments were imminent rather than a consistent need for peer feedback, 2) Advanced students may have needed the collaboration and peer-feedback when new tasks were introduced and due such as the task to analyze academic literature given at midterm and the final project reviews due at the end of the course. The technology employed in the classrooms, of both groups, was limited to supplementary and lecture materials viewed with overhead projector and the use of the computer lab for specific tasks.

Students across both groups indicated the overhead projector use to be supportive of classroom learning and beneficial. However the sessions where computer lab time was incorporated into the course teaching were viewed to be “very helpful”. In particular individual
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Grammar and writing exercises that were interactive and individually assessed were stated as being “most useful” and suggestions that they be used more in the course were given.

**Collaboration, Error-Correction**

As a whole, both groups of learners found in-class collaborations with peers and instructor, to be the most important factor in their learning. A collaborative sometimes termed student-centered approach to teaching is one that supports frequent interactions between students and students and instructor Yiqiao (2014). The use of activities and tools that promote meaningful conversation and active reflection on writing has been supported in a large body of literature for some time. Nevertheless, in the study presented, the Novice Writers viewed online collaboration to have a greater impact on their overall performance than the Advanced Writers did. This may be contributed simply to the fact that as novices they had more skills to develop and thus believed they could learn faster and more by being part of group than doing so individually. According to Haythornthwaite, (2012) for the learner the perception of time management can factor greatly in the goals that learners set to achieve in online environments. Therefore it is understandable that online collaborations would appeal more to those who did not have the opportunity to frequently meet face-to-face. Whereas for those who could easily converse with peers in person or faced obstacles when using internet or technology tools online collaborations would probably be considered a waste of time or less productive.

Perhaps due to the more consistent online collaboration of the novice cohorts the social groupings that were formed appeared to be stronger than those described by the advanced cohorts. These social groupings seemed to be very important part of how Novice Writers in particular, viewed the process of acquiring knowledge. For example, one group, on collaborative assigned tasks, argued that the same grade be given to a group member that participated less than the others. In another instance, group members risked their individual grades to allow one member more time in completing and submitting their portion of the work.

The consistent self-directed online participation of the novice learners as group participants beyond that which was assigned suggests that learners view some significant learning as occurring outside the formal classroom. These real-world contexts are particularly relevant when the learners come from a language background that is different from the language the subject is taught in (Bunts-Anderson, 2012). Theoretically this supports the paradigm that learning occurs through interaction and through socially constructing knowledge through interacting online in groups that share similar interests and with the variety of sources technology now provides.

**Collaboration: Social Groups and Instructor Models**

This connected learning is described and supported by Brindley, Walti and Blaschke (2009) in an article titled, *Creating Effective Collaborative Learning Groups in an Online Environment*. The article reports on a study conducted of 15 cohorts over a three year period and details factors that tend to support effective online collaborations. A detailed description of the importance that the novice students viewed “team work” and social grouping to have on their learning is discussed in-depth in an early publication titled *Students as Teachers 1: Novice Writers Using Collaborative Technologies to Improve Written Communications* (Bunts-Anderson, 2014). With the novice students in particular the effectiveness peer learning, peer
teaching and perceived positive impact online participation is viewed to have on individual grades as mentioned by others such as Chiong, & Jovanovic, (2012) descriptions of learners perceptions in their online Game Based Learning (GBL) study.

A review of oral comments in the teacher’s notes taken during the one-on-one consultations with students indicated a general preference for face-to-face feedback with peers and the instructor. When asked to report which collaborative process was most helpful and which was the least helpful to their composition process, responses were mixed across classes. In general, students reported that the face-to-face peer feedback on work was better than the electronic comments. A few stated that the instructor’s feedback comments were very helpful but that some of the peer comments were not. The majority reported that the peer feedback on written work was helpful and very helpful. Three students in the novice group and five students in the advanced group mentioned that the process of providing feedback to peers was too time consuming and that they preferred feedback from the instructor.

