Reading and Writing with ICT

Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions

Refereed Collective Book

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Designed by
Hamza Andaloussi

Democratic Arab Center

Reading and Writing with ICT:
Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions

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EDITED BY:

Dr. Nesrine Ghaouar
Dr. Hamza Andaloussi
Dr. Rabiaa Temmar

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للدراسات الاستراتيجية، الاقتصادية والسياسية

for Strategic, Political and Economic Studies

is pleased to present the work book of the National Conference on

Reading and Writing
with ICT:
Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions

Badji Mokhtar University- Annaba Faculty of Letters and Languages Department of English

Université Badji Mokhtar Annaba Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire de Pédagogie et de Didactique L.I.P.E.D

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Preface
by the Keynote Speaker: Pr. Hacene HAMADA

The role of literacy in modern societies is of capital importance for sustainable development as it opens doors for knowledge, sociocultural dynamics, socio-economic prosperity through education. Although listening and speaking are primary language skills for interactional communication in all aspects of social life, reading and writing are the indicators of literacy which preserves evidence of knowledge exchange, transfer and applicability in contextualized settings. In the higher education context, this role is much more important because literacy acts as the channel of communication among the academic community; through reading and writing, both teachers and learners act as partners to exchange information for instruction, information processing and transfer besides knowledge production and assessment. Pencil and paper documents like textbooks, journals, encyclopedia, dictionaries, handouts, tests and many other resources illustrate the large scope and impact of reading and writing practices on literacy in general and education in particular. This educational phenomenon prevailed for centuries until it was challenged by modern information and communication technology which is the concern of this national conference

In addition to literacy skills, modern technology improves the impact of education on sustainable development by providing us with more sophisticated resources. Nowadays, the digital technology provides the educational community with instant, virtual and socio-dynamic access to information through aural-oral, visual and written channels of communication. This development reduces and/or saves time for access but it extends the number of users in illimited spaces. The contextual factors that encouraged the use of ICT and digital skills are basically the increasing rate of higher education population in Algeria and the spread of the pandemic of COVID 19 around the world. The former represents a chronicle symptom inherent to a growing nation whose members attempt to keep up with modern life and increase their social status through education. However, the former is a temporary phenomenon that requires social distancing, safety and health measures.

To keep up with information technology and digital development within the present contextual dimensions, the educational community has to adapt its attitudes and behaviors regarding teaching, learning and assessment of all subjects and languages. In this respect, this

national conference on 'Reading and Writing with ICT: teachers' and Learners' Perceptions' provides us the with the opportunity to focus on the affective, socio-affective, cognitive and socio-cognitive, cultural, and pedagogical and methodological dimensions, both in theory and in practice of teaching reading and writing in English as a Foreign Language. Contributors to this conference proceedings made relevant contributions to highlight the collaboration between researchers and practitioners and raise awareness of the multiple ICTs used in developing the reading and writing skills. Within this scope, the participants provided relevant data to teachers' and learners' perceptions of using ICTs for reading and writing proficiency development at different levels of higher education and in various Algerian contexts. Their contributions shed light on the shift from real-world, face-to face, learning to virtual, digital learning which sometimes combines both of them at synchronous and asynchronous sessions.

The results of the various studies presented at the conference show a positive attitude of the academic community towards the use of ICTs to teach reading and writing with evidence of the various software techniques and applications like Word Processing, Video conferencing, and hybrid learning on the university platforms or on the social media networks. However, the results also show the different challenges faced by teachers and learners alike when working online because of low internet connections and /or negative private study environment. Whatever the challenges, the studies demonstrate that the digital era is everlasting for the next decades and the need to improve the digital competence and performance of the academic community is till prominent.

<div style="text-align:right">

Pr. Hacene Hamada
ENS Constantine

</div>

Inaugural Speech
by The Vice Rector Pr. Maoui Hocine

Mr Chairman,

Dear Colleague and friend, Pr Grine, Dean of the faculty of languages and letters,
Distinguished Participants and Guests,
Honourable audience,

Dear Students,

Good morning,

It is indeed a great pleasure to share a few words with you. At the outset, allow me to say that, on behalf of Badji Mokhtar Annaba University Rector, Pr MANAA Mohamed , I am much honoured to welcome all of you to this two-day online national conference on « Reading and Writing with ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' perceptions ». I am especially honoured to be able to welcome one of the most renowned keynote speakers, our friend Pr HAMADA Hacene from ENS of Constantine, whose glittering and outstanding set of scientific achievements on the topic will certainly serve. I extend my thanks to all the participants for honouring this conference with their presence or their virtual contribution. We look forward to receiving their enriching ideas and their insightful suggestions and recommendations. Further, our sincere thanks go to the organizers of this conference.

Dr Ghaouar Nesrine, the coordinator, deserves a special mention for her relentless efforts and her determination to provide the best organization and the best service to her guests to make the event a grand success. In this regard, I cannot omit to mention the valuable technical assistance of the university network services. We thank them for their professional support to the organization of this conference.

Today, Badji Mokhtar Annaba University and more particularly the faculty of letters and languages, through the department of English, is hosting this important scientific event, which will certainly instil a new dynamic in the field of research and will lay the foundation for new teaching approaches. So, our university is very pleased to greet more than 78 participants from more than 20 Algerian universities. Therefore, your diversified experiences and perspectives as teachers of English and researchers in language and education will no

doubt help in broadening perspectives in the field of TEFL and your interactions will certainly provide opportunities for creating synergy in action.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The conference will grapple with a key question which is that of the perception of the role of ICTS in enhancing both the reading and the writing skills in the English teaching/learning processes. I hope it will be a productive and stimulating conference and I will take a keen interest in listening to your presentations and in following the expected hot debate over this timely, challenging and polemicized question related to the teachers' and learners' perception.

As a matter of fact, the relevance of the topic lies essentially in the fact that the 21st century is an era which is characterized by many profound and rapid technological changes. Among these changes is the rapid development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), including ICT in education. The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) can help revitalize teachers and students alike. It supports learning in a variety of ways; for instance, it increases access to information, motivates students, develops problem solving capabilities and aids deeper understanding. Further, it can help to improve and develop the quality of education by providing curricular support in the teaching/learning of English and thereby enhancing the language skills. As you know, the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education embarked on a journey to leverage technology for teaching and learning decades ago. Unfortunately, much remains to be done. Though there is a widespread acceptance of ICT as a useful tool for teaching and learning, educational institutions are still groping around. Little has been done to train teachers to use ICT tools, and very few educational software and resources are provided to generate more innovative teaching practices.

Further, the curriculum, in our context the English curriculum, and the pedagogical practices fail to integrate technology in the absence of the physical and ICT infrastructure to enable networked and connected learning. These technological devices are necessary because they equip our students with the critical competencies and dispositions to succeed in a knowledge economy. Specifically, the goal for our students is to develop self-directed and collaborative learning through the effective use of ICT, as well as become discerning and responsible ICT users. In the LMD system we are committed to a student-centered education

and ICTs can help us do this better. The digital literacy acquired through ICT practices enables our students to learn better and will equip them with technical skills which respond to the requirements of the 21st century competencies to collaborate with others and enhance learning, including English, through technology.

So, in this aura of scientific respectability and friendliness, and with the broad range of participation at this conference - over 70 presentations as I previously mentioned- I am more than pleased because I think the Conference theme -- the growing concern over the quality of teaching and learning management and the great potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in promoting greater quality is such an important one. We all have much to learn from each other about the issues and challenges which currently dominate this educational research area.

I am sure the presentations as well as the debate at this conference will contribute in meaningful ways to the national efforts in harnessing the advantages of technology in the teaching practices, especially in the EFL context. The university managerial team is looking forward to a most stimulating and fruitful conference. On this note, I wish you an enriching conference and all the best in your endeavour to enhance pedagogy and empower your teaching/ learning through technology. To our guests, I wish you all a pleasant stay in the 'City of Annaba', on this most hospitable « Land of Hipo Regius ». With thanks again to all of you, I give my good wishes for a very successful conference.

It is then my pleasure on behalf of the Rector of Badji Mokhtar Annaba University, Pr. MANAA Mohamed, to declare the conference open.

Thank you.

Pr. Maoui Hocine
Badji Mokhtar University- Annaba

Introduction of the proceedings of the National Online Conference on Reading and Writing with ICTs: Teacher's and Learners' Perceptions

The national conference on "Reading and Writing with ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions" is part of the PRFU project (Projets de Recherche-Formation Universitaire) H02L01UN230120180001 approved by LIPED laboratory (Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire de Pédagogie et de Didactique) under the direction of Pr. Latifa KADI within the group of Pr. Nadia GRINE. The head of this project is Dr. Nesrine GHAOUAR with two doctorate candidates as members: Amina ELAGGOUNE (MAB) and Imane DOUAFER (MAB). The project was validated by the ministry of Higher education on 2018 for a 4 year period. The conference took place on 9th- 10th March 2022.

I will start the proceedings by going back to the call for contribution in the conference. It was stated that Information and communication Technology (ICT) becomes the print of the new era marked with Technological advancement in every aspect of our lives; therefore, one of the requirements of the 21st century is Technology use. Nowadays, ICT tools exist in approximately everywhere and can be used anytime anywhere. Education is not an exception, students and teachers alike do use computers, smart phones, IPods and download different applications that would enhance their competences in learning/teaching English as a foreign language. However, it is worth mentioning that though teachers and students use ICTs for different reasons - communication, contact and entertainment- their efficient use in learning is not prosperous.

Moreover, Language skills, receptive and productive are the basic rudiments in learning any language. The focus of this conference is on reading and writing. Hence, the main question of this conference is how do teachers and learners use ICTs in relation with the writing skills? Being aware that reading is the doorway for an effective writing, then there is a tight relation between how to read and how to write. As a result the subsidiary question is: "How do teachers and students perceive the role of ICTs in enhancing the reading skill for a better piece of writing?" It is noteworthy that despite the opportunities ICTs provide, teachers are suffering from the low quality of students' writings.

The conference aimed at:

- Investigating the way university teachers' and learners perceive and use ICTs in relation to the writing skill.
- Raising EFL teachers' and Learners' awareness to the significance and potentials of ICTs use in the writing skill.
- Highlighting the importance of reading for writing through ICTs.
- Suggesting effective ways to use ICTs in order to facilitate the reading and the writing skill.

As objectives, the conference allowed opportunity for collaboration between researchers and practitioners in addition to raising awareness of the multiple ICTs used in developing the reading and the writing Skills.

The Main Tracks of the Conference are:

a) Developing the reading skill through ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' perceptions
b) Developing the writing skill through ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' perceptions
c) The reading skill and its efficiency in developing the writing skill through ICTS
d) Personal experiences of self-development using ICTs to facilitate/enhance reading and writing skills
e) ICTs and Language Learning
f) Reading and Writing with ICTS During COVID19

The full Call for contribution is on the official site of the university. The link is as follows: https://www.univannaba.dz/events/10416/?occurrence=2022-03-09.

In this proceedings, the accepted articles undergone double blind peer reviewing by the scientific committee members. The number of tracks is squeezed to three sections. The first section is on "**Developing the reading skill through ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' perceptions** with six articles**".** It explores ESP Teachers' and Learners' Attitudes towards the Impact of ICTs on Developing Reading Comprehension, Teaching Reading Comprehension through Videoconferencing, the Impact of Online Reading Platforms on Language Learning, Students' attitudes towards Reading Digital Texts, the Effect of Using ICTs on Reading Skill, and ends with the reading skill and the use of ICTs during the COVID19 pandemic: students' perspectives .

The second section of the proceedings is on "**Developing the writing skill through ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' perceptions**" with seven articles**.** It considers students' Attitudes and Perceptions towards the Use of Word Office Processor's Review Applications in Writing, the Integration of Social Learning Platforms for Achieving Writing Competence of EFL Students, the Effect of Online Written Feedback on EFL Students' Writing, ICT Integration in Teaching Writing: a tremendous strength or a potential weakness?, Students' Perceptions and Use of Writing through ICTS, Improving EFL Writing through ICTs. This section ends with investigating the Efficiency of ICTs and Social Media in the Development of EFL Learners' Writing Skills.

The third section is on "**ICTs and Language Learning**" with seven articles**.** It deals with Teachers' perceptions of ICTs use in reading and writing, Proofreading in the Massive Age of Artificial Intelligence, Boosting Online Feedback through investigating Students' Preference for the Online Writing Formative Assessment Methods, Towards a Fruitful Use of ICT to Improve the Writing Skills, The Personalizing Impact of Google's Algorithmically-Based "Filter Bubbles" and Their Implications on Academic Research, Integrating ICTs in Teaching English as a Foreign Language: Challenges and Issues. It ends with Some Tips Improving the Learning Process by ICTs Integration in Teaching a Foreign language.

I. Developing the reading skill through ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' perceptions

Exploring ESP Teachers' and Learners' Attitudes towards the Impact of ICTs on Developing Reading Comprehension

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Abstarct

In the last few decades, the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has extended to cover more areas including education. There has been an increasing call for the integration of ICTs into teaching and learning. Several ICT researchers claim that the use of ICTs in teaching and learning improves education and provides more teaching and learning supports for teachers and learners. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning has been changing according to the learners' needs. Consequently, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) appeared as advanced and adult learners felt the need to acquire knowledge that is related to their own fields of study, taking into account that English is an important research language in all disciplines. Reading has been given priority for the learners who have to read English materials related to their own specialized subjects. This paper was targeted to explore ESP teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the impact of using ICTs on developing reading comprehension. The obtained results have revealed that both ESP teachers and learners have positive attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing reading comprehension, as the use of ICTs contributes in fostering learners' reading comprehension.

Keywords : ICTs, ESP, EFL, teaching and learning, reading comprehension

1. Introduction

In a globalized world, education is pivotal and the role of teachers and learners to be technologically adept remains critical in the digital era. Technology is leading lots of aspects of human life and if incorporated appropriately can further enhance the teaching and learning process and uphold the academic experience of both teachers and learners. In the last decades, there has been an increasing call for the integration of ICTs into teaching and learning. ICT covers a wide range of technologies. It refers to all technological tools and resources used for communication, creation, dissemination, storage, management and retrieval of information (Nordin, Embi, and Yunus, 2010; Thierer, 2001).These technologies include computers, mobile phones, television, radio, internet, and so on.

ICT plays a very considerable role in enhancing English teaching. It is considered a must to survive the digital era we live in (Suhedri, 2017). EFL teachers may integrate ICT in their EFL classrooms, as many learning resources are available online which they may use in their lessons. In addition, they may use ICT to deliver their teaching, for example, by using computers and projectors in presenting the materials. ICT can bring a real life experience for the learners by presenting them to them the way that natives use their language in communication. Furthermore, teachers may use audiovisual materials to facilitate and stimulate target language (Çakir, 2006).

As a matter of fact, ICT can be a useful tool to reinforce the language skills. Case and Truscot (1999) emphasized the importance of computers and the internet as good resources in developing reading skills. They argued that computer-based reading helps in increasing students' interaction with texts, attention to individual needs, and independence through an ability to read texts that they would not otherwise be able to read. It also helps them in improving their sight word vocabulary, fluency and comprehension which are critical for reading.

In higher education settings, where the medium of instruction and communication is not English, students are required to read text books in English; there is a need for reading comprehension courses in ESP. However, Abdulghani (1993) argued that unfortunately, reading comprehension, especially in ESP field, is too often kept at the low level of recalling information learned or of simply locating information explicitly stated in a text. This is partly due to the fact that the language teacher finds the scientific content difficult to tackle in depth. Also in an ESP course, the main emphasis is on language use, language functions and terminology; thus, content is kept at a low level so as not to constitute an obstacle that interferes with language teaching.

Reading is a skill of paramount importance. In addition, ICTs have a considerable role in teaching and learning language skills So, this study comes to explore ESP teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing the reading comprehension.

2. Literature Review

2.1 ICTs in Teaching and Learning EFL

English Language Teaching (ELT) is an area that has changed over the years, moving from very teacher-centered approaches to learner-centered ones (Richards, 1985). More recently, the use of technology as a tool to develop the different language skills has received a great attention. As a result, the integration of ICT in teaching and learning is not a method; rather it is a medium in which a variety of methods, approaches and pedagogical philosophies may be implemented (Garret, 1991).

According to Wernet, Olliges and Delicatch (2000), ICT empowers education as it is perceived as a medium that offers learners a wide range of information, which the teacher may not have control over. In other words, the learner does not necessarily need to be in the classroom as learning can occur anywhere with the use of these technologies. These technologies offer the learner the opportunity to control their learning process.

On the one hand, for teachers, ICT is a professional resource, a mode of classroom delivery, and a source of valid and valuable text types. On the other hand, for students, ICT provides opportunities to communicate more effectively and to develop literacy skills including skills in critical literacy. It is a valuable tool for researching, composition and despondence (Nordin, et al., 2010).

2.2 ICTs, Reading and ESP Reading Comprehension

Reading is the basis for learning different subjects. Whatever aspect of life one is considering, one discovers that the ability to read effectively enhances individual's ability to function in an effective manner. Most scholars would agree that reading is one of the most important skills for educational and professional success (Alderson, a1984). Reading reinforces the learner's other language skills. Krashen (1981) claimed that those who read more have larger vocabularies do better on test of grammar and write better (Kim and Krashen, 1997). Aebersold and Field (1997) stressed that the acquisition of reading skills in a second or foreign language is a priority of millions of learners around the world, and there is a growing demand for both effective reading courses as well as high quality second language reading materials.

Maduabuchi (2007) postulated that reading is an interaction between the reader and the text which results in comprehension. Reading is a receptive language process. In reading, there is an interaction between language and thought as the writer encodes thought as language, and the reader decodes language as thought. Since the reading skill is of extreme importance, its teaching is not a simple task. According to Celce-Murcia (2001), teaching reading skills to non-native speakers of English involves unique problems and challenges of all conceivable levels of instruction.

ICT plays an important role in helping learners find reading materials from original sources. In finding articles from international journals, students can get it just by sitting in

front of computers connected to the internet network. ICT facilitates the teaching and learning process by providing access to wider sources of information and varieties of articles. With ICT s in education, learner-centered approach is encouraged as the students can access and learn from these technologies at their pace, thereby developing learner's autonomy (Maduabuchi, 2007).

Due to the changing needs of learners in the EFL classroom, ESP emerged as an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on learners' reason in learning (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Richards and Rodger (2001) viewed ESP as a movement that seeks to serve the language needs of learners who need English in order to carry out specific roles (e.g. student, engineer, nurse) and who need to acquire content and real world skills through the medium of it rather than master the language for its sake.

Celce-Murcia (1991) claimed that ESP academic reading courses should emphasize both reading to learn (activities that stress comprehension of subject matter content) and learning by doing (activities that call for utilization of the ideas in the text). The former deals exclusively with the text at hand, while the latter takes the learner beyond the text and into some kind of reformulation of the facts, information and concepts found in it. For example, in reading to learn, emphasis is given to close reading of texts, often paragraph by paragraph, in order to find the function which each paragraph fulfills in the passage.

In highlighting the importance of reading comprehension, Rivers (1981, p.147) argued that " reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's which are knowledge of the language." Wooly (2011) pointed out that reading comprehension could be defined as a process of making meaning from text to understand overall information in the text, and not only decipher meaning from isolated sentences or words. In the same vein, Snow (2002) defined reading comprehension as simultaneously extracting and constructing the meaning of the written language.

3. Method and Materials

3.1. Research Questions

Two main research questions were asked to achieve the purposes of this study. They are as follows:

1. What are ESP learners' attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing reading comprehension?
2. What are ESP teachers' attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing reading comprehension?

3.2. Participants

The sample of this study included ten (10) ESP teachers, and fifty (50) learners. The participants were randomly selected from the faculty of Pharmacy at Farhet Abbas University, Setif 1, Algeria.

3.3. Data Collection Tools and Method

Data were collected quantitatively. Two questionnaires were designed and pilot-tested before administrating them to the participants online via a social media educational group. (See Appendices A and B).

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1. ESP Learners' Questionnaire Analysis

Question 01: Are ICTs important in learning ESP?

Table 01: Importance of ICTs in Learning

	Yes	No
Number	45	05
Percentage	90 %	10%

In table 01, it is shown that **(90 %)** of the participant think that ICTs are important in learning ESP. **(10 %)** said that the use of ICTs in learning is not important.

Question 02: Do you think that using ICTs in the ESP reading class is interesting?

Table 02:   ICTs' use in ESP Reading Class

	Yes	No
Number	47	03
Percentage	94 %	06 %

(94%) of the participants responded that they think using ICTs in the ESP reading classroom is interesting.

Question 03: Do you think that ICTs make the reading class engaging?

Table 03: ICTs' and Engagement

	Yes	No
Number	48	02
Percentage	96 %	04 %

(96 %) of the participants postulated that ICTs would make the reading class more engaging.

Question 04: Do you think that ICTs can help to improve reading comprehension?

Table 04: ICTs and Reading Comprehension

	Yes	No
Number	48	02
Percentage	96 %	04 %

Table 04 demonstrates that **(96 %)** of the participants think that ICTs help in improving reading comprehension.

Question 05: will you welcome the idea of implementing ICTs in the ESP reading classroom?

Table 05: ICTs Implementation

	Yes	No
Number	46	04
Percentage	92 %	08%

(92 %) of the participants claimed that they will welcome the idea of implementing ICTs in the ESP reading classroom; whereas, only **(08 %)** reported that they will not.

4.2. ESP Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis.

Question 01: Are ICTs important in teaching ESP

Table 06: ICTs Importance in Teaching

	Yes	No
Number	09	01
Percentage	90 %	10%

Table 06 shows that **(90 %)** of the participants consider ICTs as important in teaching ESP.

Question 02: Have you ever thought of implementing ICTs in your ESP reading classroom?

Table 07: ICTs Implementation

	Yes	No
Number	08	02
Percentage	80 %	20%

(80 %) of the participants claimed that they have thought of implementing ICTs in their ESP reading classroom.

Question 03: Do you think that ICTs would make the ESP reading class more engaging?

Table 08: ICTs and Engagement

	Yes	No
Number	10	00
Percentage	100 %	00

Table 08 illustrates that all participants agreed that ICTs would make the ESP reading class more engaging.

Question 04: Do you think that ICTs can help improving students' reading comprehension?

Table 09: Improving Reading Comprehension

	Yes	No
Number	09	01
Percentage	90 %	10%

It appears in table 09 that **(90 %)** of the participants assure that ICTs can help improving students' reading comprehension.

Question 05: If you have the opportunity to use ICTs in your ESP reading classroom, will you use them?

Table 10: ICTs Use

	Yes	No
Number	08	02
Percentage	80 %	20 %

(80 %) of the participants confirmed that if they have the opportunity to use ICTs in their ESP reading classroom, they will use them.

5. Discussion and Interpretations

In the last few decades, the integration of ICTs in teaching and learning has gained a great attention. Using ICTs empowers education and offers a wide range of information and opportunities for both learners and teachers. Using ICTs in the field of EFL teaching, in particular, has a great impact on developing language skills of the learners. Scholars agree that reading is one of the most important language skills for educational and professional success. ICTs play an important role in helping learners find materials from original sources, especially in the field of ESP, where learners need to read articles and papers from international journals for some academic purposes.

The results obtained from the analysis of the collected data reveal the positive attitudes of both ESP teachers and learners towards the role of ICTs in developing reading comprehension. First, ESP learners perceive that ICTs are important in learning. Also, ICTs can help in making the reading class more engaging, and in developing reading comprehension. Moreover, learners are ready to learn reading through ICTs. Second, ESP teachers stress the importance of ICTs use in teaching. More particularly, they are convinced that ICTs can help in making reading more interesting and engaging, and in developing students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, ESP teachers welcome the idea of implementing ICTs in the ESP reading class.

6. Conclusion

This paper was targeted to explore ESP teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing reading comprehension. Two questions were posed. First, what are ESP learners' attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing reading comprehension? Second, what are ESP teachers' attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing reading comprehension? In order to answer these questions, data were collected via two questionnaires administrated to Pharmacy students at Farhet Abbas University, Setif 1, Algeria, and their ESP teachers. The analysis of the gained data has revealed that both ESP teachers and learners have positive attitudes towards the impact of ICTs on developing reading comprehension. To sum up, ESP teachers are invited to implement ICTs in their ESP

reading classroom, as they enhance reading comprehension, make reading more interesting and engaging, motivate learners, and foster learner' autonomy.

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Appendices

Appendix A : ESP Learners' Questionnaire

Dear participant,

You are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire. Put a cross in the right box.

1. Are ICTs important in learning ESP?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Do you think that using ICTs in the ESP reading class is interesting?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Do you think that ICTs make the reading class engaging?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Do you think that ICTs can help to improve reading comprehension?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

5. Will you welcome the idea of implementing ICTs in the ESP reading classroom?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix B : ESP Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear participant,

You are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire. Put a cross in the right box.

1. Are ICTs important in teaching ESP?
   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

2. Have you ever thought of implementing ICTs in your ESP reading classroom?
   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

3. Do you think that ICTs make the reading class engaging?
   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

4. Do you think that ICTs can help improving students' reading comprehension?
   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

5. If you have the opportunity to use ICTs in your ESP reading classroom, will you use them?

   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Thank you for your cooperation!

Teaching Reading Comprehension through Videoconferencing at Souk-Ahras University during the COVID 19 Pandemic: Challenges and Prospects

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Abstarct

Due to the accelerated spread of an incredibly critical coronavirus (COVID 19), the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education forced the closure of the Algerian universities and instead assumed virtual education via online teaching/learning, where both teachers and students had to use digital technologies, sometimes for the first time like videoconferencing to facilitate and ensure the continuity of the learning process. However, the procedure was not easy as many unprecedented challenges faced both teachers and students, mainly at the level of certain courses that require practice. Accordingly, this paper aims at identifying both the main challenges and prospects for teaching the reading comprehension course through the use of videoconferencing during the COVID 19 pandemic at the University of Souk Ahras. The descriptive method was adopted based on a quantitative-qualitative design through the use of an online questionnaire that was delivered to EFL teachers at the English Department in Souk-Ahras University in order to achieve the aforementioned aims. The analysis of the collected data indicated that among the main prevalent challenges in the use of videoconferencing are: Network instability and time management, teachers' difficulty of controlling the sessions because of the hardship in realizing and organizing interaction meetings, and the most important of all was tackling the practical part of the course due to the absence of face-to-face guiding and motivation. Overall, the study findings are expected to provide policymakers with a better and more accurate picture of the challenges and prospects of integrating online learning in the teaching of reading comprehension at the Algerian universities.