Another important factor that emerged in the study was the students’ use of instructor provided models in informing the online comments given to peers on their work. The importance of models or guidelines in scaffolding self-reflection and peer-comments has been well documented in EFL literature. For instance in a recent study involving 71 Indonesian students taking an Essay Writing course Cahyono & Amrini (2016) argue the benefit of instructor provided “guides” or clear models for students to apply when self-correcting and providing peer-feedback as effective in increasing students writing proficiency (p.178). In the study presented, the application of task models was highlighted thru the repetition of comments regarding essay structure, summary writing and analysis that continually appeared in the online shared essay drafts.

It was expected that the students with more developed writing skills would be able to provide stronger peer-feedback on written errors than those with less ability. A difference in complexity of feedback was evident when comparing the feedback provided by both groups of learners. The Advanced Writers for example often mentioned multiple error types supported by specific examples in a single statement and often provide a location as an example. To illustrate, within one comment student 44527 provides feedback on content, format and language use. Student 44527 refers to a content error, a citation error with location and the need for literature support. Interestingly both students apply a citation term provided in APA citation guidelines for paragraph (Appendix C). The application of the instructor supplied model of an academic review of literature in essay format is evident when mentioning the need for support, appropriate language use and comments on the draft essays’ structure.

**Student 44527—**“In first para (paragraph), you mention many results, tables and graphs in appendix of results may be helpful to refer to-remove any first person language-you mention a fallacy, be specific with what fallacy it is.”

**Student 44529—**“you mention things about second study but provide no rephrased statements or quotes-Dont just leave a quote unexplained (first para) (paragraph),””

Initially, Student 44527 suggests their peer should reorganize their research draft and not include all the results initially in the first “para” (paragraph). The student infers that findings should be provided within the essay and with detail and suggests using an appendix. The student
also points out that in a formal academic essay first person is not a good choice and that the use of “fallacy” is not clear to the reader. Similarly, Student 44529 points out an error in content as there is no support for a study mentioned. They suggest that citations such as paraphrasing and quotes from the literature should be used and then point out a comprehension error in that there is an unexplained quote in the first paragraph inferring that it may also not be cited correctly.

In contrast, the Novice Writers often limited their feedback to one or two error types either describing errors in detail within one statement or providing different statements for each error type noted. The novice students often highlighted grammar errors and generally focused on content and format errors that were provided in the model but not included in their peer’s draft. However there are similarities in the application of the instructor supplied model of an academic summary of articles in an essay format. The scaffolding that the model supplied is evident when students describe the need for support, appropriate language use and comments on the draft essays’ structure in the peer-feedback provided (Appendix D). In both examples below the novice students’ feedback is less complex and contains more errors than the advanced students. However the novice groups did highlight multiple areas in their comments such as style, structure, content and the need for support.

Student49332—“I liked the style and the structure. i think You only miss the References.”

Student48805—“I think you should include more details from the articles to support your statement. Your introduction is attention grabbing and you have a good use of vocabulary. If you only use and in text citation it will be perfect.”

One significant distinction was in the manner that feedback was provided between members of both groups. For the advanced learners feedback was often direct in manner. Some comments were authoritarian almost like an order “you will” or critical simply highlighting errors. “There are no…” Most were succinct and brief therefore they may have been easy for respondents to apply.

In contrast, Novice Learners often provided comments that appeared to be more suggestive than authoritarian. Often these comments contained complimentary phrases such as “good job”, “great point”, “I liked…” On the other hand, feedback sometimes lacked specificity which may have made the errors more difficult to find and the feedback more difficult to apply for the respondent.

43834 –“there is no use of quotation marks”
44526—“Instead of naming and stating the two studies synthesize them into one.”
37541 –“…You will give particular cases of shortcomings and qualities you have specified.”

In contrast, Novice Learners often provided comments that appeared to be more suggestive than authoritarian. Often these comments contained complimentary phrases such as “good job”, “great point”, “I liked…” On the other hand, feedback sometimes lacked specificity which may have made the errors more difficult to find and the feedback more difficult to apply for the respondent.

47477- “You have done a good job at introducing each of the articles and giving an insight into each one of them but I think your introduction lacks an intriguing opening sentence to interest your readers.”
48805- “Pay attention to subject-verb agreement in the first two lines of the essay. I liked your conclusion especially your own opinion in the last sentence.
50011- “Your conclusion did not provide a clear sum up of your whole essay; however, you provided a great point about both article’s strategies which is “Argumentative”.

Both groups described peer feedback as helpful. Individuals from both groups also claimed that the feedback provided on individual work by the instructor was “more helpful”. This study did not set out to specifically measure how the type of feedback and the manner in which it was voiced or perceived by the respondent impacted how it was used. However given the interactive nature of online comments and the ability for others to view these comments it should be an area of significant focus in the future. Another factor that should be looked into is the difficulty level of the assignment and subject area for the students. Again this was beyond the scope of the current investigation but is a factor that needs to be measured if the goal is to better understand the impact of collaboration on specific work.

In reviewing these tasks and the feedback provided it is important to consider context. One cultural point that should be noted is that many of the students particularly those enrolled in the novice English composition courses came from oral learning backgrounds and were not generally strong writers. Many of the students at both levels frequently did not have a history of reading literature and were weak in literacy skills. Thus the summarization of reading texts in written form required of both tasks presented was considered quite difficult for some. Thus, assignments which required illustrating reading comprehension through composition by producing new skills such as “summarizing” and “analyzing” texts were sometimes avoided due to perceptions of difficulty or through procrastination by the students.

Although there were clear differences in writing abilities and composition skills between the novice students and the advanced students it should be noted, that there was also a difference in tertiary learning experiences. All of the students enrolled in the novice English composition courses were in their first year of tertiary studies, most had not developed the planning, organizational study skills required of doing a larger assignment. In contrast, all of the students enrolled in the advanced writing courses had completed at least one semester of their tertiary studies and most were in the second or third year of study.

**Course Enrollment and Passing Rates**

The Enrollment data and course completion rates were reviewed and compared with the reported institutional averages for those courses. Participation & Productivity were one of the clear outcomes of the project. A relationship between participating in the collaborations and remaining enrolled and productive throughout the courses was reviewed Figure 4.
This figure compares and contrasts retention rates of novice and advanced learners with institutional averages.

One aspect of teaching in the English and Writing Departments at AUS was the tendency of students to start off keen and end with a decided flop. Most students were unable to keep up their momentum over an entire course. Perhaps due to the relationships which developed through collaboration the momentum of staying with the group, somewhat like boarding a train, the collaborations, essentially pulled the weaker students along for the ride. The early enrolment percentage points for both classes were higher than the average for both the Advanced Writers and the Novice Writers.

The average institutional completion rates for specific courses over a long period were not published or shared with instructors at the time of this study. A comparison of the students that completed both courses with the same course completion rates offered for that semester and provided with the course evaluation indicated that the completion rates for both groups were higher than that term’s average. For the novice classes the average completion rates were 13.75 percentage points higher than those reported for all first year composition courses that term. The advanced classes were significantly higher than those reported for that term. Particularly, for those students who had enrolled in the summer accelerated courses. My summer advanced classes were the only ones to run during the summer thus the numbers were compared with those provided the previous spring semester. The average for the three Advanced level courses was 25.62 percentage points higher than those reported by similar cohorts for that term Figure 5.

It should be noted that the summer accelerated course completion and passing rates were higher than my regular term course. These results may have been influenced by scheduling differences. For example students in the summer met daily instead of weekly. This consistency appeared to help them stay on course and complete their projects more successfully than students that took the course during the regular term and more problems with procrastination.
Simply, completing the work or the final research project did not ensure that students passed their courses. As a skill based course the beginning level English writing students had to demonstrate the ability to apply the skills taught in the course. Those that failed due to the quality of the work submitted or because of missing assignments and assessments were often the same individuals reported by their peers to be not participating in their group work. For the advanced composition and research students the project had a number of components that needed to be included and the project needed to be written at higher academic standard than the general composition courses required. As the number of students that completed the courses was higher than the average posted for that time period it follows that the impact on the passing rates for these courses would be higher as well.