Keywords : Online teaching, Challenges, Prospects, COVID 19, Reading Compréhension, Teachers, Video conferencing

1. Introduction

The Coronavirus disease outbreak in 2019 (COVID 19) has fundamentally altered the nature of learning at all levels. The Algerian higher education institutions had no option but to adopt new teaching/learning pedagogies. Online learning is one of the main available alternatives to ensure continuity of learning and to protect the health and safety of the educators. Virtual learning was applied through various platforms. In most universities, E-learning is ensured through the use of videoconferencing applications such as Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, and Skype which are widely used. Google Meet is considered among the most popular videoconferencing services that have been used in the University of Souk Ahras.

Videoconferencing as an online instructional tool is used in teaching to facilitate communication and engagement between teachers and students during the COVID 19 pandemic. The use of videoconferencing in education enables continuous instruction throughout the crisis and lays the groundwork for the creation of online teaching activities in remote learning situations. However, the main concern is whether the use of videoconferencing is a successful tool to teach all the courses particularly reading comprehension. Therefore, the main questions/issues addressed in this paper are: What are the main challenges faced by EFL teachers in managing online reading courses through video conferencing at University of Souk Ahras? What are the EFL teachers' perceptions of online reading sessions using videoconferencing through Google Meet? What are the suggested solutions?

The current study aims at finding out the main difficulties faced by teachers as well students in using online learning to teach/learn reading comprehension through the use of video conferences at the University of Souk Ahras during the lockdown period. The purpose is to determine the challenges of teaching the reading skill course via the synchronous videoconference tool through Google Meet. Studying the obstacles to the use of videoconferencing in educational institutions may assist educators to overcome these barriers and become successful technology adopters in the future. It may also make the Ministry of Higher Education aware of the prominent problems of integrating online teaching/learning in teaching EFL.

2. Theoretical Perspectives and Literature Review

Many researchers, like Coventry (1995), highlighted the significance of integrating technology in educational environments, particularly since technology has witnessed a certain level of usability and stability which facilitates its use in real teaching contexts. Other scholars, such as Nurjanah (2018), addressed the main difficulties faced by students when it comes to the reading comprehension task. Accordingly, there is no doubt that using video conferencing in teaching reading comprehension for EFL Students is nowadays a distinctive method of providing real time face-to-face interaction between teacher and students.

2.1 Online Learning and its Types

Before delving into the core of the subject, it would be most useful to clarify the definition of online learning. Amran (2021) in her thesis argues that "online learning is under the

umbrella of e-learning and both are under the scope of distance learning. As previously understood distance learning occurs when teacher and students are separated in two or more places and requires certain tools to make communication possible. If the used tools in education are electronics, i.e. radio, computers, or television, then it is known as e-learning. Further, if the learning process requires or uses the Internet networks it is called online learning". It is worth noting that online courses were taught via two types of online instruction (asynchronous text-based materials and synchronous web conferencing lectures) to emulate traditional face-to-face lectures (Islam, 2019).

2.1.1. Synchronous Learning

This form of online learning is entirely done in real time with teachers who try to facilitate live discussion and lectures. It requires both teacher and students to join the learning session at a set time, despite both can be situated in different parts of the world. Therefore, synchronous learning requires the use of electronic media that made same-time participations possible. The electronic media available for synchronous learning include Audio-videoconferencing with many available platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet. In addition to that, there are other means like Chat and instant messaging session (WhatsApp and Telegram) and Application sharing (Google Docs) (Amran, 2021).

Among the advantages of Synchronous learning is offering the students the feeling of being present in the classroom and further easing the transition from conventional classroom to online classroom. However, its major drawbacks are its requirements of same time participations. In other words, teachers and students might conflict about schedules. Therefore, a wise and careful preparation is required. Moreover, Internet speed and access to internet facilities could also hinder synchronous learning (Amran, 2021).

2.1.2. Asynchronous Learning

This form of learning involves self-paced or self-contained learning and offers greater flexibility for students compared to synchronous learning. This flexibility enables students to study at their own pace and in their own time. Unlike, synchronous learning, referenced materials are readily available for students to access. The electronic media available for asynchronous learning include Audio-video streams, such as pre-recorded lectures that are easily downloaded and repeated many times; in addition to Databases, a facility that comes in the form of repositories of teaching and learning resources which are ready to access (Amran, 2021).

As it was suggested by Amran (2021), asynchronous learning may pose several drawbacks. This form of learning is not entirely self-paced. Since, learning is led by a teacher or an instructor; it is typical for them to expect assignments to be completed week by week. It also involves more work as teachers need to prepare materials and teaching content previously. Again, as cited by Amran (2021), students may feel like not attending school.

A detailed examination of online learning by Islam (2019) showed that Synchronous systems used in conjunction with asynchronous tools can create an online learning community. The latter provides support to students from both peers and instructors because

the web-enhanced classes enhance the interaction and create a sense of connectedness among students.

2. 2. Using Video Conferencing Tools during the COVID 19 Outbreak

Nowadays, videoconferencing is being more widely used to connect students and classes to other people globally free via internet (Islam, 2019). According to the United Nations Development Programme, during the Covid 19 crisis, free videoconferencing tools were heavily used such as Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, and Skype (Khuong & Tham, 2021). The professional services of videoconferencing with expanded functions and features include the capability to easily share the screen and chat simultaneously as the user video calls. Google Hangouts has more options about which part of the screen is shared while Zoom and Skype automatically share the entire screen. All the above applications enable group chat as well (Islam, 2019).

For a better understanding, it is imperative to reveal some of the benefits of videoconferencing. "Videoconferencing allows people in different locations to see and talk to each other. It may also support the electronic exchange of files, sharing of computer applications and co-working. Distinctions are becoming blurred by technological developments, but there are three types of video conferencing" ("What the research says about video conferencing in .... n.d.). In the same vein, Khuong and Tham (2021) add that according to the Oxford Dictionary, video conferencing are "meetings in which persons from diverse locations communicate via voice and video" (p. 2).

However, Coventry (1995) in his report describes videoconferencing as a confusing term. In contrast to the claim of some commercial companies that videoconferencing is a new technology, videoconferencing is a function which can be hosted on a variety of technologies and has been for some years. It is "actually applied to a wide range of situations from live video lecturing to large audiences, to a point-to-point, individual-to-individual desktop PC chats" (p. 3).

The COVID 19 pandemic led to the increase use of videoconferencing as a means of communicating or holding work meetings. Therefore, a greater understanding of the potential challenges caused by videoconferencing is needed. To highlight the adequacies and inadequacies of videoconferencing, Karl, Peluchette, and Aghakhani (2021) in their study examine the difficulties encountered by videoconferencing users during the COVID 19 pandemic. For example, many users complain of Zoom fatigue or feeling mentally and physically exhausted by videoconferencing. This exhaustion is due to several factors, one of which is prolonged direct eye gaze in which individuals are typically staring more intensely at one another for the entire meeting. Equally important, the images of others on screen can appear too big and too close. Another problem is tied to camera and microphone issues. Furthermore, participants may lose their focus due to the fact that during a virtual meeting, it is not just others' faces that draw the attention of participants, but people or things visible in others' backgrounds as well. Another interesting issue is the chat function, although useful at times, can also add to participants' information processing load, especially if the content detracts from the meeting.

In the same context, Coventry (1995) suggests that the course is location independent. Students may undertake the course from any location. However it is not time independent. There is a minimum number of courses to be taken each term and a course is run at set times of the year and must be completed within a set time. Distant learners have less opportunity for interaction with lecturers. They are keen to achieve a sense of belonging with a peer community. Thus, the introduction of communication technology increases the opportunity for interaction (Coventry, 1995). What matters most is that the quality of sound and vision during a videoconference will deteriorate if the speed of the connection becomes too slow. Thus, Internet connections have an important effect on online learning via videoconferencing and consequently on teaching purposes ("What the research says about video conferencing in .... n.d.).

Another frustration faced by participants in virtual meetings was students who failed to mute their microphones. This is mainly because of echoes and background noises which can completely drown out the speaker (Habibu & Al-Mamun & Clement, 2012). To round up, there are so many factors that hinder the effective utilization of videoconferencing in education. Some involved meeting management issues, and others environment issues.

2. 3. Teaching Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is one of the most important components of reading that must be mastered. In each of the activities, students are required to be able to construct a strong comprehension of the meaning in the text that students read (Setiawati1 & Budiasih, 2021). In the same vein, Oakhill, Chain and Elbro (2015) define reading comprehension as a complex task that combines cognitive skills and abilities such as identifying words, decoding and mastery of the language in the text. In a given text, the author usually uses certain codes such as the use of synonyms, antonyms, and idioms so the reader needs to decode this code. It means that to be able to identify words and decode the text, readers need to master language so that they can easily understand the reading (as cited in Setiawati1& Budiasih, 2021).

2.3.1 Strategies on Teaching Reading Comprehension

Teaching reading comprehension requires several strategies, which play an important role in achieving the goal of learning. This view is tackled in a scholarly work carried by Setiawati1 and Budiasih (2021). The study concludes that the first strategy depends on the teacher who needs to identify the purpose of the reading. To explain more, choosing the right reading books for learning is very significant. Having a clear purpose of the reading can also help students find a reading text that suits their requirement. In other words, they know how to select which is useful to them. Efficient reading that consists of identifying the purpose of reading can help them get accurate information and ignore information that has the potential to damage the purpose of reading.

In contrast, the second one is to ensure that there are graphics and pictures in the reading to help the learners in decoding and capturing the meaning of the reading easily. In addition, students can use efficient silent reading techniques to read and understand the reading quickly. This applies to intermediate to advanced readers who are already accustomed to

reading. Generally speaking, the use of creative strategies makes students more active and interested in learning reading comprehension. The selection of the strategies is used according to the teaching needs. It is adapted to the student's background, the genre of text and the problems that appear in teaching reading comprehension.

2.3.2. Difficulties in Teaching Reading

According to Solikhah (2018) the problems in teaching reading deal with the teaching techniques and the selection of teaching materials. Based on an experiment conducted in Indonesia, Solikhah's findings revealed that most problems emerged from the teaching practices. Among the prevalent issues: (1) the mastery of the basics knowledge, (2) the habit of slow reading, (3) figuring out inferences, implications and main ideas, (4) text selection, and (5) exercises to include.

Another study carried by Coiro (2014) argues that online reading is much more complex than offline reading particularly in terms of comprehension. He highlights some factors that influence comprehension including: characteristics of the text, the activity, the reader, and the context. Simultaneously, he explains how online reading comprehension impacted by additional sets of elements, including characteristics of different technologies used in teaching reading.

In the same context, Iftanti (2012), in her study states that most EFL students did not have good reading habit though they formally learnt English at school. This is probably caused by less motivation from the students' environment. Reading habit is a repeated form of reading practice which means the activity needs to be done regularly. Reading comprehension requires familiarity with the topic to motivate students in reading it. Usually people are interested in reading when they think that the reading will be useful for them. This is why the topic given in the classroom should be the one the students think they need (as cited in Nurjanah 2018).

3. Research Methodology

The study relied on a descriptive method with quantitative analysis. The sample of the study was selected from 15 teachers who have conducted videoconferences due to the University closure during the COVID 19 pandemic at Souk-Ahras. An online questionnaire was designed and divided into two parts. The first part contained background information concerning teachers' gender, and some direct questions required teachers' opinions regarding their experience in using videoconferences in teaching in addition to their facilities and internet access.

The second part included the questions regarding different aspects of videoconferences that have been used in teaching reading comprehension as well as some other questions to find out the main challenges. Safety was the main reason to utilize this form of questionnaire for the data collection. The questions were subjected to gather qualitative data to prescribe the teachers' experiences. These questions were divided into three categories, i.e. participants' gender, background of teaching experiences using videoconferencing, teachers' access to the internet, and challenges associated with use of videoconferencing in the teaching of reading

comprehension. This issue is quite important, and has been raised by Sulistiawan (2021) in his article, "Embarking digital learning due to Covid 19: Are teachers ready?"

The data gained from the questionnaire was coded and then analysed using descriptive statistics. The results were subjected to the understanding of the teachers' experiences in teaching via videoconferences.

4. Results and Discussion

The purpose of this research was to identify both the main challenges and prospects for teaching the reading comprehension course offered via a synchronous web conference tool during the COVID 19 pandemic at the University of Souk Ahras. The collected data were analyzed, and findings are presented below according to the teachers' questionnaire. From this analysis, a discussion section, which links the findings with the reviewed literature, is provided. The main objective is to modestly contribute to the understanding of difficulties faced by both teachers and students when using videoconferencing tools.

4.1. Teachers Gender
The teachers in this study consisted of 3 males (20%) and 12 females (80%).

4.2. Teachers' Experience in Using Videoconferencing in Teaching

To explore teacher experience in conducting videoconferencing in teaching reading comprehension, it is essential to get information on the teachers' experience in utilizing videoconferencing in their classes before the pandemic. The study found that the majority of teachers (60%) used videoconferencing tools for the first time because of the pandemic situation and some of them (26.66%) reported that they utilized it before in virtual meetings. Whereas few of them (13.33%) confessed that they have never used it.

4.3. Teachers and Internet access

In terms of facilities and internet access that support the learning continuity, four teachers (26.66%) admitted that they and their students had limited access to the internet particularly students due to the absence of resources, where they do not have computers or softwares.
However, eleven of them (73.33%) are equipped with technology and have mobile technology (smart phones, laptops).

4.4. Challenges Associated with the Use of Videoconferencing in Teaching Reading Comprehension

The findings reveal that the prevalent challenges in teaching the reading skill are grouped into three main categories: Participants (Teachers and Students), Content issue (reading comprehension) and the videoconferencing (tool).

4.4.1. Participants
a) Students: Most of the teachers agree on the following points as the main obstacles that might hinder students' online learning of reading comprehension:

- **Lack of Motivation**: It is commonly found that students are less motivated to fully participate in reading comprehension activities. This is probably rooted in the location where they learn. For example, being at home, students can be easily distracted to do other things which sometimes prompted them to turning off their videos during live learning session.

- **Inability to Focus***:* Teachers claim that most of the students might lose their focus due to the fact that during virtual meetings, it is not just others' faces that draw the attention of students, but people or things visible in classmates' backgrounds as well. Also, some teachers state that the reason behind teachers' lack of concentration during reading is probably due to the home environment that might be less proficient when it comes to English subject. Thus, students felt isolated and confused in understanding the material.

- **Lack of interaction** between students and the teacher, mainly, during the reading process (as it is asynchronous) since students might find difficulty in understanding the text and this could slow down the reading comprehension process.

- **Students feel lazy to Read**: Most of the teachers confirm that their students get lazy when they are given a task of reading comprehension to accomplish, simply, because of the poor reading habit and the absence of the culture of reading.

- **Technical Issues:** As online learning is primarily based on the use of internet and computers. To attend online reading sessions, students need a certain degree of technological proficiency such as the ability to successfully log in, participate in classes, communicate with teachers and classmates and submit a work or project…

b) **Teachers**, in their turn, complain about certain issues that they personally face and that might be a common challenge with their students:

- Most of teachers (73.33%) feel physically and mentally exhausted when they finish reading comprehension videoconferencing sessions. This exhaustion is due to the prolonged direct eye gaze in which individuals are typically staring more intensely at one another for the entire meeting.

- The images of participants on screen can appear too big and too close. There are also some problems tied to camera and microphone issues.

In addition to the above mentioned challenges, more than half of the female (66.66%) teachers confessed that their responsibilities and sometimes poor planning hinder them to use videoconferencing appropriately. Added to this, is their inappropriate use of video camera, which influenced their impression.

4.4.2. Content Issue
- **Determining the Purpose/Main Ideas:** Teachers complained about students' inability to grasp the main idea (skimming strategy). The prime reasons behind that is the poor reading habit, which is attributed to the students' laziness.

- **Lack of Vocabulary**: The majority of teachers agreed that the lack of vocabulary cause a great difficult for students, particularly at the level of analyzing vocabulary strategy. According to them, students find difficulty to do vocabulary activities because they have a limited knowledge of words. Consequently, they will be incapable to understand the text.

- **Making Inference**, which means students are required to understand the text in order to be able to find conclusions. However, teachers state that students are not able to skim the text, thus making comprehensible conclusions a hard task for them**.**

- Overall, all the teachers (100%) believe that the prime obstacle in teaching reading comprehension via videoconferencing is the practice, since reading is a multifaceted process, which develops only with practice.

4.4.3. Online Teaching Tools (Videoconferencing): The viability of infrastructure and internet connection has always become the main issue for online learning in developing and geographically diverse countries.

- Teachers difficulty in controlling the session, i.e. the facilitator does not have sole control of who speaks.

- The low internet speed from both sides.

- Poor microphone management issues, i.e. the failure to mute the microphone during virtual meetings.

5. Recommendations

Based on these findings, the paper provides some tips to overcome or at least minimize the difficulty of teaching reading comprehension via videoconferencing:

1. Providing students with the necessary tools: Since the teachers' objective is to facilitate and enhance students' understanding, necessary applied strategies might be taught explicitly (synchronous learning).

2. Facilitate vocabulary accessibility: When content is key, teachers may need to adapt digital texts to students' reading levels by, for instance, hyperlinking definitions and embedding context clues into digital texts.

3. Activate prior knowledge: Reading comprehension improves when we take time to connect the new knowledge to existing knowledge. With online whiteboards, bulletin boards, or documents, we can create mind maps.

4. Monitor Students' Progress: Students can get lost in the virtual world, but the use of online monitoring tools can help keep them on track. For instance, when students create a double-entry journal in a Google document, teachers can quickly see who is keeping up and who is confused.

5- It is important for teachers and policymakers to understand the barriers that hinder the effectiveness of online learning and enforce training strategies for teachers that can be appropriately explored to make such changes viable to all.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that teachers as well as students at the University of Souk Ahras encountered many barriers in both using videoconferencing as a tool and reading comprehension as a material. In other words, online learning in general and videoconferencing in particular are not conductive to teaching reading. Despite the significant problems that faced students at Souk Ahras University, like the adaptation to this new mode

of distant teaching and learning practices in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic, this practice can be viewed as an excellent opportunity to further enhance online learning approaches. The shift to blended learning is the creation of synchronous and asynchronous learning communities that enable students to create networks of interactions in which deep learning takes place. These findings are expected to provide university policymakers with a better and a more accurate picture of problems and prospects of integrating online learning in the teaching of reading comprehension at one of the Algerian universities, namely Souk Ahras.

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The Impact of Online Reading Platforms on Language Learning

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Abstarct

Inkitt, Goodreads, Wattpad and many others are online free reading platforms that provide readers with rich variety of novels written by professional and amateur writers. From all around the worlds the addicted readers meet at those platforms operating in different languages to appreciate the available books and writers' talent. Since those platforms are quite popular and count millions of members, an investigation to seek their roles in improving non natives reading skills and linguistic achievement is in due need. For this aim, a questionnaire is developed and distributed to a sample (n 316) of the population using those platforms to: (1) know to what extent using reading platforms contributes to reading and enhancing linguistic achievement and (2) seek the users' reading habits and their opinions about those platforms to evaluate their experience. The positive responds foster the hope to import and implement the idea of reading platforms in the Algerian schools and universities.

Keywords : online reading platforms, English language learning, reading skills

1 Introduction

Digital technology became a de facto standard in students' lives. Because of this and as practitioners in the domain of education, teachers need to make the best of it for their learners; like ensure an uncomplicated and flexible transition to this type of technology and be certain those learners are up to date and ready to cope with the demands of the digital era in general and e-learning in particular.

Many writers talked about the importance of e-learning on education (Moreno,Cavazotte&Alves, 2016; Passey& Higgins, 2011;Cole, Shelley, & Swartz, 2014), but since the onset of Covid 19, we are dealing with what we can call the rise of online learning. Many researchers (Basilaia, 2020; Cacheiro-Gonzalez, Medina-Rivilla, Dominguez-Garrido, & Medina-Dominguez, 2019; Dhawan, 2020; Muhammad, 2020) conducted studies to investigate the effects of Covid 19 on learners and education. Because of the spread of the new trend of learning online, many scholars like Robinson, Sheffield, Phillips & Moore (2017); Page and Vincent (2018) and Keegan (2009) provided instructions and material to help teachers not only survive but thrive in the digital age to enhance teaching and learning online.

Learning using books is a practice as old as the world and many studies (Dickinson, 2012) were conducted with children and adults to show the importance of reading books and their role in fostering language acquisition and learning. Chall (as cited in Clark and Rumbold, 2006) eloquently pointed the benefits of reading on education saying: "education and reading are circular – the more a person has of one, the better the development of the other". However, with the growing use of digital technology, and the feverish development of technical devices, the digitization of books seemed like an inevitable step. A competition between which is better and more particle to use and exploit in learning-e-books or the old-fashioned version- ignited.

Many pros and cons can be attributed to each type. **While reading on paper may boost retention, focus and suits readers with sleep problems and eye strain, using e-books encourages young reluctant users to read more and favors multitasking** (Allocot, 2014). Schneps et al. (2013) observed that Individuals who suffer from sight problems or reading disorders like dyslexia read e-books more effectively and with greater ease. They can benefit more from reading online because they control a range of options for changing the text size, screen illumination and spacing of lines.

The majority of studies that were conducted to investigate e-reading focused on the academic context and the results were often contradictory; a study conducted by Tveit & Mangen (2014) found that younger students, preferred e-readers. While Chou (2014) reported that "students' reactions to e-books are often negative" which can be attributed to the link students make to academic reading and stressful assignments.

One field of research that is attracting an increasing interest is the possibility to learn while reading books in a non academic context. Casual reading for pleasure, as Clark and Rumbold (2006) reported, can be an important practice to learn without the influence of distressing academic demands and challenges. Using online reading platforms like Inkitt, Goodreads, Wattpad and many others that provide readers with rich variety of novels written by professional and amateur writers can help them relax and learn.

Since those platforms are quite popular with their quality of publications and the number of users, an investigation to seek their roles in improving non natives reading skills and linguistic competence is needed. For this aim, a questionnaire is developed and distributed to the population using those platforms to: (1) know to what extent using reading platforms contributes to reading and enhances linguistic achievement and (2) seek the users' habits and their opinions about those platforms to evaluate their experience.

2 Method

In order to carry out this study, a survey questionnaire is designed and distributed to the users of the reading platforms. According to Brace (2008), a questionnaire is the most used technique in data collection and sometimes the key to its success. The set of questions need answers from specific groups of people in order to cover the information needed, generally in an anonymous way. Brace (2008, p.1) specified that "… if those questions are the wrong questions, poorly phrased, or in the wrong order, the answers obtained may be worse than meaningless: they may be misleading".

The study questions were directed to the users of reading platforms as the source of data. An example of those reading platforms is Wattpad. The statistics of the platform indicate that Wattpad connects millions of readers who spend over 23 billion minutes a month engaged in original stories. The platforms can be free or paid; in the paid version, book previews are free for readers to browse. The free previews can show up to 15% of the paid book what is enough for interested readers to make a decision whether to buy the book or not. Those platforms, however, contain some topics and concepts that can be described as culture and religion sensitive for Algerian readers; fortunately they come with some filters to sort the content people do not want to read.

In order to reach the population using those platforms, the link to the questionnaire had been sent to a few writers who kindly asked their followers on those platforms to answer it. The questions are a mixture of closed (yes/no, MCQ…) and open ended questions grouped in three sections: (S1) general information, (S2) reading habits and (S3) linguistic achievement.

316 readers responded and their answers were analyzed qualitatively. Qualitative research focuses on participants' behavior and attitude, such as, habits, inspiration and opinions that are behind their decisions. Allowing respondents to express themselves freely may reveal new insights and allow researchers to explore the feelings, experiences, wants and needs that are hard to quantify.

3 Results

Research suggests that reading online results in some problems for some people like lower understanding and less critical reflection (Allcott, 2021). This study is conducted to investigate whether people can learn from using reading platforms. The users of the reading platforms were asked a variety of questions to explore their opinions and attitudes towards online reading and the possible language learning outcome.

Table1

Personal Information of the Reading Platform' Users

Age	Gender	Native language	Favorite genre
63% <30	100 % females	Hindi, Urdu, Filipino, Arabic, French, Korean, Spanish, Russian , ……	(historical) romance, paranormal and thriller.

Particulars or the questions regarding the respondent's personal details are very important for this type of research study. When the survey audience is very large, demographic information such as age, gender and the language used by the reader in a specific geographic location can be very useful to determine the profile of the target population. In this study, the focus is on the people using online reading platforms. If the responds are similar, it can be said that the sample selected is representative of the wider universe and the findings are valid and can be generalized. Furthermore, it enables the researcher to compare the data collected in this study to past and future surveys of the same kind and aim. As it could be observed from the table above, the majority of the respondents fell in the same range of age, gender and favorite genre. The variety of languages only shows how popular those platforms are.

Reading habits differ from one person to another. Talking about her own experience, Allcot (2021) reported that she reads online for research but prefers a print book when reading for pleasure. Others tolerate better online reading for pleasure and some people are unable to read from their digital devices to the point they print online material when they settle in for a long read that needs attentiveness.

In order to investigate the reading platforms users' habits and opinions, the following questions were asked:

*What motivates you to read?

Table2

Platforms Users' Motivation to Read

Enjoyment	Relaxation	School assignments	Work
100%	83%	12%	%5

The participants were asked to tick two options and the results showed that they use reading as a means of relaxation (83%), some read as part of their school assignment (12%) and a minority (5%) reads when they need to make some work related tasks. What is common to all users is the fact that they all enjoy reading what explain the statistics showing the numbers of users and time spent on those platforms.

*What reading format do you prefer?