Although I am unaware of the specific percentile for typical course pass rates of novice writers in first semester courses, at that institution, I was told by management and experienced instructors that it wasn’t unusual to lose a quarter, of the students to early withdraws and absenteeism. Similarly, the course pass rates for the advanced composition courses were also not available. However experienced instructors stated that it was common for half the students enrolled to fail the course due to attendance issues and non-completion of projects. A comparison of those comments and the passing rates for both groups using online collaboration tools in Figure 6., indicates that the passing rates for those six classes were much higher than the passing rates typically expected.

![Figure 6. Student passing rates.](image)
This figure compares and contrasts passing rates of novice and advanced learners with institutional averages.

Productivity, most notably, for some of the weaker students in the novice courses improved. One class, “Class C”, had a number of low language level students and a number of high language level students with not many falling in between. At the lower English levels some of the weaker students were foreign students that simply lacked the language ability and skills to follow the course lectures and take notes. Many of these weaker students had fallen behind at the start of the term and by midterm 9 weaker Novice Writers were identified across three classes as being “at risk”. Perhaps due to their ability to work with mentors in their extended groups and the opportunity to meet with their instructor outside of class, for additional help, by the end of the project, 5 of these students had brought up their skills to a level that allowed them to pass the
course and move on. An additional 2 students completed the course work but were asked to repeat the course to further strengthen the writing skills they had started to develop.

**Course Satisfaction: Ethnography**

A variety of materials, institutionally driven or emerging from the courses themselves, were collected to inform the research. Data on student satisfaction regarding course and CALL was collected from institutional course evaluations. Comments from students in one class from each cohort provided contrasting views. When asked about the role that technology played in their course three Advanced Writing students’ comments covered a range of perspectives. One complained that the lack of technology due to mechanical problems in IT had a negative impact, another simply stated that it was “too much” and the third stated there was good use of technology in the course. In general, comments suggested that the students viewed the technology use as supportive and necessary but also at times a struggle (Appendix E).

**Question:** Please enter specific comments, if relevant on the role that Information Technology plays or could play in this course. (Three Advanced Writers)

- “IT could not get my professor on ILearn which greatly affected my understanding and interest in the subject ...”
- “too much”
- “The instructor makes good use of technology ... does get overwhelming at times.”

In contrast, in response to the same question, three novice students comments indicated that the use of technology in their course had been positive but were not specific as to why (Appendix F.) (Novice Learners)

1) "IT plays an integral role."
2) "A good role."
3) "It plays in this course."

When asked about the instructor and about course satisfaction the Novice Learners’ comments were all positive and complimentary but also general in nature. A few did provide additional detail such as the student below who was happy with the course content.

4) *This course was amazing. We learned more than what was required which is a good thing. I look forward to taking more courses with Dr. Anderson.*

Unfortunately, there were no institutional evaluations taken on the two Advanced Writing and Research courses held over the summer so there were no institutional measurements to evaluate and compare the course satisfaction levels or the perceptions of technology use in those classes with the same cohorts within the institution. The institution’s formal evaluation and comparison of the novice level courses however, indicated that the novice students’ perceptions of their courses were rated higher than those with the same cohorts within the institution and when contrasted with all courses held in the department. When measuring course satisfaction the average mean for Class A was 4.375, for all Fundamentals of Academic Discourses classes 4.25, and for all courses in the College of Arts and Sciences 4.3375 Figure 7.
Final compositions and research reports were reviewed by administrative course heads, directors and senior instructors to assess the quality of the final compositions reported and the course outcomes generally (Appendix G.). For the novice writing courses the Head Instructor and two senior instructors reviewed the overall coursework produced positively stating that the final compositions were “The writing quality and comprehension skills exhibited are generally higher than those produced from students at this level” and that the completion of curriculum plus additional work was “impressive”. However the Head Instructor felt, that the content of the additional assignments may have been “too challenging” for that skill level.

The advanced writing courses were reviewed by the Head Instructor and the Department Coordinator both were pleased with the completion of the curriculum as variance in quantity and quality of work for that course had been issue. The Head Instructor was interested in the technology integration and stated that the retention and pass rates were much higher than expected particularly for the two summer courses. Both felt the quality of compositions were high and selected samples to be kept in the Department’s Archives for future instructors and students to review”.

Conclusion

Much of the literature published today on the topic of technology integration in mixed language background writing courses is focused on the evaluation of a particular tool or an attempt to measure the productivity of a single teaching or learning factor. The study reported, differs in that the task based computer and electronic device integration reported was selected to encourage peer-evaluations and multi-authored learning. The perspective is unique in that student selected private technologies were also included in the analysis. Results indicate that
learners at both the Advanced and Novice levels preferred the Google Docs shared features for synchronous collaboration on written draft revision.

Peer Feedback comments on shared documents were focused on grammar errors, syntax, formatting, structure and cohesion. The use of terms and samples derived from the instructor’s models highlighted the important scaffolding these provided in essay revisions. They also supported earlier studies that report the benefits of “guided” peer evaluations. Differences in the manner in which feedback was provided were noted. The Novice Writers tended to be more supportive and general whereas the Advanced Writers tended to be more critical and informative. Although literature would suggest the latter as being more effective the perceptions of the two groups differed. The Novice Writers viewed the processes of peer-evaluation (feedback and multi-authored texts) as “very helpful” whereas the Advanced Writers’ opinions varied between “helpful” and “time consuming”. Similar to previous reports, students preferred instructor feedback over peer feedback however there was a difference in perceptions of peer-feedback in relation to writing level competence.

When analyzing outside of class collaborations the Novice Writers also tended to use social networking tools and interactive chat forums more than the Advanced Writers did. This finding may have been impacted by differences in course scheduling and the type of course work assigned. The novice course was graded over a number of essays submitted throughout the course and the advanced course marks were heavily weighted by an end-of term project and presentation. The nature of the study described, lends itself to reporting, outcomes in terms of productivity and the application of specific writing skills outlined in a course curriculum. The development of literature summaries and the construct of a literature analysis were complex tasks, as they entailed synthesizing a number of readings and the development of new critical strategies and writing skills.

Separate reviews of course productivity and learning for both groups indicated that the quantity of work completed was higher than typically found and that production of written work was a higher standard and more comprehensive than generally expected from the departments. Institutional surveys indicated that course satisfaction for novice learners was generally higher than that reported by similar cohorts in the institution. In addition, the overall completion and pass rates for both groups appeared to be significantly higher than expected. However longitudinal data was not available to quantify those results. Analysis of technology integration and collaboration across the six courses suggest that effective implementation of online collaboration tools should be flexible to allow the incorporation of outside tools and services. Findings also supported previous studies indicating that ‘privacy’ is regarded by some as a factor in selecting technologies to use. Significantly, students seem to view ease of access and convenience as key factors when selecting tools and assessing technology impact on their overall learning.

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specialties are TEFOL (Teaching English as a foreign language), English Language Teaching Across the Curriculum, Rhetoric, Technology Integration and Qualitative Methodologies

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Appendix A. Technology Integration Questionnaire

![Technology Integration Questionnaire Image]
Appendix B Group page and course page

Each Individual needs 5 readings per person on the topic uploaded. Need 1 academic summary
Appendix C. Advanced Students Comments Using Google Docs: Essay Draft and Literature Summary and Critique Samples
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback 1</th>
<th>Feedback 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It would be better if you include recommendations in your conclusion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Break your body of literature to small paragraphs. (It would be easier to read)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- I like how you start your introduction with an explanation of what non-violent protesting means.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First of all, the introduction is fantastic; you defined the topic and gave a history about it. In the body you explained what the studies talk about in overall, but you should talk more about the two studies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazing introduction, your work is good, but I think it will be better if you add some statistical information or studies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very nice presentation of topics. Maybe if you synthesize your sources a bit more by presenting some more information regarding your topic will make it better.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your introduction is well thought of but you should consider adding more recommendations. Also try using the grammar software provided by Professor Kimberly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your introduction got my attention and your conclusion is successful, it included everything. You might need to elaborate more in your studies and include some statistics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like your introduction, definitely got me interested in the topic but I think you should explain more about the studies, to be more clear. I think you should address them more critically and show us what you intend to fill in the literature that is available now.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have not given a definition about your topic in the introduction. Your body paragraphs should discuss more in depth about the sources; in other words, there should be more explanation because there are a lot of audience who does not know a lot about the issue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
smoking undertaking. I accomplished for class to get a few inquiries; or to contrast how that was arranged with check whether you can utilize anything there to further advance this one.