Table 3
Favorite Reading Format

Printed books	E-books
81.3%	18.7%

Reading print books, for some people, is an experience that goes beyond the need for academic achievement, it is their connection to their childhoods and memories; nostalgia that impels them to stick to their books as they stick to any familiar piece that linked them to their past. Schneps et al. (2013) stated that "Some people absolutely love the look, smell, and feel of the classical book held in the hand, and such people may not want to give up the sensory experience of reading from a paper book", which is the case of many of our participants (81.3%) who reported that they prefer reading print books.

*Why do you use reading platforms like Wattpad, Radish, Inkitt…?

Table 4
The Reasons Behind Using the Reading Platforms

Free access	Variety	Immediate availability	Easy download
62.5%	18.8%	12.5%	7%

According to the respondents, the platforms are popular because of the advantages they offer, mainly, the free access (62.5%) and variety of choice (18.8%).The answers explain that despite the fact that readers prefer print books, convenience and different benefits pushed them to read e-books.

*How did you come to use those platforms?

Respondents answered that they come across some advertising sites promoting reading platforms while browsing the net, others said that they read about them as a 'suggested for you' post in Facebook, some answered that it was friends' recommendation and some simply Googled sites looking for free reading platforms. We can just notice how digital age is affecting peoples' life style and choices.

*Do you take part in online group discussions or forums about books or authors you like?

Table 5
Users' Interaction with Group Discussion

Yes	No
25%	75%

Conversations during e-book reading are often about the platform while print book conversations are more often about the book content. Many users, especially those who prefer print books (75% of respondents in the question about the preferred reading format) use the platforms for the advantages they offer and do not take part in group discussing (75%).

*According to your experience, what is the difference between reading print books and e-books?

When asked about the differences they experience when reading print books and reading online, the majority mentioned the facilities reading platforms provide. Indeed, e-books are more convenient. They already have light source within device, easy to bookmark, can also be read anytime, anywhere as long as there is enough battery and good internet connection. The readers can see people's comments on passages and see a different perspective to theirs. However, screen luminance from electronic devices can contribute to visual fatigue, eyes itching and burning. Print books require light source, can be read anytime, anywhere, easier for the reader to retain the information, yet not quite practical because of books' size and their expensive cost.

Reading has a considerable effect on language achievement. It contributes to readers' linguistic competence, vocabulary growth, and speaking skills what boosts their confidence. It is known also that well read students are successful learners. Can we say the same about the reading platforms readers?

*Do you use the same strategies of reading when using the reading platforms?

Yes	No
75%	25%

75% of users reported that they use the same strategies of reading when using the platforms. We are not quite sure whether they know exactly what is meant by strategies but because they are not academics, we assume they just mean the way of reading.

Does reading e-books help you with your English language?

Table 6

The Effect of Reading E-books on English Learning

Yes	No
87.5%	12.5%

87.5% of respondents reported that the reading platforms help them improve their language. 12.5% seems in no need for those platforms to improve their linguistic competence. Some users are native speakers (answers from the personal information section) and some speak English as a second language what explains their advanced level in English.

If yes, what improvement you noticed in your language performance?

Table 7

The Linguistic Elements Affected by Reading Platforms

Vocabulary	Comprehension	Grammar	Production and Fluency
50%	25%	12.5%	12.5%)

Vocabulary growth is the first outcome of extensive reading what confirms the users' answers. Vocabulary influences comprehension what leads to grammar learning what will eventually be reflected in good linguistic production (writing and speaking)

*What addition did reading platforms provide?

Respondents' answers were different; they mentioned understanding others; gained knowledge about other people's culture and customs, broadened their general knowledge, developed their critical thinking and learned more about informal English.

Do you look up meaning of unfamiliar or unknown words in online dictionaries?

Table 8

Readers' use of Online Dictionaries

Yes	No
87.5%	12.5%

87.5% of the respondents reported consulting online dictionaries to explain unknown words while using the reading platforms. This can be seen as an advantage of using online reading what allows users to multitask and use many applications at the same time.

4 Discussion

Learning using online reading platforms is an expanding field of research. Covid 19 pandemic contributed to the increased number of users because of the lock down. Yet, the impact of this practice is inconclusive and the results of research are sometimes contradictory. People however started to pay more attention to this important field of research (Page and Vincent, 2018)

The answers of respondents in the first section where they were asked to provide particulars about their age, gender, native language and favorite genre proved that apart from their native languages, the participants who answered the questionnaire share the same information what leads to deduce that even if a larger sample was selected, the results would likely be the same and more importantly it means that the population share the same profile. It can be concluded that the population using those reading platforms are young female readers with different tongues who like to read romantic, paranormal and thriller genre. From the results also, it can be cautiously stated that the sample is representative of the universe-the general number of users of platforms- this study is targeting.

In the second section, the aim was to investigate readers' habits and attitudes towards those platforms. The first query was about readers' motivation to consult those platforms. From respondents' answers, those platforms provide the readers with entertaining novels they enjoy reading; this is why "enjoyment" and "relaxation" were their top choice. The platforms are providing the product the readers are seeking and enjoy consuming and do not mind spending hours on (23 billion minutes a month of reading on Wattpad platform).

About the favorite reading format, 81.5% of the users chose print books. Still, the fact that users prefer print books is overshadowed by the advantages reading platforms offer. One of the advantages is free access; most of the platforms are free or at least they come with two versions: free and premium where readers can have additional advantages against paying a monthly subscription; add to this the variety of choice and the different genres available where readers find the books they enjoy reading; and of course the immediate availability is another appeal to choose reading platforms. There is no contradiction between what readers want and what they use. Sometimes we need to be pragmatic; why to buy a book when we are only a click away from owning a whole library.

Other reasons why people chose e-books over print books were revealed when we asked about the differences users experience when reading print books and reading online. The majority mentioned the facilities reading platforms provide. On one hand, e-books are more convenient. They already have light source within device, easy to bookmark, can also be read anytime, anywhere as long as there is enough battery and good internet connection. The readers can see people's comments on passages and see a different perspective to theirs. However, screen luminance from electronic devices can contribute to visual fatigue, eyes itching and burning. Printed books, on the other hand, require light source, can be read anytime, anywhere, easier for the reader to retain the information, yet not quite practical because of books' size and their expensive cost.

How did users come to know about the reading platforms? Respondents answered that they read about them in some publicity pages on the net or as a 'suggested for you' post in Facebook, some answered that was friends recommendation; and some simply Googled sites looking for free reading platforms. We can just notice how digital age is affecting peoples' life style and choices.

Among the options reading platforms provide is group discussion. Readers who take part in group discussion are more involved in the activities of the platforms. Some readers form a deep connection with their favorite writers; so they, read all their books, comment on the characters in the novels, suggest ideas for in-progress or incomplete stories and form friendships with other readers and fans. In brief, they discuss everything related to the platform. Readers who focused on reading books only without taking part in group discussion consider the platforms as a source to find the books they enjoy reading and nothing more. It seems like the 75% of users who do not use group discussion are the same 75% of users who prefer print books.

About reading strategies, 75% of the respondents reported that they use the same strategies as when reading print books. Strategies- or as Wenden (as cited in Alderson, 2000) listed their different libels as techniques, tactics, potentially conscious plans, consciously employed operations, learning skills, basic skills, functional skills, cognitive abilities, language processing strategies and problem-solving procedures- are applied in reading to make comprehension more effective. Effective readers are able to identify the purpose of reading, use silent reading techniques for relatively rapid reading, skim the text for main ideas or scan the text for specific information, analyze vocabulary and apply guessing when they are not certain, and infer the implied meanings. (See Brown (2001) for more strategies).

When using those platforms, the readers are assisted; they can interact with writers and other follow readers asking for clarification; they can use online dictionaries for unfamiliar words and shift to read the same book in their native language. Besides and because of the nature of digital reading, each reader develops their own habits and strategies that help them read more effectively. Baron (2017, p.15) explained that saying: "The many advantages of reading digitally also bring with them implications for how we learn differently when we read differently". However, some negative habits can be associated with reading online. Liu (2005) stated that: "screen-based reading behavior is characterized by more time spent on browsing and scanning, keyword spotting, one-time reading, non-linear reading, and reading more selectively, while less time is spent on in-depth reading, concentrated reading and decreasing sustained attention". It can be inferred that the readers who do not take part in discussion are the same who prefer reading print books and the same who use strategies similar to when reading print books.

About the achievement, 87.5% of the sample study declared that they had benefit from reading e-books. They mainly developed their vocabulary (50%) and comprehension (25%); they gained more control over the use of English language especially casual and urban English and expanded their background knowledge about occidental culture and customs

especially those related to the English speaking countries like USA, England, Australia and Canada.

87.5% of the respondents reported consulting online dictionaries to explain unknown words while using the reading platforms. This can be seen as an advantage of using online reading what allows users to multitask and use many applications at the same time: like reading, looking for unknowing words in the dictionary and chatting with a fellow reader in one of those group discussion boxes.

From analyzing the respondents' answers, it can be noticed that they are very open to the novelty digital technology is adding to their lives. They mastered and used reading online to enjoy themselves and learn about the English language as well as the extra- linguistic aspect related to it.

Digital reading practices can foster reflection and develop the reading skills and strategies necessary for the requirements of the future era. This is why the study recommends importing the experience of reading platforms to Algerian schools and universities to allow students to skip the stress of academic learning to more casual reading where students can share books- or write their own books if they are talented enough- to acquire knowledge relevant to their current and future needs.

Teachers can assist learners in their online reading by showing them the different strategies readers can apply to make their reading more effective. Teachers can start with blended learning where face to face meetings as well as online meetings can be used to ensure a smooth transition from the traditional way to a more digital approach of learning.

Conclusion

Literacy started with chiseled stones, papyrus scrolls, print books and now is the era of e-books. The digital world is set in motion and there is no sign of slowing down. It is simply the evolution of the mode of delivery. This evolution is a certainty whether one embraces it or not. Properly selected and used, e-books can develop literacy skills equally well and sometimes better than print books. As the respondents reported, learning while reading novels is possible. The objective is to import the idea of those reading platforms to our schools and university where students can share novels to improve their language production and comprehension. Teachers can start with blended learning where students can use print books and e-books at the same time. What is important is to teach learners to not see e-books and print books as an "either/or" conflict. Instead, they can be instructed to benefit from both versions to suit the purpose for which they are reading.

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Students' Perceptions towards Reading Digital Texts

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Abstarct

Technology and the internet continue to change how students learn and develop. Reading as dynamic skill is not an exception. Previously, reading has long been linked with printed texts, articles, books. With the emergence of technology; however, another type of reading called digital reading has emerged. The latter is linked with digital texts or e-texts and e-books. The aim of this study is to explore students' perceptions of digital texts reading, since the majority of EFL students were fascinated by the use of computers, tablets and smart-phones in their daily lives. To collect data, we opt for an online questionnaire uploaded in Google forms. The questionnaire was intended to collect quantitative data concerning the participants' responses about their interest and motivation, digital texts reading efficacy, problems in digital reading, as well as their preference toward digital or printed reading texts. Research findings showed that the participants preferred and were interested to use digital texts than printed texts, in the sense that students positively perceive reading digital texts, but they did not exclude the importance of printed texts simply because most of their lecturers assigned them printed texts even though students are fascinated by technology in general and so they are skillful to handle digital texts.

Keywords : digital texts, EFL students' perceptions, printed texts

Introduction

Due to the vital role of reading, this skill has long been one of the priorities in EFL learning and teaching. Previously, printed texts have been the only material that teachers rely on in their reading sessions; however, with current technological advancements, a new type of texts called "digital texts" has been adopted in the EFL classrooms causing a fundamental change in the way today's students read. Moreover, several studies showed that the use of digital texts requires a new way of teaching and learning because digital texts have essentially changed the act of reading and students' behavior.

1. Text: from the Printed Page to the Web-page

In this digital era, it is important to examine that the transition from printed text to web-text affects the way language learner reads and interprets and perceives a text.(Gilbert, 2017). However, before discussing this idea, it is essential to define what is meant by a text. Traditionally, a text has been understood as a piece of written or spoken material in its primary source (as opposed to a paraphrase or summary). (Norquist, 2020). In other words, texts were usually presented as printed matter in bound volumes such as pamphlets or books. Recently, however, the dynamics of technology, especially social media, have expanded the notion of a text to include symbols such as emotions and emojis. For some scholars, the concept of the text becomes unstable as technologies for publishing and disseminating texts evolve. Barton and Lee (2013), for instance, stated that people are more likely to encounter texts in digital space, where the materials are becoming "more fluid". That is, they defined the concept of the text in relation to technology when they said " texts can no longer be thought of a relatively fixed and stable. They are more fluid with the changing affordances of new media. In addition, they are becoming increasingly multimodal and interactive links between texts online, and intertextuality is common in online texts as people draw upon and play with other texts available on the web."(Barton & Lee, 2014, n.p).

2. Definition of Digital text

Studies showed that There is no single definition for digital text. Manalou (2019), for instance, defined digital text as « one kept in digital devices or those accessed from the internet in the form of a web-page, text , message, or online postings. ». For Nelson, 2008; Liaw and Huang, 2014, cited in Manalou, 2019) digital text has to do with the digital version of printed texts read in a digital device (i.e. smartphone, computer, tablet.. So, based on the last definition, it is worth to highlight the features of each type of texts: digital and printed .

2. Digital Text Vs Printed Text

Several studies about students' and teachers' perceptions about the use of digital texts reading have been conducted. Manalou(2019), for instance, found that 65 participants thought that reading digital texts is enjoyable. That is, the majority of the participants liked reading digital texts simply because they considered digital materials more motivating and entertaining. In the same study, however, some other participants considered reading digital texts as tiring , as reading digitally may fatigue their eyes. However, other

studies(Singer&Alexander, cited in Alissari et.al(nd); Jeong, 2012) suggested that reading digitally results in poor performance. They also argued that reading comprehension scores were significantly better when reading printed texts over digital texts, as the latters had more eye fatigue than when reading in print.

3. Digital Text vs Printed text Reading Strategies

By contrasting digital and printed texts in terms of reading strategies, studies show that one's proficiency in print reading strategies does not guarantee his success in digital reading comprehension, because digital texts have richer and more complex components or environment than the printed texts. Murray and McPheron (2004), for instance, stated that print literacy does not automatically transfer to digital literacy. Even Afflerbach and Cho (cited in Pardede, 2019) confirmed that digital reading requires traditional print reading strategies to be employed in a more complex way. Based on this idea, Schmar-Dobler (2003) summed up this idea by comparing seven comprehension strategies consistently employed in both printed text and e-text: activating prior knowledge, monitoring comprehension, repairing comprehension and determining important ideas.

Other current studies support the idea that reading digital texts require many strategies employed in printed texts in addition to some unique skills. These skills are necessary because, unlike the print texts which is static and linear, digital texts are said to be multimodal or multi-linear in character (i.e combine text, static images, embedded videos). Hyperlinks, which is the most remarkable feature in reading digital texts, create non-sequential page structure. That is, to read such texts, readers are required to have the ability to use digital reading strategies to search for and locate texts, as well as to construct and examine meaning.(Cho,2014 & Coiro, 2011).

4. The Study

To conduct this study, the researcher opted for a descriptive method and to quantify the different perceptions, we find the quantitative approach more appropriate. To collect the intended data, an online questionnaire was given to 17 second year English students at Skikda university using Google forms. The questionnaire aims at highlighting students' perceptions of reading digital texts in terms of interest and motivation, digital text efficacy, the difficulties they face while reading digital texts as well as their preference of reading digital texts rather than printed texts

The participants of this study were second year English students at Skikda university. An online questionnaire was given to 17 EFL students using Google forms. The questionnaire aims at highlighting students' perceptions of reading digital texts in terms of interest and motivation, digital text efficacy, the difficulties they face while reading digital texts as well as their preference of reading digital texts rather than printed texts.

1. Students' Motivation and Interest in Reading Digital Texts

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
I enjoy studying at home using the internet.	52.9%	29.4%	00%	5.9%	11.8%
I feel motivated while reading digital texts	46%	23.5%	00%	12.6%	17.6%
I feel comfortable when studying or reading digital texts.	64,6%	11.8%	00%	23.5%	00%
The features of digital texts make them exciting to read	47.1%	17.6%	5.9%	11.8%	17.6%
Digital reading gives me positive experience to learn more using digital media.	47.1%	17.6%	23.5%	5.9%	5.9%
Mean scores	51.54	19.98	5.88	11.94	11.3

As shown in table 01, the majority of the participants were interested in technology as 52.9% of them strongly agreed with the first statement, 29.4% agreed with the statement and only 11.8 % of them strongly disagreed. The majority of students found reading digital texts motivating, comfortable and exciting as the highest percentage refers to those who strongly agreed with the statements. Moreover, 47.1% of students said that digital texts help them to gives positive experience and so develop their learning. These findings show that students are interested in technology in general and reading digital texts in particular.

2. Digital Texts Efficacy

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Digital text is efficient because it can save my time	64.7	17.6	00	11.8%	00%
Digital reading is easy in improving my comprehension	58.9	23.5%	5.9%	11.8%	00
Reading digital devices are beneficial for developing reading habits.	70.6	11.8%	00	17.6%	00%
Mean Score	64.73	17.63	1.96	13.73	00

Table 02 shows that the majority of students believe that digital texts are effective ,in the sense that 64.7% of them strongly agreed that learning with digital texts is effective, 58.9% of them admitted that digital reading facilitates comprehension improvement, and so increased learning achievement. Around 70.6% of students strongly agreed that reading digitally can develop reading habits. This finding reveals that students are fascinated with technology and

reading digitally as more than half of them strongly agreed and agreed with digital reading efficacy.

3. Students' Difficulties in Reading Digital Texts

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
I find problems to get information when reading through digital media.	5.9%	35.3%	23.5%	17.6%	17.6%
Technical disruption from computer decrease my reading's motivation and comprehension.	37.5%	37.5%	18.8%	3.6%	00
The light of the screen soon hurts my eyes while reading digital text.	35.3%	41.2%	17.6%	5.9%	00
It is difficult to understand digital texts without teacher's explanation.	29.5%	35.5%	17.6%	11.8%	5.9%
Reading digital texts is laborious because I must use smartphone or computer.	29.4%	58.8%	5.9%	5.9%	00
Reading digital texts is a waste of money because I spend hours in the internet.	6.3%	12.5%	12.5%	43.8%	25%
I cannot improve my knowledge by reading digital texts.	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	23.5%
MEAN SCORE	21.4	32.38	14.54	13.5	10.28

Table 3 shows that the majority of the participants encounter no significant problem in reading digital texts, in the sense that 23.5 % them were neutral while those who disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement have the same percentage with 17.6 %. The most significant problem they faced was eye irritation caused by the screen light. More than have of the participants were divided between those who agreed (35.3%) and strongly agreed (41.2%) with the negative effects caused by the screen light to their eyes. Moreover, more than half of the participants (65%) strongly agreed and agreed that teachers' explanation is very important to understand digital texts. The majority of the participants agreed and strongly agreed that reading digital texts is laborious as they have to use smartphones and computers, however, more than half of them strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement which states that reading digital texts as a waste of money. This finding reveals that students were fascinated by technology as they like surfing on the internet.

4. Preference for Reading Digital texts or Printed texts

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Reading digital texts is easier to understand than reading textbooks	52.9%	29.4%	00	17.6%	00
I more often read digital texts than printed texts.	17.6%	11.8%	00	52.9%	17.6%
I love using the internet for relevant additional texts to study.	35.3%	52.5%	5.9%	00	5.9%
I like digital texts because I can keep them in my PC and so I can read them anytime and anywhere.	29.4%	52.9%	11.8%	5.9%	00
Searching for digital texts is time consuming unlike printed texts.	23.5%	47.1%	11.8%	11.8%	5.9%
I can easily comprehend printed texts better than digital texts.	41.5%	17.5%	29.4%	11.8%	00
I always print digital texts before I read them.	29.4%	29.4%	29.4%	5.9%	5.9%
I find digital texts interesting than printed texts.	41.2%	11.8%	00	23.5%	23.5%
Mean score	33.85	31.55	11.03	16.17	7.35

Table 4 shows that though the majority of the participants strongly agreed and agreed that reading digital texts is easier than printed texts in terms of comprehension, more than 70% of them disagreed and strongly disagreed that they were more often read digital than printed texts, loved searching the internet for relevant additional texts to study and saved digital required texts in their PC so that they can read them anytime and anywhere. However, the majority of the participants agreed and strongly agreed that searching for digital texts is time consuming unlike printed text. The latter can be better understood than digital texts, and so the participants strongly agreed and agreed that they often print digital texts before they read them.

Discussion of Students' Perception towards Reading Digital Texts

By comparing the answers to aforementioned indicators, the findings indicate that the students' perceptions of reading digital texts is most positive in terms of digital texts efficacy. More than 80 percent of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that digital texts are   The second most positive perception is given to interest and motivation. More than 70 percent of respondents considered digital texts interesting and motivating. Though the least positive

response is for difficulty indicator, more than half of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that digital texts caused problems to their reading.

These findings showed that the participants preferred and were interested to use digital texts than printed texts, in the sense that students positively perceive reading digital texts, but they did not exclude the importance of printed texts simply because most of their lecturers assigned them printed texts even though students are fascinated by technology in general and so they are skillful to handle digital texts.

5. Research Implications and Recommendations

basing on these findings, we recommend the followings:

- Professional learning should assist teachers to develop language facilitation skills with digital texts as traditional strategies may not be transferable from print to digital text

- Teachers should be trained on how new technology operates, so that they can obtain changes in pedagogy and the practice needed to implement digital texts in their classes. That is, teachers should create opportunities to develop digital reading skills and strategies in their classes.

- Both teachers and students should have opportunities as non native technology users to develop technology skills that would enable them to use digital texts effectively

Conclusion

The results of this study can be interpreted to support the flexible use of both types of texts in the reading sessions « digital and printed » as well as for students who have different decoding skills. Findings of this study also confirmed that students' perceptions of digital text reading are positive; however, students did prefer reading digitally without neglecting the importance of printed texts. Finally, we can say that both digital texts and printed texts are materials of teaching EFL students at Skikda University, as its type has its own idiosyncrasies. All in all, digital text in its relation to language learning and teaching plays a vital role for teachers and students. Students can develop learning abilities in this technological era. Therefore, they can enjoy their educational activities through digital based text.

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Appendix

 Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

        This questionnaire is addressed to you in order to explore your opinions about reading digital texts in terms of motivation and interest, digital reading efficiency, the different difficulties that you face when reading digital texts as well as your preference for reading digital texts or printed texts. For this reason, you are required to say whether you: **strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:**

   1.   **Students' Motivation and Interest in Reading Digital Texts**

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
I enjoy studying at home using the internet.					
I feel motivated while reading digital texts					

I feel comfortable when studying or reading digital texts.	
I find digital texts interesting than printed texts.	
The features of digital texts make them exciting to read	
Digital reading gives me positive experience to learn more using digital media.	

2. Digital Texts Efficiency

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Digital text is efficient because it can save my time					
Digital reading is easy in improving my comprehension					
Reading digital devices are beneficial for developing reading habits.					

3. Students' Difficulties in Reading Digital Texts

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
I find problems to get information when reading through digital media.					
Technical disruption from computer decrease my reading's motivation and comprehension.					
The light of the screen soon hurts my eyes while reading digital text.					
It is difficult to understand digital texts without teacher's explanation.					
Reading digital texts is laborious because I must use smartphone or computer.					
Reading digital texts is a waste of money because I spend hours in the internet.					
I cannot improve my knowledge by reading digital texts.					

4. Preference for Reading Digital texts or Printed texts

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Reading digital texts is easier to understand than reading textbooks					
I more often read digital texts than printed texts.					
I love using the internet for relevant additional texts to study.					
I like digital texts because I can keep them in my PC and so I can read them anytime and anywhere.					
Searching for digital texts is time consuming unlike printed texts.					
I can easily comprehend printed texts better than digital texts.					
I always print digital texts before I read them.					

The Effect of Using ICTs on the Reading Skill: the Case of Second Year Students and teachers of Abbess Laghrour University

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Abstarct

Admittedly, the modern era witnessed an increasing use of the technological tools which affect our activities, without forgetting their touch on the teaching learning process. Speaking of the latter, reading skill has gained momentum recently because it can be considered as the core of learning. In this regard, this study aims at investigating the students' and teachers' attitudes towards the use of the various technological tools while reading. The objective of this paper is to shed light on how the different tools of ICTs can foster and improve the learners' reading abilities. The study was descriptive qualitative study whose subjects were fifteen (15) teachers and forty (40) second year students from English department at Abbess Laghrour University. Based on the data collected through questionnaires and interviews, there were various points concluded like: using online dictionaries while reading obviously help learners to improve their vocabulary building and usage, which facilitates reading activities. In addition, teachers observed that using visual aids increases students' excitement and motivation towards reading and the course becomes more interesting and creative. Moreover, teachers faced problems while using ICTs like the lack of computers and infrastructure, as well as problems of controlling their class while grouping them on the small number of computers. Accordingly, the study concludes that the use of ICTs enables students to engage easily with reading texts. Therefore, this study proclaims that teachers should change their attitudes and try to create new ways to use ICTs while reading as much as possible.

Keywords : ICTs, reading, vocabulary, motivation, visual aids.

Introduction

Traditionally, the teacher was the sole source and the only lecturer in the classroom, but with the shift to the learner-centered paradigm, things changed, and learners take their responsibility to enhance their own different skills with a small guidance from their teacher. Recently, the teaching-learning process has witnessed an increasing use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) which are always developed and changed throughout history and all over the world. However, the aforementioned process has four different skills like listening, speaking, writing and reading through which students develop their competencies. Despite the fact that ICTs have been introduced and integrated at the same time in the didactic process, some teachers and students are unaware of the important role of such technological tools in helping learners enhance their reading skill through using different tools and devices while teaching and learning reading. In this regard, this paper sheds the light on the integration of ICTs while reading for EFL students in order to help them enhancing their reading skill. It also aims at:

- Exploring teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the benefits of using ICTs to enhance the reading skill by raising their awareness of ICTs importance.

- Discovering the different challenges faced by students while reading.

This case paves the way to raise the following questions:

1- To what extent are ICTs used while reading?

2- Do ICTs enhance EFL learners' reading skill?