Please avoid using first person. Remove all ‘I’ and replace with student researcher or writer. Also read your sentences there are a large number of pronouns used but to whom they refer is unclear. It is best to avoid pronouns if possible in academic writing if you must use them make sure that what or whom you refer to is in the same or the preceding sentence.

Instead of using she or he use the ‘author’. You have repeated the purpose of one article more than once.

You will need a brief introduction of your analysis within the literature review which explains the purpose of analyzing the articles. It should end with an explanation of how these studies relate to your own topic. You will need to provide specific examples of weaknesses and strengths you have mentioned.

- Instead of naming and stating the two studies synthesize them into one. You will require a concise presentation of your dissection inside the written works survey, which demonstrates the reason for examining the articles. You will give particular cases of shortcoming and qualities you have specified.

In first para, you mention many results, tables and graphs in appendix of results may be helpful to refer to—remove any first person language—you mention a fallacy, be specific with what fallacy it is.

- There is no use of quotation marks.

You have some very confusing pronoun use throughout. It is difficult to tell who is a researcher, an author or a study participant or you (the student researcher). Please use the correct terms to refer to the participants. You may want to look at the example smoking project I did for class to get some questions or to compare how that was planned to see if you can use anything there to further develop this one.

Instead of stating each course try to introduce the topic they talking about.

Kindly utilize the right terms to allude to the members. You might need to take a gender at the sample smoking undertaking I accomplished for class to get a few inquiries or to contrast how that was arranged with check whether you can utilize anything there to further advance this one.

Please avoid using first person. Remove all ‘I’ and replace with student researcher or writer. Also read your sentences there are a large number of pronouns used but to whom they refer is unclear. It is best to avoid pronouns if possible in academic writing if you must use them make sure that what or whom you refer to is in the same or the preceding sentence.

Instead of using she or he use the ‘author’. You have repeated the purpose of one article more than once.

You mention things about second study but provide no rephrased statements or quotes.

-Don’t just leave a quote unexplained (first para).
Appendix D. Novices Comments Using Google Docs: Essay Drafts and Literature Summary

48028 Well I think your thesis does not explain the main point of each paragraph, although you clearly mentioned that in a compare and contrast critique, you should also mention what the things that you will compare. Moreover, I think you need to talk more about the way both articles are written and organized instead of talking about the content of both articles. I think you should include the page number to your text citations. 50011 - Your detailed thesis is well developed, it was able to convey the content of your essay.
50011 - You should more about how the author's organized their articles. 47420 I liked your essay, it was well organized, and I followed your points clearly. I liked how you explained and about how the author portrays the Imam in America and the Arabs from the Arab world. Maybe if you connected your analysis to how the Arab world does it, you could help improve the essay, for example, the author has a slabborn tone when describing Arab in the article name because the author seems to generalize... 
48032 liked the style and the structure. I think you only miss the References. 48036 I think you should include more details from the articles to support your statement. 48036 You introduction is attention grabbing and you have a good use of vocabulary. You have done a good job at introducing each of the articles and giving an insight into each one of them but I think your introduction lacks an intriguing opening sentence to interest your readers. 47477 I like the way in which you contrasted the articles in terms of their writing style but I believe there are other aspects that you can consider in your analysis such as the validity of the information the quality, how well each of the writers each his/her purpose etc. 47477

48032 You really worked on it and fixed many stuff. I think the comparison is really strong. If you only use and in text citation it will be perfect. 48036 Pay attention to subject-verb agreement in the first two lines of the essay. 48036 I liked your conclusion especially your own opinion in the last sentence. Your introduction and detailed thesis are great but I just think you need to pay more attention to your use of verbs and transitions. For example... because... therefore... The use of the on the contrary does not seem normal instead you can say, despite of such a constraint, this essay proves that there are two exclusive articles out there which stand out as rare educational pieces. 47477 The way in which you have introduced each of your articles along with their summaries is fantastic. Also, you have established a great comparison between the two. But I think the difference paragraph needs to be broken down into smaller paragraphs addressing each category: the author's background, the writing style etc. 47477

48032 I really like how you compared both articles but I think the second and third paragraphs should be under the introduction or you can just put them after the paragraph which talks about the authors of both article. Other than that you analysis was perfectly done. 
48032 I think it is perfect. What you only miss, and what we all miss it an in text citation and a reference list. 48036 I liked your introduction that includes a clear detailed statement. 48036 You should provide some direct examples from the article about Arab. 48036 Your conclusion is strong and leaves a strong impact on the reader.