1. Literature review

This section aims at presenting the theoretical concepts of both the reading skill and the concept of ICTs in order to shed light on the numerous studies conducted on both variables

1.1. Reading Skills

National Literacy Trust Director, Jonathan Douglas (2014) said:*"Technologyis playing a central role in young people's literacy development and reading choice. While we welcome the positive impact which technology has on bringing further reading opportunities to young people, it's crucial that reading in print is not cast aside"*. In the light of his words, ICTs have a vital role in enhancing learners' reading competencies because they give them the opportunity to read more and better than the printed materials do. Traditionally, teachers and their handouts, text book, and the different materials they brought to their class were the only sources students can find in front of them while studying. However, with the ICTs, finding different books, articles and scientific papers becomes as piece of cake, so students can get further information, details and other sources everywhere and whenever they need them.Doubtlessly, reading can be considered as the core of the didactic process, by which other skills can be enhanced, as an example the writing skill which requires lots of reading in order to create a well-formed piece of writing.

According to Davies (1968), reading is the ability to interact with different written forms by using cognitive abilities. He also adds that the reading skill can involve different processes like: figuring out some answers to questions by drawing conclusions and results, knowing the writer's intention and different used techniques so that the reader can recognize the passage mood. Another point of view was introduced by Munby (1978) who believes that reading also include the ability of understanding explicit and implicit kinds of information, and the ability of deducing hidden messages under the use of unfamiliar lexical items. Furthermore, reading can be considered as the core for learning various subjects and enhance different skills. Reading efficiently will enhance learners' ability to interact in an effective way. Moreover, Maduabuchi (2007) has considered reading as the interaction or the relationship between the written text and the reader which leads to the comprehension of the hidden messages. In addition, Nwaiwu (2007) stated that reading is also an interaction between various thoughts encoded by the writer and the language decoded by the reader. He also explained the reading process as a communication form in which the reader tries to interpret and analyze the writer's mind and thoughts. Thus, reading can be seen as an important process that would be developed with practice, in order to be familiar with its different aspects like: word recognition and vocabulary building that can be learned, improved and mastered with time.

1.2. The Concept of ICTs

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be considered as an interdisciplinary process of collecting, storing, transforming, sending, receiving, analyzing and other different functions that are used through an electronic devices and tools. Similarly, Kent (2004) points out "ICT in education point of view refers to Information and Communication Technology such as computers, communications facilities and features that variously support teaching learning and a range of activities in education"(QCA schemes of work for ICT in Kent country council, 2004). In the light of his words, integrating ICTs in the teaching-learning process did open new dimensions that could raise the quality of education. Such integration can also empower education since ICTs can be seen as media that help learner to have a wide range of information with a free and easy access. Thus, students are not obliged to be in the classroom to learn as learning can happen anytime and anywhere with the help of such technological tools.(Wernet, Olliges and Delicatch, 2000). According to Nordin et al (2010), ICT can be viewed as a professional and valuable means to foster the didactic process. For teachers, it seems to be like a delivery mode and a source of authentic and valid text different types. And for learners, it is considered as valuable tool that provides them with different opportunities to develop their communicative skills and literacy skills by allowing them to search in an easy way (Nordin et al, 2010).

In addition, it facilitates finding original sources, like articles from international journals, so students can them just by sitting in front of their computers and connecting to the internet network. By doing that, students can be autonomous learners and the learner-centered approach can be encouraged as well. All in all, Yunus and Salehi (2012) claimed that the use

of information and communication technologies in the didactic process improves the quality of education and provide both teachers and learners with more learning and teaching supports.

2. Research Methodology
2.1. Data Gathering Tools

Since the main purpose of this paper is to investigate to what extent do EFL students use ICTs to enhance their reading skill, a descriptive qualitative study was conducted, in which a mode of triangulation was used. A questionnaire was administered to students at the department of English at Abbess Laghrour University. According to Brown (2001), as cited in Dornyei (2003), "questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (p.06). That is to say, questionnaires represent any form of list of questions which need to be answered; they can be list of questions, checklists, multiple choice items, and/or other sorts (Dornyei, 2003). And we had an interview with teachers of English.

2.2. Participants

The participants who were selected to take part in this study were second year EFL students at the Department of English at Abbess Laghrour University. The number of informants who were randomly selected in this study was forty (40) students and fifteen (15) teachers.

2.3. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire includes sixteen (16) questions divided into three sections. Section one is concerned with background information questions about the students and their manipulation of technological tools. Section two is devoted to teaching reading, notably how it is fostered by learners. Lastly, section three is designed to explore learners' awareness of implementing ICTs while reading.

2.4. Description of the Interview

The teachers' interview aims at investigating their attitudes towards the influence of ICTs while checking the students' reading skill. The teachers were asked nine (09) questions. The most important questions were about: The teachers' awareness of the significance of using ICTs while reading, the students' motivation and interest to read and the different difficulties faced by both students and them while using ICTs in their courses to read something.

3. The Main Findings and Analysis
3.1. Teachers' Interview

The results of the interview with the teachers showed that all teachers are aware of the importance of the reading skill and the role it plays in developing other skills. When asking the teachers about their perceptions on the integration of ICTs in EFL classes, they all agreed that such integration would be of a help, yet the majority of them complain about the lack of knowledge and competence of using ICTs. So, more training is needed. Moreover, teachers

complain that the lack of infrastructures and the low speed of the Internet hinder them from using the ICTs adequately. In addition, all teachers confirm that students have lots of software, websites, applications and other tools that allow them to facilitate the reading process for them, and help them to overcome the different obstacles like difficult word meanings, the right pronunciation of unfamiliar words and so on. They also believe that students become more motivated because of the different sources they can find while using technological tools and they can foster their different learning styles as a result of the variety of information forms that ICTs can provide. Finally, concerning their attitude, all teachers show positive attitudes towards the use of ICTs in EFL classes.

3.2. Students' Questionnaire Analysis
Section one: Participants' Background Information

Participants' Gender.	31 females / 9 males
Age.	Between 19 to 22
Choice of Studying English.	30 deliberate /10 undeliberate

Table 1: Participant Background Information

The majority of students are females. This shows that females make up a larger share of education and there are more female than male students in Algerian classes. The age of the students ranges from 20 to 22 years. When asking the students if studying English was their personal choice, 30 of them stated that studying English was a deliberate choice, while the remaining 10 students claimed that their choice was not intended. This means that either they forced in a way or another to study English or because they had no other choice.

Section 02: Reading Skill

The findings of this questionnaire revealed that the majority of the questioned students representing (36) prefer the reading skills. However, the four remaining students prefer writing and speaking. None of the students opted for the last option which is listening. This shows that students are not much interested in the listening skill. It is surprising that the big majority of students read only to prepare for examinations, and only two of them read for fun. However, none of the students read to get cultivated or to get ahead in studies. This is unfortunately the case of most students in different levels in Algeria. Moreover, the results showed that all the questioned students agree on the fact that they have access to various technological tools such as text - to - speech, animation, online dictionaries, audio books and linked videos, and students use these tools in order to overcome the different difficulties related to the reading skill. Unexpectedly, when asking the students whether reading is a hard task or not, we have found almost very convergent results. Eleven students confirmed that reading is a hard task, and other nine students claimed the facility of reading in classes. This may ascertain that those who find reading an easy task are good readers, yet they do not concentrate and pay attention to these skills, and those who believe that reading is a difficult

task are not interested at all in their studies. Concerning the most used strategies while reading, we noticed that most students' answers range between skimming and scanning. Only two students claimed that they use extensive and intensive readings. Finally, analyzing the results of the question which is concerned with the different difficulties that students encountered during reading, we have difficult words to pronounce, words with difficult meaning, and complex writing structure.

Section three: ICTs Information and Communication Technologies

Trying to investigate the students' insight about the importance of using ICTs in EFL classes, we suggested a scale of importance from "very important" to "not important at all". The results show that second year students are aware of the importance and the necessity of using ICTs in education, mainly in developing reading skill. Twenty-two students' point of view towards the use of ICTs has been "very important" whereas the rest eighteen students selected "important" to describe their perception concerning the use of ICTs. None of the questioned students have chosen "not important at all". These results above indicate that ICTs have a significant impact and important role of the learning process principally reading. When asking the students whether they have access or not to technological tools both in the class and at home, we found out that all of them answered "yes" concerning the class. However, many of them do not have access to these tools at home, because according to them, there are many challenges when using ICTs at home such as internet reliability, the affordability of the devices etc ... Concerning the statistic results, the big majority of students (38) think that ICTs help learners to develop the reading skill along with so many other skills. Only two students believe the contrary, which according to us, as EFL teachers, something very confusing. Last but not least, when asking the students about their attitudes towards incorporating ICTs in classes in order to improve the reading skill, all of them without exception have positive attitudes.

Conclusion

To conclude, Information and Communication Technologies is considered as an interdisciplinary process of collecting, storing, transforming, sending, receiving, analyzing and other different functions that are used through electronic devices and tools that play an important role in enhancing different learning skills like reading. The latter is a key element in the teaching learning process that can be developed with practice. However, the integration of ICTs in the teaching learning process has a vital role in enhancing the reading skill and other different skills that learners should improve. Thus, both teachers and learners are aware of the importance that ICTs have as a powerful tool that can change the didactic process to be more interesting, motivated and active. On the other hand, it is recommended that both teachers and students to have more training about how to use ICTs adequately.

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Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

I would be gratefully glad if you spare few minutes of your time to fill in the questionnaire of a paper entitled "Reading and ICTs".

Your contribution will be insightfully guiding the paper properly in terms of methodology and data gathering tools and practices.

Part one: Students' Personal Information

Tick the right box:

1. Gender :

- Male ☐
- Female ☐

2. Age:

- 18-20 years old ☐
- 20-25 years old ☐

- 25 or more years old ☐

3. Was studying English at the University your personal choice

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Part Two: Reading skill

1. Which skill is your favorite skill?

   - Writing ☐
   - Reading ☐
   - Speaking ☐
   - Listening ☐

2. Do you like to read books, articles, and different genres of written pieces?

   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

3. You read in order to:

   - Prepare for examination. ☐
   - Have fun. ☐
   - Get ahead in your studies. ☐
   - Cultivate yourself. ☐

4. Which strategy (ies) you use more while reading?

   - Skimming. ☐
   - Scanning. ☐
   - Extensive. ☐
   - Intensive. ☐

5. Do you think reading is hard task?

   - Yes ☐

- No ☐

6. What sort of difficulties you have encountered during reading, or hinder you from reading?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Part three: ICTs Information and Communication Technologies:

1. Do you have access to technological tools?

   - Yes ☐

   - No ☐

2. Are you aware about the importance of integrating the ICTs with the reading skill?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

3. What are different tools you use while reading?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. Do you think ICTs would help you to develop your reading skill?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

5. Do your teachers use some technological tools during their class?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

   If   yes,   mention   them
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. What sort of problems you may face while using ICTs?
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………………

   thank you.

The Reading Skill and the Use of ICTs during the COVID19 Pandemic: Students' Perspectives

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Abstarct

COVID19 pandemic has affected all vital sectors in the world. Higher education, like other sectors, has adopted new methods and strategies to cope with the new situation, and has taken new measures in teaching and learning to meet the needs of learners. During this period, the use of ICTs has become so important if not indispensable. The focus of this paper is reading skill in relation to ICTs during the COVID19 pandemic. The question is: to what extent have our English language students become digital native readers? This study endeavors to reveal the truth of digital natives in the department of English, University of Badji Mokhtar Annaba, and seeks to assess the use of ICTs by English language learners during the COVID19 pandemic and how do technological tools affect their reading skill. The study used a survey questionnaire and the target samples are third year and master one English students. The results reveal that: reading skill has developed during the pandemic period compared to the period before, reading becomes an obligation where students feel themselves obliged to read and understand their tasks and assignments, ICTs helped a lot students to develop new reading strategies to cope with the process of e-learning in this digital age.

Keywords : COVID19 pandemic, ICTs, reading skill, strategies

Introduction

In recent years, the world has witnessed successive and rapid scientific, technological, and informative developments. This made it imperative for the academic staff and those in charge of educational institutions to coexist with these global changes to keep pace with changes, developments, and new challenges in the light of global trends and education development policies that took many forms, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT) on a large scale, e-learning, and new adopted academic instructions and measures. This drastic development has brought about an unparalleled scientific revolution that has not happened before, as it has changed the ordinary, traditional course of life into digital electronic life. Information and communication technology with all its forms, patterns and means has played an effective and prominent role in all areas of life, especially in higher education and scientific research, where digital technology has become used in education because of its benefits for the teachers and students alike.

With the emergence of the Corona epidemic and the quarantine conditions imposed on many sectors, university educational institutions found themselves forced to submit to the fait accompli, which is the transition to distance education and online learning. In fact, this is a compulsory action to ensure the continuity of learning process and communication with students through the use of available information and communication tools, and through various programs set by the educational faculty to move forward to continue learning and in light of the new data, challenges and unexpected urgent conditions.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and based on these new technological changes, students find themselves obligated to develop their reading skills and deal with modern digital technology more quickly than before since ICT has become a necessity to enable them to continue their lessons remotely with their teachers. This is what prompts us to know the extent to which ICTs affect students and their reading skills and strategies. The main focus of this paper is reading skill in relation to ICTs during the COVID19 pandemic. The study seeks also to reveal the truth of digital readers in the department of English UBMA, and to assess the use of ICTs by English language learners during the COVID19 pandemic and how do technological tools affect their reading skill. It raises the following questions:

- To what extent have our English language students become digital native readers?
- What are the students' perceptions with regard towards the following:
  ⇨ The usefulness of technology in learning English, and to what extent have our English language students become digital reader.
  ⇨ Reading skill during COVID19.
  ⇨ New reading skills and strategies during COVID19 pandemic.

Reading Skill

Reading can be defined as one's ability to distinguish the alphabet and connect them, and then translate these letters into meanings, and finally understand these meanings to reach the desired meaning of the read text. Relying on their own knowledge of vocabulary and

language, readers endeavor to construct the meaning (Zhang, 2001). Reading is usually followed by understanding and concentration, which results in analysis, conclusion, and employment of the read material for the benefit of the reader, as the reader cannot understand the meanings of words if he does not analyze the symbols that make up them, as it is a linguistic skill, a visual process, and a physical, nervous, mental and emotional activity as well. Yuksel and Yuksel state that good interaction with the text needs to employ a cognitive process (2012).

Reading skill is one of the most important skills in the process of language learning. Ng et al. (2020) assert that reading skills have been identified as one of the vital competence in the 21st century (p. 281). Reading has a relationship with other subjects and disciplines, and all arts and colors of knowledge and culture, reading is one of the most important cultural and civilizational foundations in modern societies. It is an important means of communication that cannot be dispensed. It is the window through which man views various knowledge and cultures, and it is the individual's means and tool in studying and acquiring knowledge, as well as in study and culture, occupying leisure time, and also in the field of learning. Rosenblatt (1994) elucidates that readers bring along their culture and experience when they read a text.

In the field of education, any learning or development that takes from reading is a basic means of achievement and skills acquisition, and the growth of personality aspects (Mizrachi, 2015). Reading is not only an achievement tool for the rest of the other study subjects, but it enables the learner to the process of personal and social compatibility, and makes him realize the meaning of true citizenship. As claimed by Anderson, Hiebert et al. (1985), reading is a crucial life skill. It is a foundation for a child's success in school and in his life. It paves the way for many opportunities, and personal and professional achievements.

Goals and Importance of Reading

Reading aims to achieve special and basic goals and general career goals. According to Mikulecky and Jeffries (1996), reading contributes to the quality of pronunciation, good performance, representation of meanings, and the acquisition of various reading skills, such as speed, independence in reading, the ability to acquire meanings, and benevolent endowment when the meaning is complete. It also improves linguistic gain, and develops the student's, learner, or reader's outcome of new vocabulary and structures (p. 1). It also leads to training the student on the correct expression of meaning, and then leads to the proper use of libraries and benefit from their contents, and it also leads to correct understanding (Teele, 2004, p. 92).

Moreover, reading contributes to building the personality of the individual by educating the mind and acquiring knowledge, and it also contributes to the reader's enjoyment and entertainment in his spare time, which appeals to him from a certain colour of readers, such as stories or poetry for example, and reading is an education tool in life (**Reading Wise Team, 2021**). In school, the learner cannot progress his learning unless he is able to master the skills of reading. It is also a means of the individual's communication with others, which is separated from him by temporal or spatial distances. It also provides the individual with ideas

and information, and stops him on the heritage of the human race. Reading is also one of its functional objectives: It is a means for the advancement of society, and its connection with each other, through the press, letters, books, literature, references, criticism, guidance, drawing ideals, and other methods and forms of employing reading in learning and in culture as well. Reading is one of the most important means that calls for understanding, rapprochement and communication between the elements of society (Russell, 1951, pp.274-277).

Reading Strategies

There are several reading strategies. Predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing are substantial and effective strategies proved to enhance reading comprehension (Block & Israel, 2005). First, prediction improves students' interaction, increases their interest, and fosters their understanding of the text (Oczkus, 2003). The chief important aspect of the prediction process is to compare the existing text and the outcome to ensure good comprehension (Duke & Pearson, 2005). Second, visualizing is another strategy that successful readers utilize when understanding a text (Adler, 2001). Visualization entails the reader constructing an image of what is read, and keeping this image stored in the reader's memory as an interpretation of the text (National Reading Panel, 2000). Moreover, making connections is a paramount strategy that can be employed in the reading process. In fact, the learners can brisk and refresh their prior knowledge and connect the ideas in the text to their own experiences. In addition to this, Adler claims that summarizing presupposes the reader to decide and set what is significant when reading and to condense the information in the reader's own words. Furthermore, questioning is considered a key strategy in the reading process since it can be used before, during, and after reading. It is important for readers to raise questions in order to build a suitable meaning, boost understanding, find answers, solve problems, and get new information (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). The last strategy is inferring. It intends to read between the lines. Students can draw their conclusions relying on employing their own knowledge along with information from the text (Serafini, 2004). Skimming, scanning, sequencing, guessing the meaning of words from the context, and many other strategies cannot be ignored since good readers have to develop and use this variety of strategies.

Information Communication Technology and Language Learning

Information and communication technology can simply be defined as the set of different tools, techniques, systems, or means that are employed in order to process the content and this latter to be communicated. Information and communication technologies have revolutionized the spread of information, and modern technological developments have greatly contributed to eliminating the differences between borders and communication tools. Negi (2021) points out,

> Information and communication technology (ICT) has changed almost every aspect of our lives. It plays a major role in various fields such as education, marketing,

engineering, etc. In the last few decades, it has almost become the necessity of our lives" (p.107).

Information and communication technology devices involve a variety of "electronic devices, computer networks, etc. Examples of such devices are radio, television, and equipment and services associated with these technologies, such as video conferencing and electronic mail (e-mail)"(Srivastava & Sinha, 2021, p. 80). Skorczynska et al. (2016) confirm that technology plays a crucial role in language learning, and communication is easily conducted via "sending text messages or e-mails or via Internet-based software as Skype, personal blogs, Facebook, Twitter etc.; i.e. it is possible to be at home physically alone and yet to communicate virtually with millions of people at the same time through social networks" (p. 22).

ICT plays an important role in the learning process, especially learning foreign languages. No one can deny the scientific revolution brought about by communication and media technology in higher education and in all areas of life. Ruschoff (2016) reveals the fact that digital Media "with their interactive and participatory potential have had a significant impact on the way foreign languages are being taught and learned. In recent years, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) have come of age" (p. 43). In recent times, Integrating ICT in the learning process, especially in higher education, is backed by great support due to the effective role of these new technologies. Varghese and Mandal (2020) demonstrate:

> Digital technology provides an active learning environment through increased access and sharing of the facilities and contents. The potential of this technology to reach large audiences was in fact the first advantage it offered. Its capacity to reach the users anyplace and anytime holds the key to the paradigm shift. It contested the belief that classroom time is equal to learning time. The advancement of digital technology has added even more facilities such as simulations, virtual labs, customizable contents and exercises, adaptive modules, and so on to cater to individual needs and demands. This has placed a strong argument for adapting the technological paradigm into teaching and learning. (p.7)

The use of ICT has many impacts on students' attitudes, thoughts, and reactions. Duffy and Cunningham (1996) claim that the "ICT-based method of teaching and learning can be considered a student-centric methodology "(pp. 170–198). In this way, students can incubate their knowledge to a great extent and strengthen their "personality development" (Negi, 2021, p. 109). The Head Foundation (2017) emphasizes that ICTs help students foster a series of essential skills like "thinking creatively, thinking critically, and working together to learn and search for new information and communicate well" (p. 6).

Online Learning

The first initiative of online learning traced back to the 1990s. During that time, some universities authorized their academic staff to take action and start developing new ways of learning through the integration of ICT into programs of education. According to Bach et al. (2007):

> At first these isolated communities of practice were reluctant to pool any resources or share a great deal of information or experience. This led to many wheels being reinvented, and some areas of development having huge resources, and others trying to develop projects on a shoestring budget. By the late 1990s students arriving in higher education, all with good ICT skills, were increasingly placing demands on their universities for online-based resources and content. As a result, universities have made online learning resources mainstream and sought to establish resources that are offered to all staff and students. (pp.40-41)

Online Learning is a learning system that learners can get by means of the Internet relying on technology devices (Market Business News, 2019). In her definition of e-learning, Ammani Abubakar (2021) states clearly that e-learning refers to a "course management system, learning management system or virtual learning environment. This is designed to offer learners the opportunities to collaborate and interact with an icon-based user interface. This offers tools for test building (…) and many more."(p. 6). This new way of learning relies on using electronic wide-area networks that expand across the World Wide Web, link people from different backgrounds, and offer chances for social interaction and language learning (Bonk & Kim, 1998).

Online Learning during COVID19 Pandemic

In responding to the urgent circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning has become compulsory (Paudel, 2021). During this period, students and academic staff faced unexpected challenges and introduced new initiatives in an attempt to overcome the practical difficulties involved in developing effective online programs. They experienced online and distance education employing "information and communication technologies"(Altbach & de Wit, 2020) that impacted both students' and teachers' experiences during the COVID-19 lockdown. Hammond (2020) explains:

> There are many disparities between online education in a time of normalcy and online education in the time of COVID-19. The most notable difference that I found is that teaching staff who teach online regularly are familiar with programs such as Zoom and Blackboard. Furthermore, their syllabi tend to be structured with clear expectations for the term. I found that some professors are not at all familiar with these programs, and therefore the course in and of itself was difficult due to a lack of structure and organization. For example, some teaching staff were unable to effectively lead lectures because they did not know how to use Zoom properly or would send out their course syllabus with no due dates or criteria for evaluation. This was particularly frustrating as

a student, because the majority of class time was spent trying to figure out how to use certain platforms rather than discussing the course materials. (p. 235)

In fact, the use of audio and video conferencing such as; Zoom, Google Meet, Skype,...etc., was prevalent to meet students' needs, and it was necessary to provide the content in different ways and formats (Chan, Bista & Allen, 2022, p. 3). The COVID-19 pandemic has briskly increased the digital transformation of education globally. Higher education institutions have undertaken new measures and had to make several changes to their way of teaching, research processes ...etc. These new circumstances put many learners in front of real challenges, especially in developing countries where many students are not able to get good access to the Internet ((Mseleku, 2020).

Ammigan et al. (2022) describe the COVID-19 as a serious "test of resilience and relevance for higher education institutions in recent times", and it needs inventive "risk-mitigating" reactions in order to maintain access easily in a secured manner (p. 2). Rapanta et al. (2020) clarify that with the lack of "training and time" to get ready for online learning, higher education institutions "scrambled to find different options of pedagogical approaches in synchronous or asynchronous environmental conditions as well as evaluation methods." (pp. 923–945), and this will increase more stresses to the whole academic staff. "Accessibility, affordability, flexibility, learning pedagogy, and educational policy" are the main important defies of e-learning for both students and teachers (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021, p. 139).

Methodology

The Sample of the Study

The target samples are third year and master one English students, University of Badji Mokhtar Annaba. The study samples were selected taking into account those groups of students who have really experienced the epidemic period with all its circumstances. Both third year and master one English students studied for one or two years before the COVID-19 pandemic, and they were familiar with the traditional way of teaching and learning. On the other hand, they have a good experience with learning online since they lived the pandemic from the very beginning, that is to say; they are acquainted well e-learning process. They represent the best and most suitable category for study.

The Method

The study used a survey questionnaire divided into three sections that aims to answer the main question and the desired objective behind this investigation. Each paragraph consists of a set of questions aiming to meet and answer the desired goals.

Section one: to what extent our students are digital readers?

This section aims to know:

►If students are digital readers and if they are familiar with ICTs,

►Their reading preferences, the types of ICTs they use.

►How often they use ICTs.

►If they find difficulties with ICTs when they read.

► The importance of ICTs.

Section two: Reading skill during COVID-19 pandemic

This section seeks to know:

► If students read more during COVID19 or before the pandemic, and the reasons behind their choice.

► How much of the assigned reading for university course do they usually manage to read during the pandemic.

►If they feel obliged or free to read during the pandemic.

►If they find difficulties while reading during the pandemic.

Section three: New reading skills & strategies during COVID-19 pandemic

This section aims to know:

► Do ICTs change students' attitudes toward reading?

► If they have developed new reading strategies during COVID19 pandemic.

► If ICTs become necessary during COVID19 pandemic.

►What are the strategies and reading skills they have developed/ used a lot during the pandemic.

Results and Discussion

To what extent our students are digital readers?

The results indicate that the majority of students are familiar with information and communication technology and prefer to use it a lot. Smartphones and computers are the most used by students in their daily and educational activities, including reading. Most of the students responded by emphasizing the importance of these technological means in facilitating the study and that they do not find any difficulty in using them.

In fact, this explains that information and communication technology is very prevalent in the university community among students, and that most of them have become digital learners who like technology, and they prefer to read through these means for ease of use and provide many advantages that attract students.

Reading skill during COVID-19 pandemic

The majority of students admit that they read more during the COVID 19 pandemic, due to the circumstances in the period, as well as to the quality of education that was imposed on them, which is distance study and the abundance of time in the absence of face-to-face education. They confirmed this by insisting that they read everything that was necessary and imposed on them by their teachers. All students affirm that reading has become a compulsory activity imposed on them to complete their homework and assignments.