60011 - Your conclusion did not provide a clear sum up of your whole essay, however, you provided a great point about both article's strategies which is "Argumentative". 60011 - Based on your thesis statement, why did you split it into two sentences, and why only show the similarities, what about the differences.

47477 You have effectively introduced your articles and included an amazing summary of each of the articles. Also, you have considered differences in each of the author's writing styles but I think you need to also consider their background, home reliability and other areas which can be critically analyzed within an article. 48032 It's a very strong essay, you worked on the problems. I have nothing to say.
48032 I loved your description in analyzing them. you also had good in text citation. Great work.
Successful Online Learning Collaboration: Peer Feedback

Bunts-Anderson

Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL No.3 July 2016
Appendix E. One class -Advanced Students Comments

Faculty: Anderson, Kimberly
Question: Please enter specific comments, if relevant, on the role that Information Technology plays or could play in this course
Response Rate: 33.33% (3 of 9)

1. IT could not get my professor on iLearn which VERY MUCH AFFECTED my understanding and my interest in the subject, especially since everything my professor did was online. Nothing physical or paper or anything. All via net.
2. too much
3. The instructor makes good use of technology, almost everything is done online. However, it does get overwhelming at times.

Appendix F. One class -Novice Students Comments

Faculty: Anderson, Kimberly
Question: Please enter below any comments on how the course should be improved
Response Rate: 42.06% (3 of 7)

1. Give more classwork than homework.
2. Reduce the pass mark
3. as it is

Faculty: Anderson, Kimberly
Question: Please provide your instructor with helpful suggestions for improving his/her effectiveness
Response Rate: 42.06% (3 of 7)

1. You are the best instructor I’ve had this semester.”
2. YOUR EXCELLENT
3. Dr. Kimberly Anderson is very nice and helpful instructor

Faculty: Anderson, Kimberly
Question: Please enter specific comments, if relevant, on the role that Information Technology plays or could play in this course
Response Rate: 42.06% (3 of 7)

1. It plays an integral role.
2. A good role
3. it plays in this course

Faculty: Anderson, Kimberly
Question: Other comments
Response Rate: 57.14% (4 of 7)

1. This course was amazing. We learnt more than what was required (which is a good thing). I look forward to taking more courses with Dr. Anderson.
Appendix F. One class -Novice Students Comments  

The Head Instructor and two senior instructors reviewed the overall coursework produced. The senior instructors stated, that the final compositions were “impressive” and “The writing quality and comprehension skills exhibited are generally higher than those produced from students at this level”. The Head Instructor was pleased that all three classes had completed the work planned and surprised that they had produced an additional essay and summary. The Head Instructor was pleased that the students had all completed the work outlined by the department as she said this was “atypical” however she also felt that the summary writing and analytical elements within the additional work might be “too challenging” for that level and best left for later composition courses.

For the advanced writing courses the Head Instructor and the Department Coordinator reviewed the students’ final projects and compositions. The Head Instructor was pleased with the formatting, citation elements and that the projects contained all the elements described in the course guide lines. She stated, that advanced writing students found the course challenging and as a result the retention and pass rates were typically low. She also claimed that the quality and amount of work varied dramatically with instructor and that maintaining standards had been an issue. She mentioned that the quantity of work was often condensed during summer sessions. Therefore was “Very pleased” with the completion rate of all three courses and with the overall learning outcomes and selected samples to be placed in the Department’s Material Library. The Department Coordinator stated that there had been “issues with the quality and content of final projects and compositions” and that “she was pleased to have “some current samples for future instructors and students to review”.