The pandemic period has impacted a lot the learners. It has changed the old habits and attitudes of students when education was onsite, this because distance education requires them to read more and more in light of the accumulated lessons and tasks, and assignments that cannot be understood unless they read well and understand the lessons sent to them about after.

New reading skills and strategies during COVID-19 pandemic

The results depict that information and communication technology has greatly changed students' attitudes towards reading, as many of them have developed new techniques and strategies to adapt to the conditions of the pandemic and distance education. The students acknowledge the importance and necessity of information and communication technology during the Corona pandemic, and they explained that they have developed many reading skills and strategies such as: summarizing, skimming, scanning, inferring, predicting, sequencing, and guessing the meaning of words from the context…etc. They have even developed their own techniques to know how to manage their time wisely and how to be selective and how to prioritize what is important to be read and done first.

According to these outcomes, it seems clear that information and communication technology has played and continues to play an effective role in changing students' attitudes in relation to reading techniques and developing their reading skills. This is clearly evident through This is evident from the efforts of the students t to coexist with the epidemiological situation by adopting new strategies and developing new reading skills.

Conclusion

The Corona pandemic has put new pressures on various areas of life, most notably the field of education. Therefore, resorting to distance education was the quickest emergency solution in order to preserve education and to search for the available means according to the available capabilities in order for students to continue receiving lessons and communicating with their teachers. The use of ICTs during this period was prevalent, and both teachers and students benefited from these technologies in the learning process and in their social life in general.

The study reveals important facts about the use of ICTs. This new generation is a digital one. The majority of students are acquainted with ICTs. They have considerable knowledge about the technological and digital tools, and even they know how to manipulate these new

technologies. The only problems they have faced are related to technical problems such as getting access to the university platforms and the bad Internet quality.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed students' attitudes toward the learning process. Reading skill has developed during the pandemic period compared to the period before. Many students claimed that reading becomes an obligation where students feel obliged to read and understand their tasks and assignments. There was great pressure in terms of lessons and assignments sent to them by teachers, and this prompted them to read quickly in order to answer the duties and assignments within their specified deadlines.

ICTs helped a lot of students to develop new reading strategies to cope with the process of e-learning in this digital age. Among these strategies: Skimming, scanning, inferring, sequencing, guessing the meaning of words from the context, predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing are regarded as substantial and effective strategies developed and used by students in this technological age and under the COVID-19 imposed circumstances.

The role of ICT in higher education is vital like the role of blood and oxygen in the body. ICT is tremendous in imparting knowledge to the students. It helps students to keep track of learning anytime and anywhere, where they have the freedom to access knowledge at their suitable time and place. Aside from the target knowledge acquired, they also get access to extra information related to their courses.

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II. Developing the writing skill through ICTS: Teachers' and Learners' perceptions

Students' Attitudes and Perceptions towards the Use of Word Office Processor's Review Applications in Writing: The Case of First-Year Students at The English Department, Batna 2 University

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Abstarct

The use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) means in the academic context has been an issue of great debate and controversy. How students apply ICT resources to enhance their learning processes and to develop their skills was the concern of many scholars during the last two decades. The Algerian context is no exception. The current paper attempts to shed light on the usefulness of one of the digital applications, namely word processor in reviewing students' written texts. Henceforth, this small scale study endeavors to inquire into the following query: "What different Attitudes and Perceptions do First-Year students hold towards the Use of Word Office Processor's Review Applications in Writing?" To address the aforementioned research question, a descriptive analytic research design has been used wherein a questionnaire has been administered to collect students' views and perceptions. Results indicated that, indeed word processor is a useful tool to review their writing mistakes. However, few of them are aware of its utility and applications. In fact, only a small proportion of the respondents conceived the plausibility and the positive effects of the use of word processor; whereas as indicated by results obtained, some students do not even use it.

Keywords : ICT, review applications, Word Processor, writing

1. Introduction

Many students in the context of foreign language learning tend to struggle with writing. Actually, they are even afraid to take a writing plunge, or even worse, crippled by the fear that they are not good enough to write correctly and appropriately. Indeed, even professionals experience the same situation when it comes to writing. Henceforth, this small scale study endeavors to go through advice, get inspired, and empowered considering the writing skills. The use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) means in the academic context is a widely debated and controversial issue. Henceforth, how students apply ICT resources to enhance their learning processes and to develop their skills was the concern of many scholars during the last two decades. Similarly, in the Algerian university, the concern is gaining more and more interest among practitioners.

Writing tends to be one of the most convoluted skills to be developed. Notwithstanding, writing in a foreign language also causes many difficulties for the less experienced students. Writing correctly and appropriately requires the acquisition of certain skills, training, and preparation. The use of ICT tools can help much in this process. However, what has been observed among undergraduate students is that they do not make use of these devices to enhance their writing. This is probably due to the lack of their awareness of the existence of these tools, or the absence of training. Consequently, this small scale study attempts to introduce the use of Word Processor as a means to foster students' writing ability and to address their perceptions and attitudes towards its utility. For these reasons, this study enquires into the following.

The research query consists in knowing about students' perceptions as to the use of word processor applications in writing. Hence, the research question is set as follows:

- "What different Attitudes and Perceptions do First-Year students hold towards the Use of Word Office Processor's Review Applications in Writing?"

To consider this inquiry, the following study aims to:

- Identify the impact of using word processor on learners' performance.
- Understand the existing relationship between word processor and the students' writing skill.
- Raise both teachers' and learners' awareness towards the different ways to overcome the shortcomings in the teaching of writing.
- Showcase how Word Processor can be a viable means to handle those shortcomings.
- Introduce an innovative tool in the teaching of writing that might boost students' writing performances.

The current paper attempts to shed light on the usefulness of one of the digital applications, namely Word Processor, in reviewing students' written texts.

2. Literature Review

It has been contended that "Writing is like driving at night. You can see only as far as the headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way."(Doctorow, 1963, para. 1).Undoubtedly, developing the performance of any language requires the mastery of four prominent skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Of the four skills, writing tends to be the most demanding of all. Within this regard, Nunan (2000) argued that it "is an enormous challenge to produce coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing in a second language" (p. 271). Practically speaking, it tends to be difficult to draw a clear distinction between skills when it comes to language learning. A learner in order to master any given language, he/she has to master the four skills. Henceforth, most teachers and educators opt for the integration of the four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) in their teaching approaches to produce fluent users of the language. Within this regard, Johnson (2008) argued that one skill can enhance other skills. That is, writing is promoted through reading, speaking, and even listening. In this paper, prominence is given to the mastery of writing, and how this latter could be enhanced using ICT means. Crystal (2006), quoted by Khusna and Puspitasari (2020, p. 323) contended that "writing is a way of communicating which uses a system of visual marks made on some kind of surface. It is one kind of graphic expression." However, Byrne (1991) asserted that:

> Writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of sounds. The symbols have to be arranged, according to certain conventions, to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences.(Byrne, 1991, p. 1)

From above, writing is not just restricted to the limits of graphic representations and visual marks; nonetheless, these patterns are arranged and structured to abide by specific conventions and regulations. Since then, students are required to master these rules to produce convenient products. In fact, writing, in the academic context, is precursory as Alexander (2008), cited in Hosseini, Taghizadeh and Jafre (2013, p. 3) claimed "strong writing skill may enhance student's chances for success". Within the same respect, Hyland (2003) asserted that "writing is one of the main ways that we create a coherent social reality through engaging with others" (p.69). Accordingly, writing is very important in maintaining the social and the communicative relationships between individuals. That is why teachers and educators tend to give prominence to the teaching of this skill, especially if it is assisted by technology; namely, Word Processor.

2.1. Defining Word Processor

A Word Processor generally refers to a "WYSIWYG ("What You See Is What You Get") system where the formatting takes place while you enter your text; no further processing is needed prior to sending your work to a printer" (Academic Computing and Communications Center, 2010, para. 5).Word processor is a computer software application used for entering, editing, and formatting text based documents. It is the most useful type of all computer programs. It is characterized by ease of use and rapidity of deployment, making

possible powerful information sharing and supporting collaborative writing activities and improving student interaction (Abdelrahim, 2013). Besides, Braine (1997), quoted in Abdelrahim, 2013, p.3), contended that "the word processor could provide unique collaborative opportunities for education combining freely accessible information, and rapid feedback, the word processor is being rapidly adopted as an innovative way of constructing knowledge". It is a computer program that enables learners and computer users to upload texts, save them within a computer file, edit and format them in different manners. This facilitates the writing process.

2.2. Characteristics of Word Processing

According to Kennedy (2009, p.3), Word Processor typically refers to text manipulation functions such as automatic generation of:

- Batch mailings using a form letter template and an address database (also called mail merging).
- Indices of keywords and their page numbers.
- Tables of contents with section titles and their page numbers.
- Tables of figures with caption titles and their page numbers.
- Cross-referencing with section or page numbers.
- Footnotes numbering.

Other Word Processor functions include "spelling checks" (actually checks against Wordlists), "Grammar Checking" (checks for what seems to be simple grammar errors), and a "Thesaurus" function (finds words with similar or opposite meanings).

2.3. Usefulness of Word Processing

Many scholars (Hunter et al., 1989; Hyland, 1993; Robinson, 1991; Tzotzou &Tourabelis, 2015) have documented the usefulness of ICT means in the teaching of writing particularly Word Processor. It can be used for conducting the whole writing process - planning, drafting, composing, editing and proof-reading- not merely as a typewriter for copying out a final revised version. Within the context of the reported studies (Hunter et al., 1989; Hyland, 1993; Robinson, 1991; Tzotzou &Tourabelis, 2015), the teacher attempted to make learners feel comfortable with technology, and familiarize them with the keyboard and the computer applications, starting from easy functions, and proceeding with more difficult ones. In a traditional context, teachers provide a collaborative environment by assigning pair/group work activities which facilitate and encourage interaction. However, Word Processor, in computer labs, encourages learners' interaction and offers excellent opportunities for joint composition. However, the best way to integrate Word Processor into the writing curriculum is to focus on the learners and the curriculum, not on the Word Processor (Robinson, 1991). To make effective use of Word Processor, learners need some basic Word Processor skills (Hunter et al, 1989), quoted by (Tzotzou &Tourabelis, 2015).Indeed, the literature (Collier, 1983; Braine, 1997; Hunter et al., 1989; Hyland, 1993; Robinson, 1991; Tzotzou &Tourabelis, 2015) has widely evidenced for the utility of word processor as a tool that might

enhance learners' mastery of the writing skill. As a matter of fact, this study attempts to bring about more supportive evidence as to the use of Word Processor in enhancing writing among EFL students.

3. Research Methodology Design

To address the aforementioned research question, a descriptive analytic research design has been used wherein a questionnaire has been administered to collect students' views and perceptions. The questionnaire is designed based on one question for background information, eight Likert scale items, and one open ended question to collect students' evaluations of the use of Word Processor (Appendix A). The questions of the questionnaire were self-designed. This type of study is meant to provide insight into patterns of attitudes and performances in ICT-assisted learning contexts. It enables to make inferences about students' learning outcomes. The collected data were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The selected students were fifty (50) first-year undergraduates during the academic year (2021-2022) at the department of English at Batna 2 University. The sample has been chosen applying convenience sampling. Data have been analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
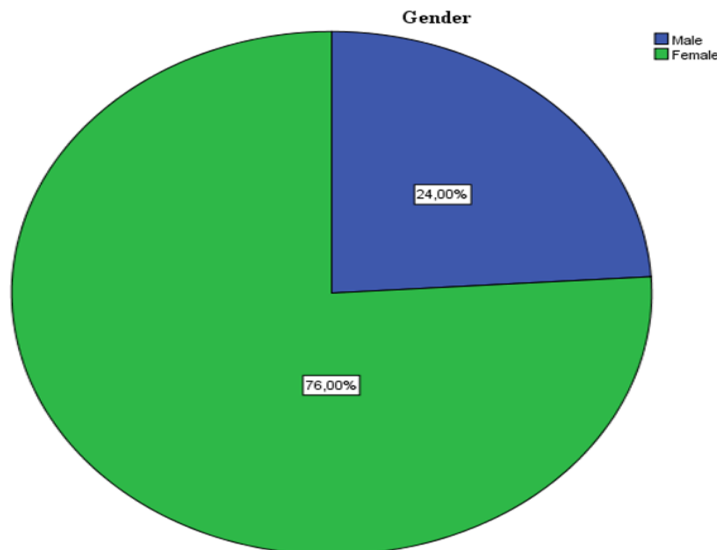
4. Results and Discussion
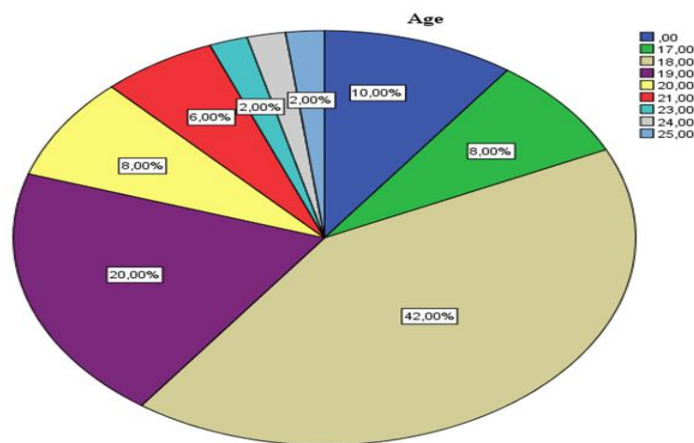

Figure 1 Participants' Gender

Figure 2 Participants' Age

As it is indicated in the figures above, the majority of students are females with a rate of 76% and age mean of 18. In this survey, the age and gender issues are very important because they potentially help to know how valuable are the different views, perceptions, and even decisions taken by the informants. The category range of the informants belongs to what might be called the "digital generation". It can be expected that, considering the topic of the investigation, students could be familiar with ICT tools and applications. Thence, students did find it plausible to participate in this study. It has been found as well that there is a strong correlation between the participants' age, gender, and their attitudes towards the applicability of word processor as digital software.

Further results indicate that indeed word processor is a useful tool to review their writing mistakes. However, few of them are aware of its usefulness and applications. Considering students' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of Word Processor applications, the responses are set as follows: When asked about whether they have ever heard of Word Processor, 76% of the students replied affirmatively. 22% of the informants answered with "No"; however, only a small proportion representing 2% did not give any answer as it is demonstrated in the following barchart:
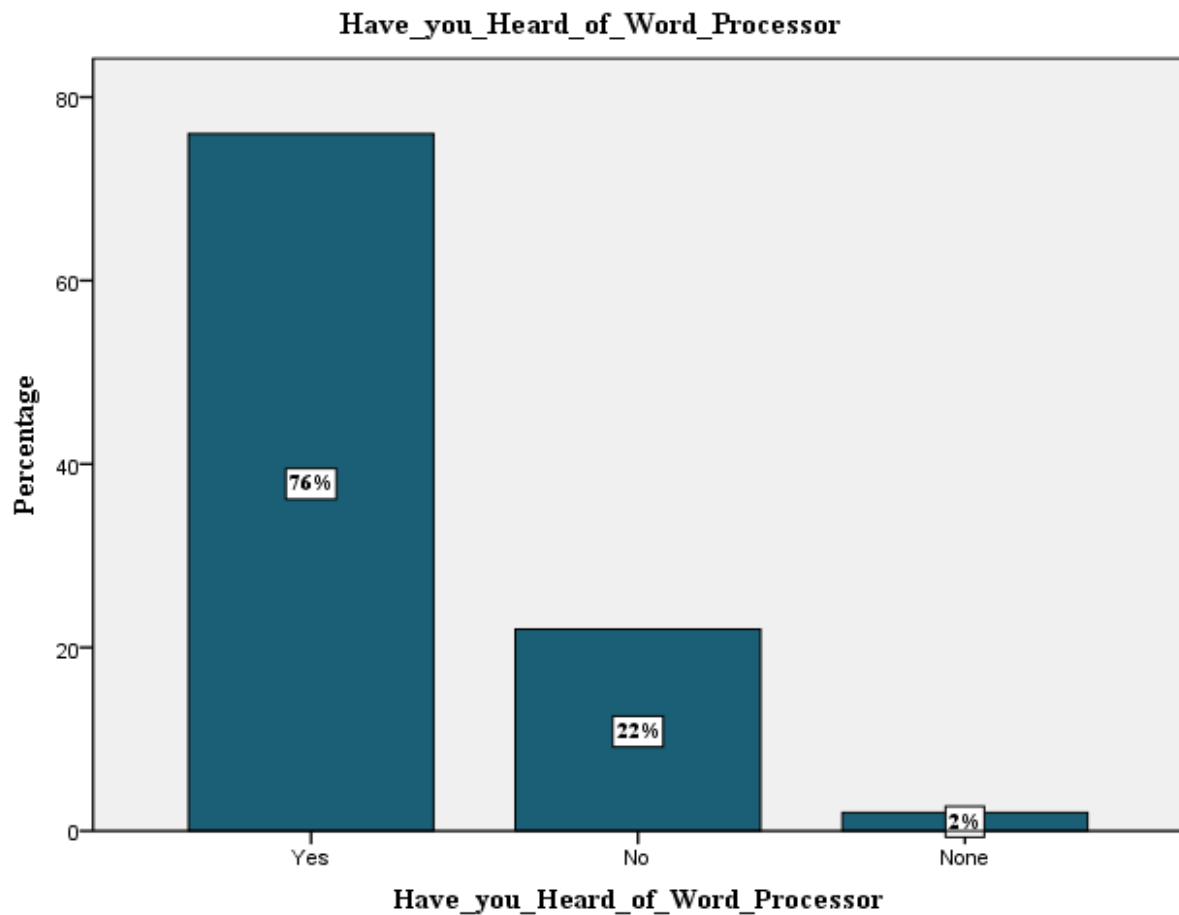
Figure 3 Awareness of Word processor existence

From above, it could be deduced that word processor tend to be a commonly known application for the majority of the informants. Within this respect, since its inception in the educational world as a medium of learning and teaching, word processor has proven viable in assisting language learning (Abdelrahman, 2013). The presented results, also, might confirm that first year students are technology literates and are aware of the existence of word processor as an application used for writing.

Figure 4: Frequency of Word processor Use
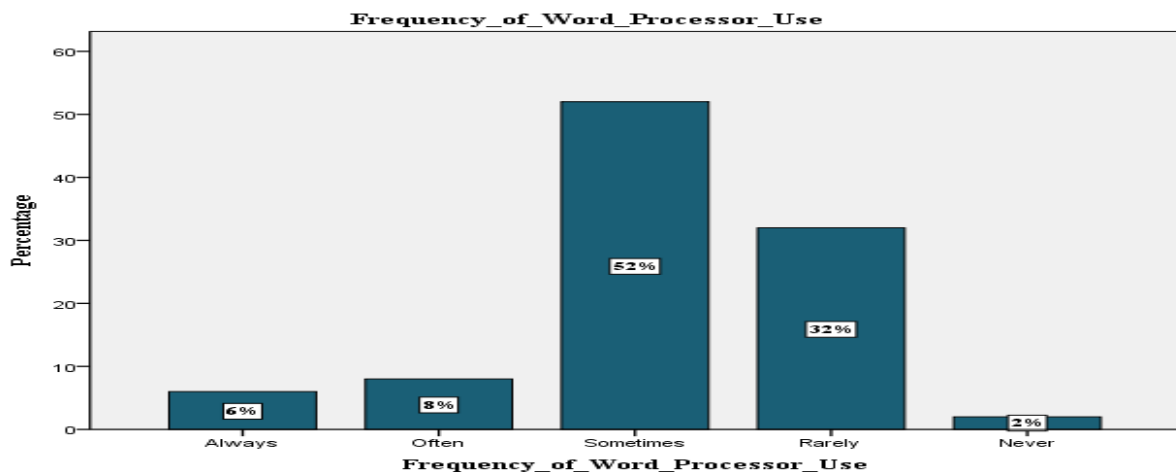
As it is showcased in the above figure, a proportion of 52% do sometimes use Word Processor as opposed to 32% who claimed a rare use. However, a rate of 8% stated often use, and only 6% of the respondents do always use Word Processor. These results tend to be significant in portraying the positive attitude towards the use of word processor. Indeed, this software stands a prerequisite for helping students in producing, drafting, and revising their writing compositions. Considering this, Cavanaugh (2022) argued thatthis software provides a degree of flexibility for responding to students' needs.
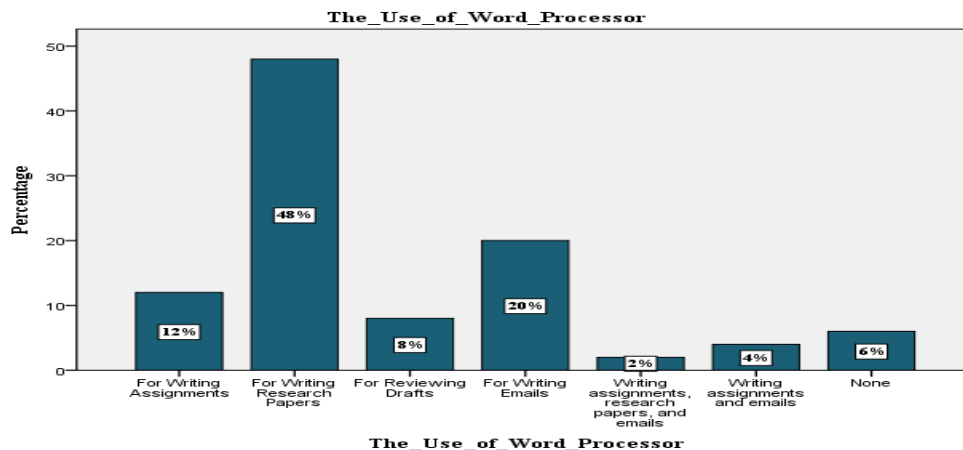
Figure 5: The Use of Word Processor

A shown in Figure 5, the majority of students, representing 48%, use Word Processor to write their research papers and only 8% use it to review their drafts. A significant rate of 20% of the students use it for writing emails; whereas, 12% use it for their assignments. In addition, students use word processor for the following tasks: writing assignments, research papers, and emails representing the rates of 2% as well as 4% respectively. It is also noticeable that 6% of the students do not use word processor for none of these tasks. On the same wavelength, Warschauer (1998) affirmed that word processor eases spelling checks. While some

researchers (Bean, 1983; Bernhardt, Wojahn, & Edwards, 1989; Daiute, 1986; Dickenson, 1986; Phinney&Khouri, 1993) claim that this software facilitates revising, editing, and formatting.

When asked about which application they use most, 24% of the students replied by translation and reviewing, and 22% referred to spelling and grammar. Only 8% of the students use it for word counting, while 6% of the respondents prefer to rely on thesaurus and translation as functions of word processor. Statistical data showcase that students use the aforementioned application for reviewing, spelling, thesaurus, grammar and translation with 2% and 4% respectively. However, a very small proportion of 4% do not use it all. In fact, Beck &Fetherston (2003) stressed that word processor is the most plausible of all computer software for its multiple functions and applications as it is clearly supported by the following graph.

Figure 6: The applications most used
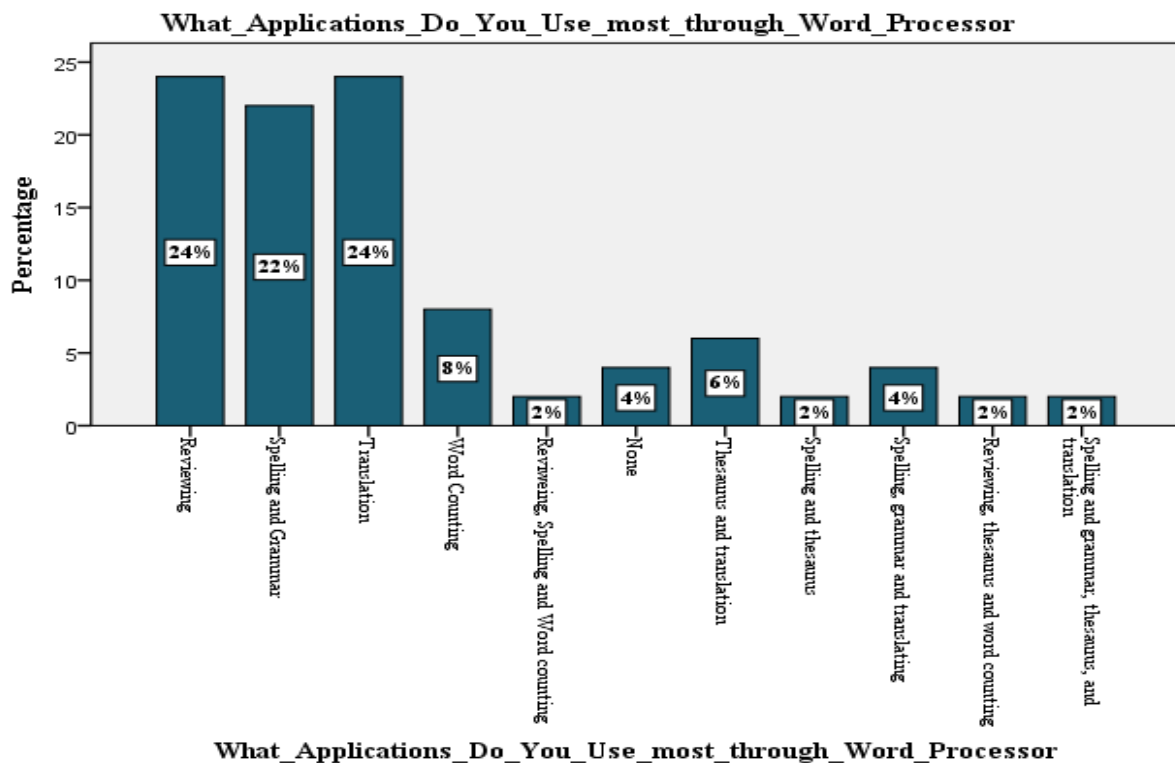
To support the aforementioned results, 50% confirmed the use of Word Processor for reviewing. 10% and 8% do always and often use it respectively for the same task. However, a significant rate of 28% claimed a rare use for reviewing at the expense of 2% of the students who never use it at all. This finding showcases that reviewing is the most applicable function used by students.
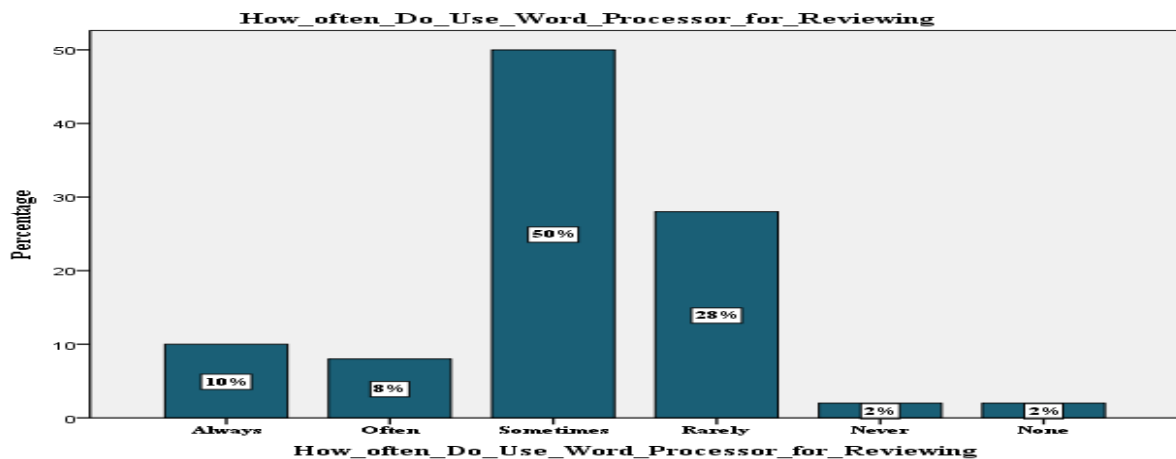
Figure 5: The frequency of Using Word Processor for Reviewing

Moreover, students claimed that while reviewing, 28% use it for correcting grammar at the expense of 22% who use it for correcting style and spelling respectively. Also, among the other functions used by students through Word Processor, correcting punctuation, grammar, style, and spelling are quite often used with 4%, 8%, and 2% respectively. However, a rate of 6% claimed a non-use of any of these applications.
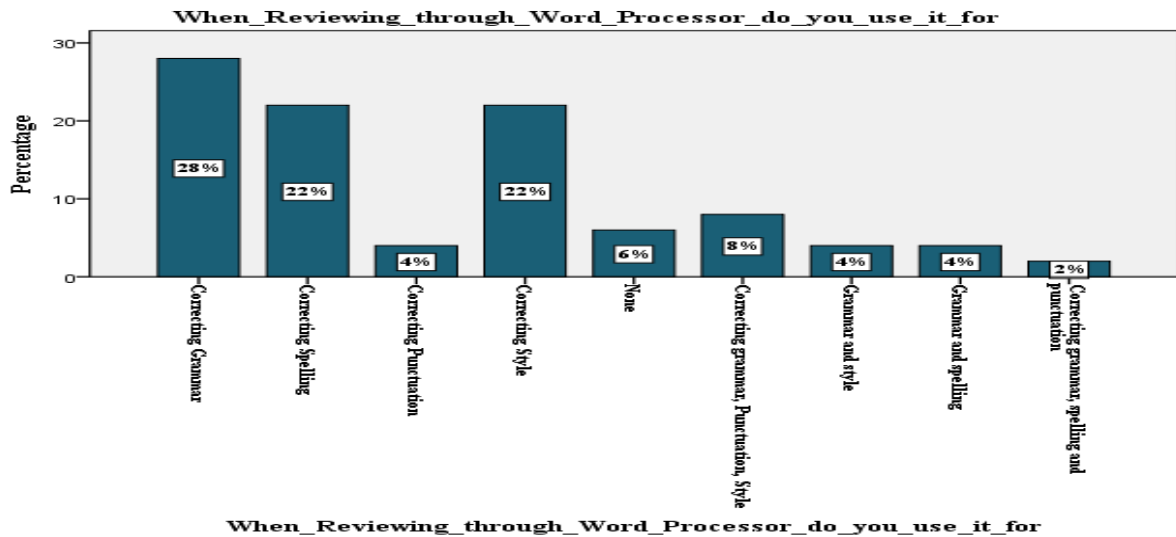
Figure 6: The Purpose of Reviewing through word processor

Furthermore, 46% of the students confirmed that the use of word processor often refines their written drafts and, comparatively, 40% said sometimes. 8% of the students reported that Word Processor always refines their writing. Nonetheless, 2% considered that it never refines their written compositions at the expense of 4% who have presented no views.
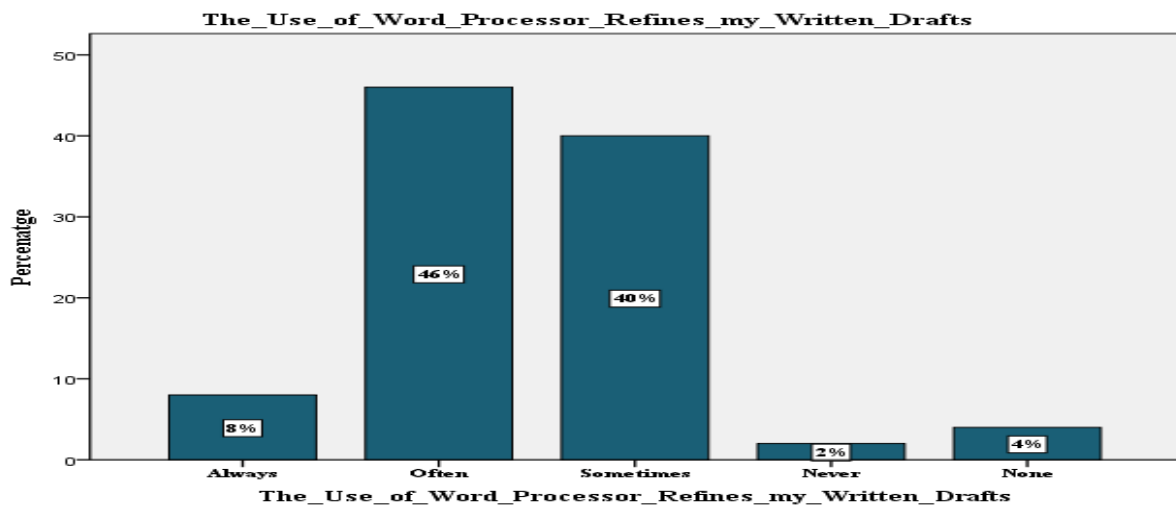
Figure 7: Using Word processor to refine drafts

In accordance with this, Word Processor even develops their writing skills with high rates of 54% and 24% respectively. However, a small proportion representing 16% claimed that it did so sometimes. Though for the 2% remaining Word Processor never did enhance their writing skills, it is apparent that for first-year students, this software is beneficial for enhancing the quality of the learners writing skill as it is clearly shown in the following graph.
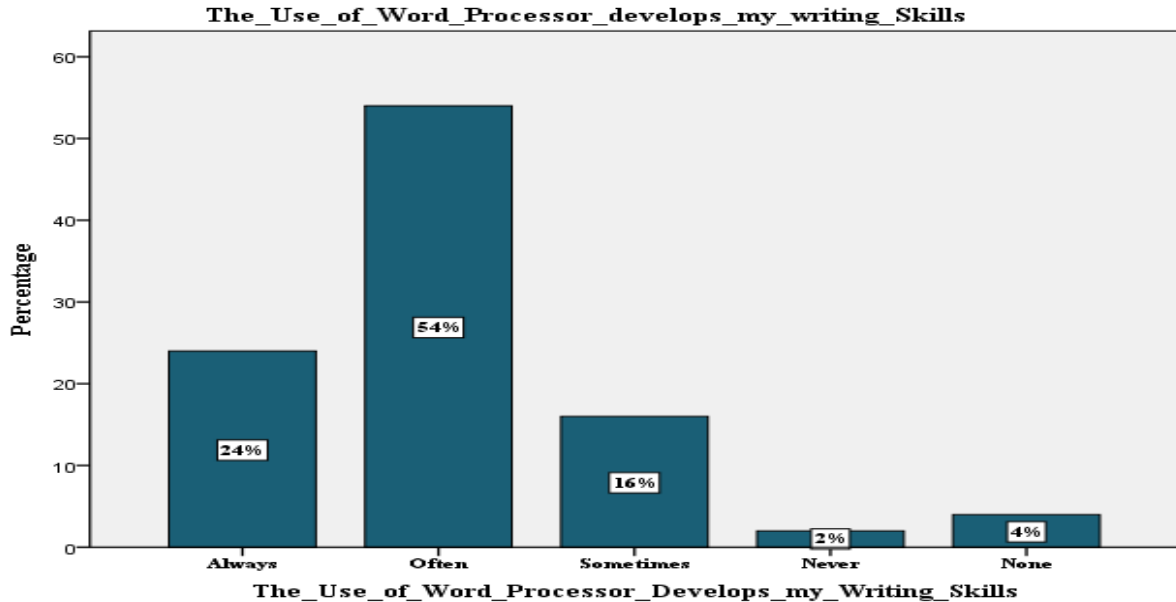
Figure 8: Word processor developing the writing skill

In fact, computer word processing programs have eased the editing process of correcting spelling mistakes, grammatical mistakes and sentence punctuations. Consequently, it has been argued by Owston, et al., (1992) that:

By eliminating the drudgery of recopying a composition and by allowing for far text modification, the use of text editors can decrease resistance to revising and encourage a more fluid and recursive writing style. (pp. 249-250)

This indeed will by extension promote the quality of students' written compositions.

Item Ten of the Questionnaire

Considering qualitative responses, the majority of students confirmed that word processor is a viable application for doing all assignments, and it develops their writing skills. Additionally, it is a useful means to foster their EFL skills. This was mainly the case during the pandemic circumstances where students found themselves urged to be autonomous learners. In sum, all results resume that Word Processor is a viable means to foster learners' writing skills as it is showcased in the table below.

What_is_your_Evaluation_of_the_Use_of_Word_Processor

	Valid Answers	Number	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
		18	36,0	36,0	36,0
	A good application for doing all assignments	1	2,0	2,0	38,0
	A great tool for writing. It helps me to correct my grammar and my writing skills.	1	2,0	2,0	40,0
Valid	As a student I am sure the application will help me a lot especially in preparing my future research and doctorate. Also it is good for writing development	1	2,0	2,0	42,0
	Develop my writing skills. I can write emails, write projects or programmes of any company.	1	2,0	2,0	44,0
	Good for those who want to improve their written, reading, spelling skills. For me it helps a lot to make me know and learn more about the English language.	1	2,0	2,0	46,0

It can refine my written drafts and develop writing skills and can be used in many things. We can correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, and style.	1	2,0	2,0	48,0
It could develop my writing skills and I can email my teachers if I have a question about the lesson that I have studied	1	2,0	2,0	50,0
It helps doing research. It is very important in our life in our studies and work in correct form	1	2,0	2,0	52,0
It helps in developing skills in various sectors and it is useful	1	2,0	2,0	54,0
It helps in making research and for writing. It helps in organizing my information	1	2,0	2,0	56,0
It helps in many things in my daily life and in many domains. It helps me in writing research and my emails, and all the things.	1	2,0	2,0	58,0
It helps in taking information, but sometimes it is not beneficial. You must write alone to develop our writing.	1	2,0	2,0	60,0
It helps in writing, correcting, and spelling and my grammar	1	2,0	2,0	62,0
It helps me to develop my writing	1	2,0	2,0	64,0
It helps them in their writing by correcting their faults. It makes their projects easier especially in this period of COVID.	1	2,0	2,0	66,0

It helps you to develop your writing skill, reviewing drafts, and writing emails. So, I strongly agree to use the word processor in my life.	1	2,0	2,0	68,0
It is a good programme that helps interviewing, writing research papers and all the academic work needed in college life.	1	2,0	2,0	70,0
It is a helpful application to write documents correctly. It facilitates that	1	2,0	2,0	72,0
It is good, but I think it needs development	1	2,0	2,0	74,0
It is used for writing assignments, research papers even for reviewing drafts and writing emails. It is very useful. It helps its users to refine their drafts, developing their writing skills even learning the appropriate grammar and spelling	1	2,0	2,0	76,0
It is useful to improve writing skills.	1	2,0	2,0	78,0
It is very helpful. It develops writing, spelling, grammar, and a lot of other things. It develops the writing skills of many people. It helps in reviewing so much.	1	2,0	2,0	80,0
It is very useful.	1	2,0	2,0	82,0
It is very useful. It facilitates the work and helps do research.	1	2,0	2,0	84,0
It teaches us to do research	1	2,0	2,0	86,0
Nothing	1	2,0	2,0	88,0

The best invented software and application. Its use is so unique. It helps directly to develop your writing skills, in translating and reviewing and a lot of things.	1	2,0	2,0	90,0
The best programme of writing drafts though it is a little bit complicated, but it helps students to writ right and correctly and to develop our writing skills	1	2,0	2,0	92,0
Using it always helps to increase people's writing and I find it important to make people learn more about how to write emails, assignments, etc...	1	2,0	2,0	94,0
Word processor is one of the best applications that help teachers and students to correct their mistakes and learn to write with it. I am one of the users of this amazing useful application.	1	2,0	2,0	96,0
Write research papers and emails	1	2,0	2,0	98,0
Writing in false words	1	2,0	2,0	100,0
Total	**50**	**100,0**	**100,0**	

From above, Word processing is a software that enables students to produce letters, reports, newsletters, tables, form letters, brochures, and web pages (Aladwan, 2021).Hence, it can be assumed to be a plausible tool to enhance students' writing skills.

5. Pedagogical Implications

The major pedagogical implications could be highlighted as follows:

1. Students should be encouraged to use different applications and software such as word processor to enhance their writing skills.

2. Word Processor is conceived to be a vital means to foster learners' writing performance.

3. Students should not be discouraged to use ICT means to learn and to develop their skills.

4. Teachers should incorporate the use of ICT means in their teachings to help students promote not only their wring skills, but also other skills in their learning process.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, this study results suggest that it is, indeed, very hard to find each time the right word to fulfill the right function in the text. For, writing does not include only linguistic features, but cognitive abilities as well.Within this respect, as suggested by Mark Twain (1890),"The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug." (Quote investigator, 2019,para. 1) Finally, it can be said that we all have stories to share and we can do that through various means to showcase the best image of us all.

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Appendix (A) :

Students' Attitudes and Perceptions towards the Use of Word Office Processor's Review Applications in Writing: The Case of First Year Students at The English Department, Batna 2 University

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

I would be much grateful if you could answer the following questionnaire. Data collected will be used for academic purposes only and remain anonymous.

Thank You

Dr. GUERZA Radia

1. **General Information**

Age

Male

Female

✓ **Please, tick (√) appropriately:**

2. **Have you heard of Word Processor's applications?**

1	Yes	
2	No	

3. **How often do you use Word Office Processor?**

1	Always	
2	Often	
3	Sometimes	
4	Rarely	
5	Never	

4. **I use Word Office Processor:**

1	For Writing Assignments	
2	For Writing Research Papers	
3	For Reviewing Drafts	
4	For Writing Emails	

5. **What Applications do you use most through Word Processor?**

1	Reviewing	
2	Spelling and Grammar	
3	Thesaurus (Checking Dictionaries)	
4	Translation	
5	Word Counting	

6. **How often do you use Word Processor for Reviewing?**

1	Always	
2	Often	
3	Sometimes	
4	Rarely	
5	Never	

7. **When reviewing your drafts through Word Processor, do you use it for?**

1	Correcting Grammar	
2	Correcting Spelling	
3	Correcting Punctuation	
4	Correcting Style	

8. **The use Word Processor refines my written drafts:**

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Neutral	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

9. **The use of Word Processor develops my writing skill:**

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Neutral	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

10. **What is your evaluation of the use of Word Processor?**

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Thank You

The Integration of Social Learning Platforms for Achieving Writing Competence of EFL Students

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Abstarct

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) tools have gained more prominence in the last decade due to the drastic evolution of diverse types of gadgets. The incorporation of such ICT tools in the educational arena aims at providing new experiences that can enhance the language learning and improve 21st century skills. These technological means have been a remarkable advance in teaching and learning of the writing skills, through using texts accompanied by CD ROM which may include authentic materials such as images, videos, lexicons, and information. ICT tools also include online learning platforms such as Quia and Edmodo through which various tasks are accomplished and which can increase students' grammatical patterns, cognitive and writing competences. The study aims at determining the extent to which these online platforms can benefit EFL students' writing skills while carrying out the writing process. To achieve this aim, we opted for an experimental test with 40 students to test their level of writing competence, their language exposure, attitudes, reflection, and feedback. The findings reported that the students ensured a development in their writing skills more than the other language skills because they had been in touch with English language through reading, texts, diction, syntax, and content. Yet, students improved their writing skills because they contemplate it could be learned by taking the usefulness of technological resources and learning aids such as computers, online applications, platforms, and web pages.

Keywords : Edmodo Media, EFL students, Web-based learning, Writing Competence

Introduction

Technology is growing nowadays rapidly. It can be seen from the results of the development of communication technology with the emergence of the internet, cell phones, television, and other technological devices. With the integration of technology in education, both educators and students can address the challenges equated with learning in an easier way. It became an essential part in any educational system, as information communication technology is an integrated component in teaching and learning environments.(Tarun, 2019)

One form of technological advances in education is E-learning. It is a form of learning which uses communication and information technology multimedia. E-Learning is relatively persistent and new, it has become the educational learning tool designed to increase knowledge and performance. According to Rhona & Benfield (2005), online learning has pulled and still evokes outstanding educational investment, but the educational value is often challenged. During the last pandemic, online libraries, TVshows, video conferences, online channels, and educational institutions have been supplied by platforms such as Microsoft, Google, Moodle, Zoom and Google meet.

Online courses for ELT involve Massive Open Online Courses, specific online courses, and MALL which refers to mobile learning (m-learning). They are accessible to EFL learning materials, and allow students to communicate at any time with their teachers and peers. According to Rosenberg (2001), e-learning is widely used by teachers by using the Internet duringthe learning, and it became one of the most favorable learning media in the world. E-learning is the use of Multimedia and information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education. It involves types of media which transmit text, audio, images, and videos. It also involves technology applications and processes such as audio or video tape, satellite TV, CD-ROM. (Limone & Toto, 2018)

Learning in general involves a range of applications, learning methods and platforms (Rossi, 2009). While e-learning involves the use of information and communication technologies to allow the access to online learning and teaching resources. According to Abbad et al,(2009) e-learning is supported by the use of digital technologies. It is yet referred to as any learning that is web-based. (Keller & Cernerud, 2002) Among the platforms adopted due to technological advancements to support teaching and learning systems in online education, along with video learning, is Edmodo platform. It is an academic communication platform which enables educators to accomplish their courses online easily.(La Rose et al, 1998)

Most of the students at higher educational institutions may face difficulties to write in English, and to develop their thoughts into a good paragraph of different types. They may struggle to spend much time to think about the content and how to plan their writing. They may also confront problems with the vocabulary, grammar, and other writing mechanics. It was still a struggle to almost all students. Indeed, EFL students especially at Laghouat College of Teachers seem to be passive in the writing classroom, they do not engage in debates, and they do not ask for guidance from their teachers. For this reason, the researcher

managed to implement a tool which can be crucial and efficient during the process of teaching and learning in the writing classroom.

This tool involves integrating technology with the learning process. Although, not all teachers are able to use ICT devices in their classrooms, they have been supported and guided to use it Muslem, et al,(2018) believe that using technology as an innovation in teaching is one way to boost the quality of learning outcomes. Throughout the study, we managed to look for an effective resolution to improve the writing skills of students and develop their competence in writing through Edmdo as a learning medium for text writing. It is a platform which contains exercises and assignments monitored by teachers. It can be accessed by students even though they are not in a school learning environment, they can share their ideas through this media with their teachers guidance.

The use of Edmodo in higher education institutions in Algeria has not been sufficiently inspected. Edmodo as a social platform, and other learning devices and networks need to be explored to enable the students' comprehension of language and innovation skills. Hence, the present knowledge gap regarding the role of these technological devices will be addressed, as the problem of the research is formulated in the following questions:

1. What is the impact of Using Edmodo on increasing EFL Students' awareness about writing aspects along with coherence, unity, language use, and content?
2. Is there any significant impact of Edmodo platform on EFL students' competence in writing a paragraph?

Subsequently, we suggested the following hypotheses:

(H1): Edmodo platform has a significant impact on increasing EFL Students' awareness about writing aspects along with coherence, unity, and language through Edmodo use.

(H2): Edmodo platform has a significant impact on the students' writing competence in writing a paragraph after getting the treatment.

(H0): Edmodo platform has no significant impact on the EG class after getting treatment by using Edmodo.

The finding of this research is expected to add knowledge on the use of Edmodo learning medium in the EFL classroom since technology is advancing rapidly in todays' EFL classrooms. Edmodo is yet expected to become one of the social interactive learning multimedia to be used by EFL educators as one of the new ways to teach the writing skills.

1. **Literature Review**

1.2 Web-based Learning in EFL Classroom

With the development of internet and computer technology, E-Learning has received great attention since the last two decades, and has become an important issue in the field of education. (Brown and Johnson-Shull, 2000) Technology use is convenient, as it has

contributed to the enhancement of e-Learning programs, and to developing students' language proficiency. (Cerny and Heines, 2001)Regarding the close relation of ICT and e-Learning, According to Clarke (2004), "e-Learning is a general term covering many different approaches that have in common the use of information and communication technology"(p. 02) while "e-learning, digital learning, computer enhanced learning, no matter which tag is applied, all aim to exploit web-based technology to improve learning for students"(Jones, 2003, p. 66)

The integration of ICT and teaching has made learning possible. When teachers start to replace a piece of chalk with a mouse, a pedagogical revolution is silently taking place. Normally, when teachers talk about e-Learning, they are used to separating technology from teaching, and they like to take themselves as teaching "professionals" rather than computer "technicians". However, they are advised that: "Technology and pedagogy should be considered together, as it is pointless, from a pedagogical point of view, to make ICT-based tools available if the educational strategies, and the activities the learners engage in, are not suitably revised" (Bottino, 2002, p. 93)

Accessibility supported by ICT, e-learning can simply be viewed as: "online access to learning resources, anywhere and anytime"(Holmes& Gardner, 2006, p. 14)Web-based learning is learning language through the use of the Web and exploiting Web materials, resources, applications or tools. Web-based learning provides activities, learning materials, and learning environment which contribute positively to learning a language and developing language skills. Web-based language learning depends on the Web which can support language teachers to integrate Web resources into the language classroom (Son, 2007)
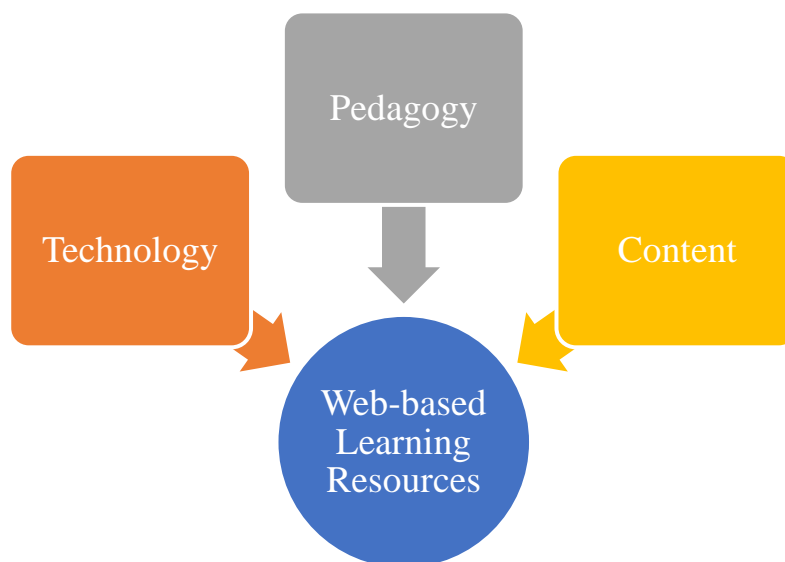

Figure 1: Web-based Learning Resources(Adopted from Hadjerrouit, 2010, p. 57)

The requirement of using modern technology and web tools in teaching the writing skills is related to the role and nature of the writing skills along with other language skills.

Callahan et al.,(2013)addressed a set of web-based curriculum materials to enable educators to progress their professional growth and teaching practice. These materials also can allow students develop self-guided learning skills to guide their discovery and learning. Web technologies and devices including YouTube, podcasts, and forums can provide students with the opportunity to engage in different tasks and learning practices. (Duffy, 2008)Students can retrieve the learning materials and practices at their institutions, or at home and at any time. The role of students in the learning environment is to construct their own knowledge, and is prepared to solve complex problems and tasks. They become self-directed and motivated learners who can have self-reflection on their own learning (Berge, 2000)

1.2 Edmodo as a Social Learning Media

Many institutions recognized the students' perception and attitudes towards Edmodo in the EFL learning context. Edmodo is a persistent device for language teaching and learning. It can be used in a web-enhanced environment through blended learning, or as a supplementary learning device. Arroyo(2011) believes that Edmodo is a tool which develops students'cooperation and knowledge construction. It yet provides an access through which students can be motivated to learn.

Edmodo is a social platform which can support traditional learning through web-based learning. According to Manowong (2015), Edmodo is a supportive device which provides an effective online learning environment. Occasionally, Wheeler and Jarboe (2001)figure out that students who attended both face to face classrooms and online classrooms have higher perceptionof learning than those who attend only traditional classrooms or entirely online classrooms. According to Schmidt (2002),integrating Web-based learning with Edmodo involves designing a course through providing students with Websites to visit, online reading, at the same time supporting the classroom with face to face interaction, document sharing, and source information.(Berge et al., 2000). Using Edmodo in the classroom can promote student's engagement, through participating in classroom activities.
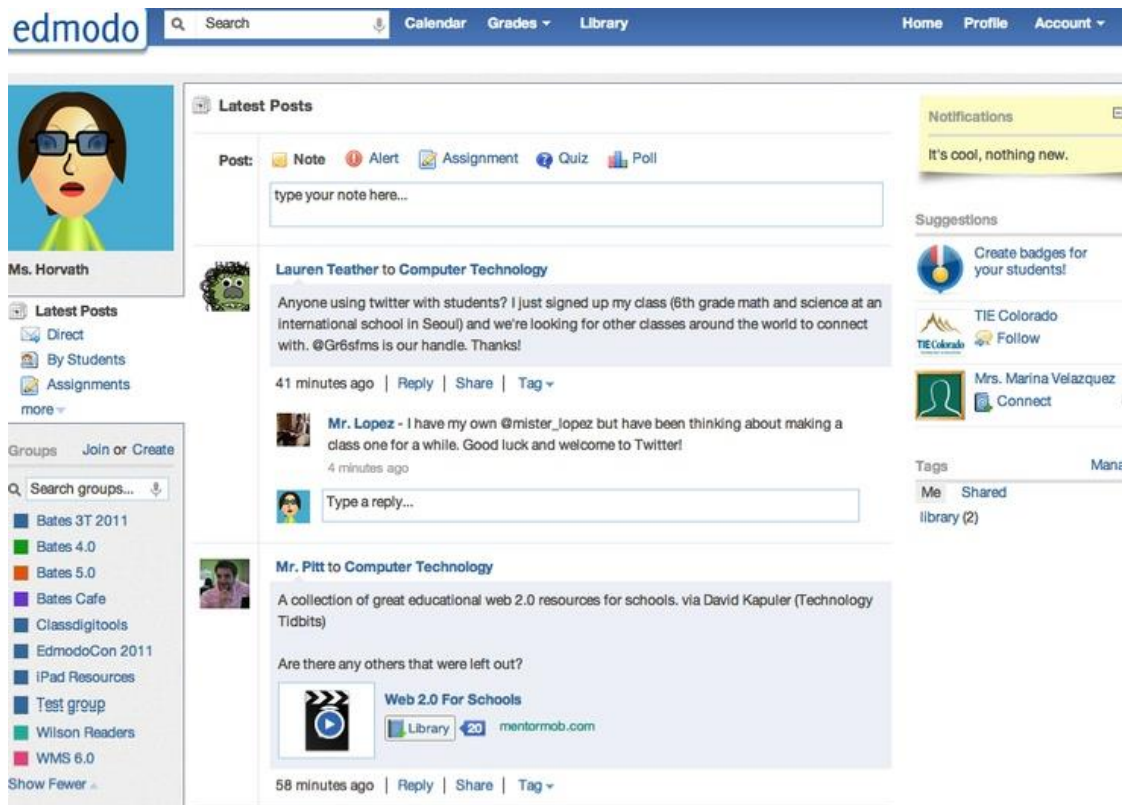
Figure 2: Edmodo Learning Platform

Edmodo provides persistent features for educators and students. Witherspoon (2011)views Edmodo as a Learning Management System (LMS) which can facilitate collaboration and interaction. The activities done in web-based learning with Edmodo includes haring knowledge, quizzes, submitting an assignment, creating and voting polls, receiving feedback, getting a grade, and also commenting and discussing the lesson content. Abad (2016) also states that Edmodo can help educators to conduct a virtual classroom allowing students to access the material and learn autonomously. As an academic communicative teaching tool, Edmodo provides effective content-management systems and integrated learning (Cheong, 2010).

1.3 Writing Skills in the EFL Classroom

Having the ability to associate with literacy is to be able to write and read. Writing can be one of the most important skills in ELT context. Students of English should be aware and qualified to write, because this literacy can help them to achieve personal and professional goals especially in this globalized era. According to Quintero (2008),writing is "a sublime moment when words come into our minds and we struggle to connect and put them together to give meaning to the thousands of ideas that are running into our heads" (p. 10)According to Collins and Gentner (1980), the writer should be aware about the structural levels in writing along with the word structure, sentence structure, paragraph structure, and overall text structure.

Writing is a major part in EFL teaching context, students need to write down notes and write for tests and exams. Yet, writing was viewed as only a supporting element for learning grammar and vocabulary rather than a language skill. However, writing in the EFL classroom became a consistent skill for speakers of a foreign language as well as for individuals using their first language. (Harmer, 2004) Indeed, writing in a foreign language is considered one of the challenges for EFL learners. The level of difficulty increases when used in different EFL contexts where the learner is rarely exposed to the requirements of writing in English. The difficulties that EFL students may face include creating and organizing ideas, choosing an appropriate diction.

According to Hedge (1991),less skilled writers are those who manage to produce writer based rather than reader based topic at the expense of the reader. As a language skill, writing involves a number of competencies, Al-Buainain (2009)states that writing is a psycho-social linguistic skill which involves sub skills such as handwriting, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and the use of strategies of planning, revising and editing writing. However, to write involves developing a set of orthographic skills, as it also involves learning a new set of cognitive and social relations. (Tribble, 1996)Writing is yet an activity of being able to communicate with language through a graphic representation of ideas.

2. Method of the Study

The methodology used in this research was quantitative. According to Arikunto (2006), quantitative research is a type of research which requires the use of numbers, ranging from collecting data, interpretation and analysis of data, and stating the results. In this research, the researcher seeks to recognize if there was any improvement in students' writing a contrast paragraph by using Edmodo learning media, and also to address the responses of the students on using this learning medium after the treatment was conducted. Accordingly, to answer the first research question, an experiment was conducted by implementing the one group pre-test and posttest experimental design. This design included one group of students from an entire Experimental group which consisted of a pre-test in the traditional classroom, treatment in pre-test classroom meeting and a post-test online meeting.

2.1 Population and Sample

The population represents all the students of second year EFL students of PEM/PES sections. The total number of this population is 124 students during the academic year 2021/2022. The research approach measures the impact of using the Edmodo platform for writing a contrast paragraph on developing EFL students' writing competence. A total of 40 students took part in the study. These students, mixed between males and females,were from the department of English at ENS of Laghouat, aged between 19 and 22 who are assigned as the experimental group for the treatment of the study. Indeed, all students of the experimental

treatment were trained in using Edmodo platform ,in order to acquire the necessary skills for the study.

2.2 Description of the Pre-treatment and Post-treatment

The research instruments that the researcher used in this study is an experimental test and a survey. The researcher used the test for obtaining good and efficient results. The pre-test and post-test is about writing a contrast paragraph. The researcher familiarized the EG with pre-test andpost-test. The pre-test was done in the classroom at College which was about answering a set of questions about the characteristics of writing a contrast paragraph based on the instructions given in the course, and writing the paragraph. The post-test also was about the same task but was rather provided on Edmodo. Both tests took about 50 minutes; the amount of questions was 10 questions. The students emphasized the main idea, coherence and unity, diction, synonym, and language accuracy.
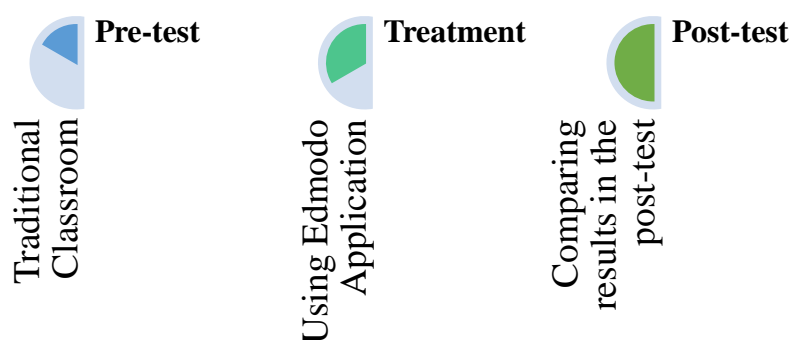
Pre-test — Traditional Classroom

Treatment — Using Edmodo Application

Post-test — Comparing results in the post-test

Figure 3: The Process of the Experiment Phase

The post-test was given after the treatment to evaluate their writing improvement. It was used to examine the effects ofthe treatment. The evaluation of the students' writing emphasizes the aspects of writing, which are: coherence, unity, language use, and accuracy through scale categories of: 1= very good, 2= good, 3= moderate, 4= low for each aspect. The results of the pre-test and post-test were used to examine the differences before and after the treatments while using Edmodo to teach writing a contrast paragraph.

The table below identifies the sub-variables we have implemented to conduct our experiment tests, which involve coherence, unity, language use, and accuracy. They are identified using a set of indicators which involve writing a paragraph in English in general.

Table 1: Identifying the Sub-Variables

Sub- Variables	Indicator
Coherence (Logical development of ideas)	-Form of the contrast paragraph is acceptable but some evidence may be lacking. -Some ideas are notwell developed -Sequence is logical, but transitional words may be lacking. -The type of organization (block or point by point) is well implemented.

Unity (Conveying a complete idea, one unit of thought)	- All sentences relate to the main idea - The paragraph should develop one unit of thought. - Lack of order of ideas in the body, and lack of supporting evidence and examples.
Language Use(Correct grammar, vocabulary)	- Grammar issues are apparent and damaging the meaning of the text. - Correct use of prepositions, modals, diction, and tense -Spelling errors interrupt the reader, punctuation errors interfere with ideas.
Accuracy (Meaning, content)	- This concerns addressing the topic, writing concrete and well-developed ideas. - This involves the development of incomplete ideas, or when the paragraph is outside the topic. -There are inadequate efforts in the content of the paragraph.

During the pre-test, the researcher asked the students to write a contrast paragraph about a legendary person, or write about someone they like and inspired by. Similarly,during the pre-test, students were asked to write a contrast paragraph about a legendaryperson, but itshould be different from their paragraphs during the pre-test treatment.

3. **Analysis of Data**

In assessing the students' writing, several aspects were considered in the assessment process. The language assessment and scoring system focused on the aspects of writing: coherence, unity, language use, vocabulary and content. After scoring the students' writing of contrast paragraph, the researcher used the statistical form to calculate the mean score and standard deviation, and one group t-test. These forms were used to determine if there was any improvement from pre-test to post-test. Also, to examine the research hypotheses, the result of statistical analysis was compared to the average score in the t-scores measurement using the significance value of (α= 0.05)

3.1 Distribution of the Population

The population is all the individuals in the second year, and the total number of this population is 124 students.The sample of the study was selected randomly through the random sampling technique, and it consisted of only 40 students. The sample represents half of the population, and it consists of 12 Male students and 28 Female students, as shown in table 02 which represents population genre distribution.

Table 2: Population Genre Distribution

Genre	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	12	30%

Female	28	70%
Total	40	100%

We temptedto describe and analyze the test before and after the treatment.The pre-test and post-test were given the EG in the experiment in the classroom, and on Edmodo platform. The pre-test was given to the students before the treatment was conducted,and post test was given at the end of the treatment on Edmodo. The total Mean score of the participants' pre-test and post-test in the experiment class are shown as follow.

Table 3: Total Mean Scores of Writing Competence Aspects during the Pre-test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cohérence	40	1,00	4,00	3,0250	,76753
Unity	40	1,00	4,00	3,2000	1,06699
Language Use	40	1,00	4,00	3,1500	,86380
Accuracy	40	2,00	4,00	3,3500	,53349
Valid N	40				

Based on the analysis of the students' scores in the pre-test and post-test, the findings revealed that almost all students increased their scores of writing a contrast paragraph. Still, there were some students whose scores are below the standard score. Therefore the treatment of teaching a contrast paragraph by using Edmodo combined with learning in the classroom managed to have a positive impact on the students. Table 04 shows the total Mean scores of the writing competence aspects during the Post-test.

Table 04: Total Mean Scores of Writing Competence Aspects during the Post-test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cohérence	40	1,00	4,00	2,4000	,95542
Unity	40	1,00	4,00	2,2000	,88289
Language Use	40	1,00	4,00	2,7750	,97369
Accuracy	40	1,00	4,00	2,4250	,93060
Valid N	40				

In the pre-test, the total score from whole writing aspects of 40 students is 9.79, while the sum of the score in the post-test is 12.72. In getting the mean score of both tests, the sum

of the score in pre-test and post-test were divided by the number of students n=40. Hence, the difference between the two mean scores is 2.93. It is obvious that the mean score of post-test increased as compared to the pre-test, as illustrated in Figure 2. This indicates that the students' writing of paragraph has improved after using Edmodo.

The interval used to measure the students' competence in writing a contrast paragraph involves the aspects of coherence, unity, language use, and content. To see the students' progress in both pre-test and post-test for each aspect of writing in the contrast paragraph, the data is revealed in table 5. The Mean is calculated after comparing the students' scores in the pre-test and post-test. The score is considered negative if it is below the standard mean score, and positive if the score is above the mean score. The hypotheses of this research were analyzed by using the t-test.

The standard mean of t-score is 1.275, and the t-score is referred to the critical value of t-test at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.5$ with the degree of freedom (df) = 39 for all sub-variables:

- For Coherence variable, t (39) =5.014, P (sig)= 0.01 which is less than Alpha(α= 0.5) and less that the Sig value Sig (P) = 1.5
- For Unity, t (39)= 5.958, P (sig)= 0.01 which is less than Alpha(α= 0.5) and less that the Sig value Sig (P) = 1.5
- For Language Use, t (39)= 8.282, P (sig)= 0.01which is less than Alpha(α= 0.5) and less that the Sig value Sig (P) = 1.5
- For Accuracy, t (39)= 6.262, P (sig)= 0.01 which is less than Alpha (α= 0.5) and less that the Sig value Sig (P) = 1.5

The scores are summarized in table 5 which representsa comparison of Means of both tests through the t-test score.

Table 5:Comparison of Means through the t-test score

Sub-variables	t (df)= 39	Sig (P) value = 1.5	Mean Difference
Coherence	5.014	0.01	0.9000
Unity	5.958	0.01	0.7000
Language Use	8.282	0.01	1.275
Accuracy	6.262	0.01	0.9500

This means that (Sig= 0, 01 ≤ 1, 5) which indicates that the sample is different from the population. Therefore, both the first alternative hypothesis H1 and the second alternative hypothesis H2 are confirmed, and the null hypothesis H0 is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant increase of the students' writing scores after having the treatment and writing a contrast paragraph throughEdmodo-based instruction.

4. Discussion

The findings revealed an improvement toward students' writing of a contrast paragraph; they indicated the students hold positive responses and attitudes in using Edmodo for learning. Through using Edmodo in learning a contrast paragraph, the students seemed to be active and experienced in solving the problems in the learning process. This helped them look for solutions to their writing difficulties. The majority of students became more motivated because they found Edmodo to be helpful and enjoyable. Edmodo proved to be significant for students in writing a contrast paragraph because they were able to ask questions, post problems to be solved, and receive responses by their peers. They are provided with a particular situation through which they can accomplish tasks. The students were not only receiving information from the teacher or from the textbook, they experienced the teaching material, Edmodo, without too much passive information. Therefore, the result of the EG students' posttest score was significantly improved after the treatment on Edmodo.

Schools should be able to assist educators and students with facilities and knowledge on how to integrate technology in their EFL classrooms. Meanwhile, most educators may be less trained in using ICT tools due to the lack of training and materials provided by their educational institution. Accordingly, the use of multimedia in EFL teaching can increase students' interest in learning and motivate them as well. Students' writing competence is affirmed through their motivation and satisfaction with the online learning process. This includes the teachers' use of appropriate technological devices, pedagogical tools, along with Edmodo. The results prove that most students faced less challenges in their learning in Edmodo. This may imply that their experience can be evident as their skills of writing have been improved through accomplishing tasks and experiencing their courses in Edmodo platform.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The use of Edmodo as a learning tool to teach writing a contrast paragraph to EFL students at ENS of Laghouat resulted in a positive and significant impact. The students initially faced difficulty in writing a contrast paragraph regarding some aspects of writing, such as organization, content, grammar, and vocabulary. After the treatment, the students could write better contrast paragraphs which appeared in the post-test results that are higher than the pre-test results, with the mean score of score of 2.93. This study proved that Edmodo is a teaching tool which provides solutions to some problems in teaching writing to EFL students. Yet, it can assist teachers to manage the learning process and encourage students to work enthusiastically and interactively through encouraging communicative learning environment. Considering the research gap of this study, the experiment of using Edmodo in teaching writing to EFL students was only limited to a limited sample of students and only one group. It yet emphasized only one type of paragraph writing. Testing the validity of this research is not investigated. Hence, in future investigations considering more groups for conducting the

experiment, employing more types of paragraphs writing, and perhaps using more additional data collection tool scan be considered to get more confirmatory and efficient results.

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The Effect of Online Written Feedback on EFL Students' Writing: The Case of ENSC Second Year Students

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Abstarct

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, most teachers resort to the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to break the time limitation in the classroom and to bring a virtual learning environment. Teachers of writing are not an exception. They supported the continuation of teaching and/or practicing writing during the pandemic. However, given that writing is the most complicated skill to master, online assisstance may remain a mere adaptive challenge to maintain students' learning opportunities. Accordingly, this research sets out to investigate the effect of online written feedback on students' writing skill. The study was conducted with second year students during the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022 at the ENS of Constantine. One group, out of four groups, is selected as the sample of the study. The group chosen consisted of 28 students. To obtain the necessary data about students' current level of writing performance, an exemplification essay type writing assignment was used. The data was examined using an analytic scoring technique. The students received teacher's (researcher's) feedback on their essays through their e-mails. The students then were required to revise their writing based on their teachers' online written feedback. The findings indicated some positive evidence in favor of the utility of online written feedback to improve students' writing skill. On the whole, online written feedback proved to be a possible solution to help EFL students to overcome their writing problems.

Keywords : writing, online, teacher's feedback, written feedback, email

1. Introduction

The massive rise of the number of laboratory-confirmed and suspect cases believed to have been infected with the new virus, Covid-19 epidemic, made the matter almost possible to pursue studies under normal conditions. Fear of Algerian parents dramatically increased, and their state officials' as well. They were so much concerned about how much harm the pandemic might do. As a response, the ministry of education, by executive order of the president, enforced unprecedented restrictions and quarantines to limit the spread of the virus among students and the pedagogical staff. The bold move to shut all educational institutions, including universities, has not been at the expense of education. Instead, online type of learning has been adapted to assist learners out of the classroom.

Online learning has transparently witnessed a distinctive rise during the pandemic. Its use became inevitable and irreplaceable (Han, Öksüz, Şarman & Nacar, 2020). In other words, it "serves as a panacea in the time of crisis," Dhawan (2020, p. 6). A considerable number of studies demonstrate that online learning has a great impact on teaching and/or learning. Webster & Hackey (1997), for instance, concluded in their study that online learning facilitates the exchange of information and expertise while providing opportunities for all types of learners in distant or disadvantaged locations. Online learning, as stated by Dhawan (2020),"can make the teaching-learning process more student-centered, more innovative, and even more flexible" (p. 7).

Online learning was also fundamental in teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL).It becomes the norm (Tallent-Runnels et al. 2006; Gluchmanova, 2015).A substantial number of studies revealed its usefulness in a varied of aspects. According to Hashemi and Kew (2021), online learning assists EFL/ESL students to enhance their competence and skills. Other studies found that online learning increase learners' motivation and engagement towards learning English (Ilter, 2009), and towards foreign language education in general (Cinkara & Bagceci, 2013). Online learning was also found to increase, in addition to learners' engagement, learners' self-confidence and communication skills. (Halim & Hashim, 2019)

Despite the positive effects of online learning reportedin the above studies,many teachers and learners do not support this kind of learning because they do not believe it actually solves difficult teaching and learning problems (Conlon, 1997).This is particularly true when it comes to the productive skills such as the writing skill. Alawamleh, Al-Twait, & Al-Saht (2020).Writing is agreed to be the most difficult and complex skill (Harmer, 2007; Nunan 1989; Tribble, 1997). According to Bell and Burnaby (1984, as cited in Nunan, 1989, p. 23), it is complex because its mastery entails control at the sentence level, content, format, sentence, structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. In addition, it requires an ability to structure and integrate information cohesively and coherently within paragraphs and texts. Moreover, a direct interaction with and beneficial feedback from the reader is compulsory (Byrne, 1988). Lack of the latter makes the writing skill more challenging (ibid).

The present research aims primarily at investigating the extent to which online written feedback improves students' writing skill. The study also aims to uncover students' writing difficulties with regard to 'Format and Content', 'Organization and Coherence', and 'Sentence Construction and Vocabulary'.

The study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1) To what extent does online written feedback improve ENSC second year EFL students' writing?
2) What difficulties do they encounter in their writing?
3) Does online written feedback help them to overcome their writing difficulties?

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Definition of Writing Skill

Writing is seen as an act of translating our thoughts into language (Byrne, 1988, p. 1). It is also seen as a creative process or an act of discovery (Crystal, 1999, p. 214). More precisely, it is "an intellectual activity of finding the ideas and thinking about the way to express and arrange them into a statement and paragraph that is clear to be understood" (Nunan, 2003, cited in Komariyah, 2015, p. 1). In this same respect, White and Arndt (1991) defined writing in the following way:

> A form of problem-solving which involves such processes as generating ideas, discovering a "voice" with which to write, planning, goal-setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written as well as what has been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning. (p. 3)

While this selective coverage of definitions vary somewhat, they all emphasize the fact that writing is a skill that one should become proficient at in order to perfectly express ideas, feelings and communications.

2.2. Definition of Feedback

Feedback is simply conceptualized as "information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding" (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 81). Generally, it is defined either with reference to its informational content or its effect. In relation to its informational content, Sadler (1989) defined it as "information about how successfully something has been or is being done." (p. 120). According to this definition, giving feedback entails "a teacher who knows which skills are to be learned, and who can recognize and describe a fine performance, demonstrate a fine performance, and indicate how a poor performance can be improved" (Sadler, 1989, p.120). In terms of its effect, feedback is described by Ramaprasad (1983) as "information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way" (p.4). This definition highlighted three critical points (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 5)

1. The focus of feedback may be any system parameter: input, process, or output.
2. The necessary conditions for feedback are the existence of data on the reference level of the parameter, data on the actual level of the parameter, and a mechanism for comparing the two to generate information about the gap between the two levels. There cannot be any feedback if any one of the three (data on the reference level, data on the actual level, mechanism for comparing) is absent.
3. The information on the gap between the actual level and the reference level is feedback only when it is used to alter the gap. If the information is stored in memory it is not feedback.

Feedback, according to this definition, is described as a system-control function because it is necessary for both teachers and students. On the one hand, it helps teachers to make programmatic decisions with respect to readiness, diagnosis and remediation. On the other hand, it assists students to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of their performances, so that aspects associated with success or high quality can be recognized and reinforced, and unsatisfactory aspects modified or improved. Sadler (1989, pp. 120-121)

Winne and Butler(1994) declared that "feedback is information with which a learner can confirm, add to, overwrite, tune, or restructure in formation in memory, whether that information is domain knowledge, meta-cognitive knowledge, beliefs about self and tasks, or cognitive tactics and strategies"(p. 5740). This definition, as stated by Hattie and Timperley (2007) provides an excellent summary of the concept of feedback.

2.3. Benefits of Feedback

Feedback is a crucial part of education and training; it helps to motive and develop learners' knowledge, skills and behaviors if it is carried out well (Mckimm, 2009). According to the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) (2020), feedback is significant for many reasons.

✓ It provides clarity for students about what they have and have not accomplished in relation to the success criteria.
✓ It notifies students' errors, and this encourages them to be more engaged by thinking for themselves about how to improve. This, in turn, increases their efficacy and ownership in the learning process. In other words, it encourages them to think deeply and reflect on their work.
✓ It helps the students to grow in their ability to critically analyze thinking and performance from multiple viewpoints.

A considerable number of studies have investigated the power of feedback to promote and improve students' learning. Results show that feedback guides students to enhance their performance, and encourages them to outpace the challenges they are facing (Kingsley, 2008). It is also found that feedback boosts the students' writing skill as it provides them with the highest opportunity to cultivate the practice of self-correction and developing writing skill (Zohrabi, 2012).

An on-screen feedback experience exploration conducted by Getzlaf et al., (2009) revealed that maintaining a good quality of online feedback lead to positive learning outcomes.

Moreover, in his investigation of the relationship between exporting effective feedback and the teaching and learning process, Obilor (2019) proved the significance of effective feedback for both teachers and learners. As far as learners are concerned, effective feedback assists them to identify the gaps between their level of performance and their desired level of learning. In addition, it offers suggestions and constructive information to help them perfect their learning. Moreover, it makes them more responsive in processing the feedback and information received from their instructor, and increases their motivation towards learning.

Research did not turn a blind eye to the usefulness of online feedback in enhancing students' writing. Results obtained from an action research study conducted by Nara Vadia and Ciptaningrum (2020) reveal that online feedback is effective to improve students' writing, especially in their linguistic competence. Findings also show the usefulness of online feedback to enhance students' interest and confidence in writing.

As far as written feedback is concerned, Hyland and Hyland (2006) maintain that written feedback from lectures still plays a vital role in most EFL/ESL writing classes. This kind of feedback is the most crucial feedback that L2 students expect to receive (Wen, 2013). It is highly appreciated by students (Hyland, 1998). Written feedback is proved to have an influential impact on students' writing development because the written comments on the students' writing assure information about the clarity and impact of their writing (Ward, Peters & Shelley, 2010).

2.4. Best Practices to Give Online Feedback

Bonnel and Boehm (2011) suggested a list of instructive and supportive practices for giving feedback to online learners. Although the suggested practices may initially sound like a heavy handed compulsion, they might help online learning to survive and thrive. One of these practices is to 'Maximize technology' through email communication, course room messaging, audio messages, synchronous web-bed conferences that can be recorded for those who could not attend, and post online office hours. A second valuable practice is to 'have a system', or a constant intervention to provide feedback and information. This system should include clarifying expectations, scheduling feedback, the use of praise and constructive feedback in private, and the use of online discussions for some feedback that would be appropriate for all learners to view. It should also include giving timely and regular feedback as stated in the course syllabus, offer support, encouragement, and promote critical thinking. A third practice recommended is to 'Create a feedback rich environment'. This latter involves tips like promote learner self-reflection encouragement, use peer review, vary feedback so it fits the assignment, use group feedback, teacher feedback, and automated feedback. A final practice advised is the 'use of rubrics, templates, and automated responses'.

Going over a considerable number of studies to uncover the best practices for delivering online feedback to learners, Leibold and Schwarz (2015) become excited at the

potential of sharing seven praised techniques. These techniques are believed to have a wonderfully important role in encouraging the learners to persist working hard and to strive to continue to develop and improve. These techniques are 'address the learner by name', 'provide frequent feedback', 'provide immediate feedback', 'provide balanced feedback/ sandwiched feedback', 'provide specific feedback', 'use a positive tone' and 'ask questions to promote thinking'.

In addition to highlighting learners' mistakes, Obilor (2019) suggests to provide solutions for areas of weaknesses and suggesting improvement in future learning. According to him, lack of such practices lead to no change in the way a student goes about the next assignment or tackles any future learning task.

Alvarez, Espasa and Guasch (2011) carried out a study to explore the nature of teacher feedback during a collaborative writing assignment, and to identify the possible effects feedback has on the revision of a text written by university students in an asynchronous online learning environment. Based on the results obtained, they recommended including suggestions and questions, instead of direct correction. These practices help the students to respond more constructively. Therefore, they make significant changes in the arguments of the text they are revising.

3. Method
3.1. Population and Sample
3.1.1. Population

The population of the current research was 2nd year students from the department of English at the Teachers' Training School Assia Djebbar of Constantine (ENSC). The students constituting the population were assigned to four groups. Three groups, among them the sample of this study, consist of 28 students. The remaining group consists of 27 students.

3.1.2. Sample

The sample of this research was one group which consists of 28 students. The group selected was taught by the researcher. The study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022.

3.2. Data Collection and Instruments

The instrument used in this study is a writing test. The students were asked to write an Exemplification Essay on the topic "*explain with examples how small acts of kindness can have an impact on others*". The essay was required to be written in two hours and to be sent to the teacher via e-mail. The researcher (teacher) collected and analyzed the essays to identify students' areas of weaknesses. Then, the students received their teacher's (researcher's) feedback on their essays through their e-mails. The feedback was given in the form of suggestions and questions rather than direct correction. Students then were asked to revise their first draft based on their teachers' (researcher) online written feedback. The second draft was collected and analyzed in order to address how online teacher's written feedback influences students' writing.

The analysis of both drafts was guided by Hyland (2003, pp. 243-244) analytic scoring method. This kind of assessment is useful because it "provides detailed information in discriminating which aspects of writing the students (writers) are good or weak at" (Veloo, Abd Aziz & Yaacob, 2018 p. 24)

The analytical rubric he proposed sets out clearly the criteria to be used in assessing an assignment. His categorization includes three areas: ***Format and content***, ***Organization and coherence***, and ***Sentence construction and vocabulary***. Details on each section are provided bellow.

A. Format and Content (8points)

⇨ ***Excellent to very good*.** Fulfills task fully; good ideas/good use of relevant information; substantial concept use; properly developed ideas.
⇨ ***Good to average*.** Fulfills task quite well although details may be underdeveloped or partly irrelevant; satisfactory ideas with some development; quite good use of relevant information; some concept use.
⇨ ***Fair to poor*.** Generally adequate but some inappropriate, inaccurate, or irrelevant data; limited ideas/moderate use of relevant information; little concept use.
⇨ ***Inadequate.*** Clearly inadequate fulfillment of task; omission of key information; serious irrelevance or inaccuracy; very limited ideas/ignores relevant information; no concept use; inadequate development of ideas.

B. Organization and Coherence (4 points)

⇨ ***Excellent to very good***. Message followed with ease; well organized and thorough development through introduction, body, and conclusion; relevant and convincing supporting details; logical progression of content contributes to fluency; unified paragraphs; effective use of transitions.
⇨ ***Good to average*.** Message mostly followed with ease; satisfactorily organized and developed through introduction, body and conclusion; relevant supporting details; mostly logical progression of content; moderate to good fluency; unified paragraphs; possible slight over- or under-use of transitions but correctly used.
⇨ ***Fair to poor*.** Message followed but with some difficulty; some pattern of organization – an introduction, body, and conclusion evident but poorly done; some supporting details; progression of content inconsistent or repetitious; lack of focus in some paragraphs; over- or under-use of transitions with some incorrect use.
⇨ ***Inadequate*.** Message difficult to follow; little evidence of organization – introduction and conclusion may be missing; few or no supporting details; no obvious progression of content; improper paragraphing; no or incorrect use of transitions; lack of reference contributes to comprehension difficulty

C. Sentence Construction and Vocabulary (8 points)

⇨ ***Excellent to very good*.** Effective use of a wide variety of correct sentences; variety of sentence length; effective use of transitions; no significant errors in agreement, tense, number, person,

articles, pronouns and prepositions; effective use of a wide variety of lexical items; word form mastery.

⇨ *Good to average.* Effective use of a variety of correct sentences; some variety of length; use of transitions with only slight errors; no serious recurring errors in agreement, tense, number, person, articles, pronouns and prepositions; almost no sentence fragments or run-ons; variety of lexical items with some problems but not causing comprehension difficulties; good control of word form.

⇨ *Fair to poor.* A limited variety of mostly correct sentences; little variety of sentence length; improper use of or missing transitions; recurring grammar errors are intrusive; sentence fragments or run-ons evident; a limited variety of lexical items occasionally causing comprehension problems; moderate word form control.

⇨ *Inadequate.* A limited variety of sentences requiring considerable effort to understand; correctness only on simple short sentences; improper use of or missing transitions; many grammar errors and comprehension problems; frequent incomplete or run-on sentences; a limited variety of lexical items; poor word forms.

4. Results

Table 1: Scores and Mean of Students' First Draft

Student	First draft scores
1	5
2	4
3	11
4	7
5	4
6	3
7	3
8	2
9	11
10	6
11	9
12	4
13	7
14	3
15	3
16	4
17	7
18	4
19	3
20	3
21	8
22	5
23	3
24	6
25	6
26	9
27	4
28	3
Mean score	$\overline{X}$= 5.25

As it is noticed in table 1 above, almost all the students (26 out of 28 students) obtained a score less than 10 in the first draft, and only two students got a score above 10. Table 1 also

shows that the target group recorded an average of $\bar{X}$= 5.25. This indicates that the students' writing proficiency prior to receiving any feedback is low.

Table 2: Students' first draft versus the edited version of the first draft scores

Student	First draft scores	Edited version of the first draft score	Difference
1	5	9	+4
2	4	10	+6
3	11	13	+2
4	7	8	+ 1
5	4	13	+9
6	3	9	+6
7	3	12	+9
8	2	12	+10
9	11	13	+2
10	6	10	+4
11	9	15	+6
12	4	11	+7
13	7	8	+1
14	3	12	+9
15	3	5	+2
16	4	8	+4
17	7	9	+2
18	4	8	+4
19	3	11	+8
20	3	4	+1
21	8	11	+3
22	5	9	+4
23	3	5	+2
24	6	7	+1
25	6	11	+5
26	9	11	+2
27	4	7	+3
28	3	7	+4
Mean score	$\bar{X}$= 5.25	$\bar{X}$= 9.57	$\bar{d}$=4.32

The results displayed in Table 2 above show that there is a significant difference in the scores students got in the first draft and the edited version of the first draft. All the students recorded a score higher than that of the first draft, but with a variation in the gained scores. This variation (see column 4 of table 2) can be classified into five categories: ten students improved with a gain from +1 to +2, eight students gained from +3 to +4, four students gained from +5 to +6, two students gained from +7 to +8, and four students gained from +9 to +10. However, the development that half of the students (14 students) made was not remarkable as it did not allow them to get the average (see column 3 of table 2 above).

Moreover, table 2 above shows that while the study group obtained a mean of $\bar{X}$= 5.25 in the first draft, it recorded $\bar{X}$= 9.57 in the edited version of the first draft. Calculating the two means difference ($\bar{d}$=4.32) makes it clear that the students of the study group made a significant improvement. This suggests that the study group benefited from the online written feedback that they received after the first draft.

Table 3: students' writing difficulties

Category		Number of essays		percentage	
		First draft	Edited version of the first draft	First draft	Edited version of the first draft
Format and Content	Inadequate	22	04	78%	14%
	Fair to poor	05	11	18%	39%
	Good to average	01	12	04%	43%
	Excellent to very good	00	01	00%	4%
Organization and Coherence	Inadequate	01	02	3%	7%
	Fair to poor	24	07	86%	25%
	Good to average	03	18	11%	64%
	Excellent to very good	00	01	00%	4%
Sentence Construction and Vocabulary	Inadequate	15	03	54%	11%
	Fair to poor	09	12	32%	44%
	Good to average	04	11	14%	41%
	Excellent to very good	00	01	00%	4%

Table 3 shows that the 'format and content' of the majority of first draft essays (78%) are inadequate, (18%), five essays, are identified as 'fair to poor', and only (4%), one essay, is classified as 'good to average'. With regard to the category 'Organization and Coherence', most of the essays (86%) are identified 'fair to poor', (11%), 3 essays, are identified 'good to average, and (3%), one essay, is considered 'inadequate' (see table 3above). Regarding the last category, 'sentence construction and vocabulary', it is found that more than half of the essays (54%) are inadequate, (32%) are 'fair to poor', and (14%), 4 essays, are 'Good to average' (illustrated in table 3 above). However, in all the three categories, no essay (**00**%) is classified 'excellent to very good'.

5. Discussion

Analysis of the first draft reveals that the students of the study group face various difficulties in their writing. The problems that they mostly face are related to the three categories considered in this study, yet disproportionally. This may be due to several

overlapping reasons. Initially, this was their first experience in writing an essay. This is why they may frame their essays as a free writing composition ignoring the usual rules of writing. In addition, they may unconsciously fall into the trap of admiring their flow of ideas, and so they contribute to mask the best of them and to suffer from a loss of unity, coherence, appropriateness and accuracy. In addition, as they are in clearly unusual circumstances, where immediate direction on the part of their teacher is completely absent, all sorts of writing complication arise. Moreover, feeling overwhelmed by the topic that they are required to write about, or the fear of negative criticism and the frustration caused by the latter may create in them the feeling of a towering mountain stopping them in their tracks. That flood of internal chatter may build layer upon layer of limiting ideas. For these reasons, in particular, they presented a low writing proficiency in the first draft.

The results of the edited version of the first draft <u>mostly</u> reveal that online written feedback can substantially help students to reduce their writing problems either on the level of 'format and content', 'Organization and Coherence', or 'sentence construction and vocabulary'. This suggests that the <u>majority</u> of students learned from the written comments they received online. However, very few students did not benefit or have partially benefitted from online written feedback. To illustrate, two students showed no improvement in all the aforementioned aspects, three others showed no improvement in 'format and content', and one demonstrated no improvement in 'sentence construction and vocabulary'.

6. Conclusion

The principal aims of this study, as mentioned previously, are to investigate the extent to which online written feedback improves students' writing skill, and to find out the students' writing difficulties with regard to 'Format and Content', 'Organization and Coherence', and 'Sentence Construction and Vocabulary'. The results obtained made it clear that giving feedback is indispensable. The written feedback posted online to the target participants contributed to the upgrading of their writing skill albeit to varying degrees. Confidently, the development achieved has affected virtually all students' areas of weaknesses. However, not all participants get the maximum profit, and score on the average. On the whole, online written feedback reduces the need for direct interaction.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the feedback to be given online

- ⇨ Should be written in the form of conversations, questions and suggestions rather than an overall comment.
- ⇨ Focuses on the students' weaknesses without disregarding to highlight their strengths.
- ⇨ Should address all writing aspects for not to make students feel that their efforts are not recognized.
- ⇨ Should be made personalized by which teachers refer to their students personally by using their names or personal characteristics. This would enhance teachers' presence and guidance, which their students feel missed in these exceptional circumstances.

⇨ Should draw attention to each problem (error) once to encourage students to go over the rest of their composition to identify them at other places. This would help to increase students' self correction in their future tasks.

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Appendices
Appendix 1: Samples of the First Draft essays, feedback on the first draft and the revised version of the first draft

Sample 1

a) **First Draft**

The term kindness is not easy to define. Some qualities of being kind person are clear and obvious as the quality of being friendly, generous and helpful. Whereas, being kind is doing intentional, voluntary acts of kindness. Not only when it is easy to be kind, but when it is hard to be too. Simple and small acts of kindness can have a positive impact on other people.

First of all, showing a small act of kindness can help someone who is going through hard and troubling times. For instance, it may help someone who has just lost a friend, parents or relative because the person who has lost a loved one; he is without doubts needing support and help. Also, when someone is getting bullied, some good actions and words can make him happy and grateful. Many people's are facing a lot of family problems and they are struggling every day alone .Certainly, they need love and care to heal their wounds.

Second, showing a small act of kindness can impact others attitude. For example, saying good things to someone who is very sad and depressed; can change his attitude and decrease his sadness. As well as, it can change someone attitude when he is angry. Since anger brings violence and hate, we must soften the atmosphere by saying beautiful things that lift up the spirits of that angry person.

Finally, small actions of kindness can help pay it forward. When we are kind no matter how small our acts are, we experience kindness coming back to us from the whole existence. Also by performing acts of kindness, we influence others to be kind too, and this produces an endless chain of effects, a circle of kindness. It can spread just like a virus very fast and at a great extent; we only need to realize its healing power and using it for our own and for others benefits.

To conclude, even showing small acts of kindness can have great effects on others. It can help someone that is going through hard times; it can impact someone attitude and it can help pay it forward. I now understand how important and beneficial to be a good person. I guess the Dalai Lama was right when she said: "there is no need for temples, no need for complicated philosophies. My brain and my heart are my temples; my philosophy is my kindness " .

b) **Feedback on the First Draft**

- Mess: rewrite the topic sentence using the underlined idea as the main idea for this paragraph. Then add an appropriate example (experience)

First of all, showing a small act of kindness can help someone who is going through hard and troubling times. For instance, it may help some one who has just lost a friend, parents or relative because the person who has lost a loved one ; he is without doubts needing support and help. Also, when someone is getting bullied , some good actions and words can make him happy and grateful . Many peoples are facing a lot of family problems and they are struggling every day alone .Certainly, they need love and care to heal their wounds .

- Use the underlined words to reformulate your topic sentence.
- Add an experience (example) appropriate to the topic sentence.
- 'depressed; can': 'can' or any other verb is never preceded by a semicolon

Second, showing a small act of kindness can impact others attitude. For example, saying good things to someone who is very sad and depressed; can change his attitude and decrease his sadness. As well as, it can change someone attitude when he is angry . Since anger bring violence and hate , we must soften the atmosphere by saying beautiful things that lift up the spirits of that angry person.

- Reformulate the underlined group of words, and use as a topic sentence.
- Add an example appropriate to the new topic sentence.
- What is crossed is babbling

Finally, small actions of kindness can help pay it forward . when we are kind no matter how small our acts are , we experience kindness coming back to us from the whole existence . Also by performing acts of kindness , we influence others to be kind too, and this produces an endless chain of effects, a circle of kindness. It can spread just like a virus very fast and at a great extent ; we only need to realizeit's healing power and using it for our own and for others benefits.

- The conclusion is appropriate, yet it has some weaknesses: restatement of the thesis statement should be reformulated by eliminating wordiness (the two crossed words)
- Sentence in blue (summary of the sub-points) has to be reformulated according to the new sub topics that you will choose to develop.
- The remaining sentences are good

To conclude, even showing small acts of kindness can have great effects on others. It can help someone that is going through hard times, it can impact someone attitude and it can help pay it forward. I now understand how important and beneficial to be a good person . I guess the Dalai Lama was right when she said: " there is no need for temples, no need for complicated philosophies. My brain and my heart are my temples; my philosophy is my kindness " .

c)   **Revised Version of the First Draft**

The term kindness is not easy to define. Some qualities of being kind person are clear and obvious such as: being friendly, generous and helpful; whereas, others are not such as: saying simple but beautiful words , smiling at others' faces and offering someone a gift . Being good person is doing intentional, voluntary acts of kindness. Not only when it is easy to be, but when it is hard to be too. Those acts of kindness can have a great impacts on others since they would make someone's day, make people feel happy and influence them to be kind too.

First of all, acts of kindness such as saying good things to someone who is passing through hard times can make his/ her day. I remember once, my best friend was passing through very dark days. She was totally depressed. One day , I called her to check up after her but she didn't answer. I called her a lot but she didn't pickup, so I decided to visit her in order to check what's wrong with her. When I went to her home ,her mother hugged me and she was crying .Then, she told me that her daughter tried to commit suicide and they had taken her to hospital. After hearing such horrible news , I ran out to the hospital to see her. When I arrived to the emergency room, I found her father who told me that she is sleeping. I waited until she opened her eyes when she saw me ,she started crying . I hugged

her and I tried to increase her spirits with simple and beautiful words. I had never imagined that those simple words make her day and motivate her to move on and to over all obstacles. I was extremely happy because she became confident in her self again and my small words heal her wounds.

Second, small acts of kindness as smiling at someone's face can make him happy. For example, when someone is sad if you give him a smile, he will feel optimistic and happy. Once, when I was going to university, I met an old man and he seemed to me very sad . So, I decided to talk to him and ask about his state. I smiled at his face and I said good morning I hope that you are doing well and in good health. He was extremely happy and thanked me a lot and he told me that I have the prettiest smile ever . I was very happy to hear such beautiful compliment and at the same time I was proud of myself because a small smile had made him happy and decrease his sadness.

Finally, small acts of kindness like offering a friend or a loved one a gift can influence him to be kind too. I always consider giving others gifts can make them thankful because when we are kind to others no matter how small our acts are, we definitely impact others to be kind too. This produces a circle of kindness because if someone offered you a gift, you certainly would give him too. Kindness spread like a virus very fast and at great extent; we only need to realize it's healing power and using it for our own and others benefits.

To conclude, small acts of kindness can have great effects on others. It can makes someone 'day ,it can make people feel happy and it may impact others to be kind too. I understand know the importance of being good person. I guess that the Dalai Lama was right when she said : "there is no need for temples, no need for complicated philosophies. My brain and my heart are my temples my philosophy is my kindness."

Sample 2

a) First Draft

Have you ever asked yourself if you are a good person? Well, a good person has a lot of qualities that make his/her soul really pure; the most vital one is kindness. Small Acts of Kindness greatly affect people by making them confident, helping them to be psychologically stable, and changing their personalities into the best.

First, small Acts of kindness affect people by making them confident. A person who shows some kindness to other one can make him feel strong and motivated in some situations. People who feel that they do not have such a strong personality need some kindness to gain their trust in themselves. For example, in oral presentations, many students seem to be shy; however, when we give them a smile, they become more confident and fluent. Also, at the end of the presentation, when we start to discuss, we support our colleague by telling her that the topic was well-selected, and you did well. We encourage her to keep moving forward. A smile and few words can make a big difference.

Second, small acts of kindness can contribute in making people psychologically stable. Humans have feelings; those feelings change from a moment to another according to the events that a person live or experience. Sometimes a person face a problem that makes him start to think of bad things such as: suicide. For instance, I have a friend who was suffering from a particular problem. She began to think that her life is very complicated, and she wants to get rid of it. However, I was always with her explaining that in life we pass through happy and sad events. I tried to give her some positive energy; I helped her bear those moments. Having a kind person in some situations can significantly make you mentally comfortable. In addition, the influence of kindness can clearly appear on children. When parents show some kindness to their kids, they will grow up in a normal way with a strong personality and a psychological stability. For example, I used to have a friend who was always complaining concerning her parents. She used to tell me that her parents do not like her sufficiently; probably, they did not show her enough kindness.

Finally, small acts of kindness can change people into the best. Persons who do not usually show kindness feel embarrassed when they see how people act and behave. Another example is we used to have an annoying neighbor who never do any person a favor. One day, he needed something. Since he was not kind, he expected that we will not help him; however, we tried our best to help. From that event, we saw a gradual change in his personality. May be he realized that being kind will not make people love him only but also respect him.

To sum up, kindness is one of the most crucial qualities of a good and respectful person that affects others positively by raising their confidence in themselves, making them psychologically stable and mentally healthy, and by changing people into the best. As our religion and Quran insisted on being kind with a smile or a piece of advice, it is high time we improved our qualities and personalities to reach the best version of ourselves.

b) **Feedback on the First Draft**

- Good beginning (hook).
- The second sentence does not lead to the thesis statement. (crossed)

Have you ever asked yourself if you are a good person? ~~Well, a good person has a lot of qualities that make his/her soul really pure; the most vital one is kindness.~~ Small Acts of Kindness greatly affect people. They ~~by~~ make ~~in helping them to be g~~ them confident, psychologically stable, and change ~~ing their personalities into~~ the best.

- Topic sentence is clear and precise, yet it is wordy (crossed)
- The beginning of your example is appropriate, yet all what is after the first sentence is babbling; no events. Tell us the whole story of how a small act of kindness make your friend confident.

- Use the past tense when you tell an experience that happened in the past.
- The example is appropriate, but hard to identify in your paragraph which is too wordy.
- In addition, the example needs a closing sentence.
- Your paragraph at the end is a mess (crossed). Do not complicate things for your self; one long example is enough, and easy to controle.

First, small Acts of kindness affect make people by making them feel confident. A person who shows some kindness to other one can make him feel strong and motivated in some situations. People who feel that they do not have such a strong personality need some kindness to gain their trust in themselves.

For example, in oral presentations, many students seem to be shy. , however, when we give them a smile, they become more confident and fluent. Also, at the end of the presentation, when we start to discuss, we support our colleague by telling her that the topic was well-selected, and you did well. We encourage her to keep moving forward. A smile and few words can make a big difference.

Second, small acts of kindness can contribute in making people psychologically stable. Humans have feelings; those feelings change from a moment to another according to the events that a person live or experience. Sometimes a person face a problem that makes him start to think of bad things such as suicide. For instance, I have a friend who was suffering from a particular problem. She began to think that her life is very complicated, and so she thought wants to get rid of it. However, I was always with her explaining that in life we pass through happy and sad events. I tried to give her some positive energy to ; i helped her bear those moments. Having a kind person in some situations can significantly make you mentally comfortable. In addition, the influence of kindness can clearly appear on children. When parents show some kindness to their kids, they will grow up in a normal way with a strong personality and a psychological stability. For example, I used to have a friend who was always complaining concerning her parents. She used to tell me that her parents do not like her sufficiently; probably, they did not show her enough kindness.

* Good topic sentence
* "Another example" : transition not appropriate. First, this is the only example provided, yet you said "another ...". Second, the topic is so specific, so you need to illustrate. Thus use " to illustrate"
* The example is appropriate , yet you repeated the word help a lot to escape from more details. In addition it lacks some suspense in the middle.

Finally, small acts of kindness can change people into the best. ~~Persons who do not usually show kindness feel embarrassed when they see how people act and behave.~~ ~~Another example is~~ We used to have (use the past tense because the experience is in the past) an annoying neighbor who never do any person a favor. One day, he needed help. ~~something.~~ Since he was not kind, he expected that we will not help him; however, we tried our best to help. From that event, we saw a gradual change in his personality. May be he realized that being kind will not make people love him only but also respect him.

* Restatement is too wordy. Re-express it using the remaining set of words.
* Add some meaningful ideas to complete your conclusion

To sum up, kindness ~~is one of the most crucial qualities of a good and respectful person that~~ affects others positively by ~~raising~~ their confidence in themselves, making them psychologically stable ~~and mentally healthy,~~ and ~~by~~ changing people into the best. ~~As our religion and Quran insisted on being kind with a smile or a piece of advice, it is high time we improved our qualities and personalities to reach the best version of ourselves.~~

C) Revised Version of the First Draft

Have you ever asked yourself if you are a good person? Well, a good person usually shows kindness to people. Even small acts of kindness affect them by making them confident, psychologically stable, and changing them into the best.

First, small acts of kindness make people confident. Sometimes a smile and nice words make a big difference. For example, one day in the Oral Expressions module, my friend Liz was presenting her topic. She was very shy to the extent that she was avoiding eye-contacting us. When she finished her presentation, I gave her my personal feed-back. I told her that she mastered her topic, yet I added nicely that she should work on other aspects. Since I supported her rather than severely criticized her, she showed such a self-confidence in the next presentation that I was astonished. I never thought how much words are powerful.

Second, small acts of kindness make people psychologically stable. Offering even psychological support can achieve this purpose. For instance, my friend was suffering from a familial problem. When I figured this out, I went to see her. She told me that she wanted to get rid of her life; however, I tried to convince her that committing suicide was and will not be a solution. I visited her almost everyday, and she started to think more logically. After her life got better, she thanked me, and I realized the importance of kindness in making people mentally healthy.

Finally, small acts of kindness change people into the best. To illustrate, we used to have an annoying neighbor who did not offer anyone help. Last month, he needed something from us, and he expected that we would refuse. However, when he told my father, he accepted. Our neighbor was surprised. From that event, we saw a gradual change in his personality. Perhaps, he recognized that being kind will not only make people love him, but also respect him.

To sum up, small acts of kindness influence people by raising their self-confidence, making them psychologically stable, and changing them into the best. I hope that everyone will take the initiative and starts to show kindness. As Frances Hodgson Burnett says "even if your hand is empty, your heart is always full."

ICT Integration in Teaching Writing: A Tremendous Strength or a Potential Weakness? Voices from Teachers of English –Batna 2 University

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Abstarct

Reaching masterly levels of literacy is an ultimate objective for all students in tertiary education. This aim is especially challenging for teachers of English particularly in the domain of writing which has been classified as one of the most important skills because the world has become so text-oriented, and the development of modern technologies mainly Information and communication technology (ICT) has impressively changed many aspects of the writing process. Due to this change, teachers need effective techniques to improve students' writing skills. Thus, many of them insist on perking up the productivity of students' writing in which (ICT) seems to be as an effective tool to get that goal. The purpose of the present research paper is to examine the impact that ICT has on student's writing production and development. A total of 07 teachers from department of English at Batna 2 University participated in the study. Data were gathered from an interview. The study revealed that a wide range of problems concerning ICT integration in teaching writing are held by teachers. The paper recommends a necessary change in the teachers' teaching practices, and ongoing teachers' professional development should be considered. Finally, a set of implications are proposed.

Keywords : literacy, writing, ICT

Introduction

ICT refers to Information and Communication Technology and is deemed to be a turning point in many sectors of life. The use of ICT is a crucial part of foreign language learning and teaching, and it has remarkably changed methods and ways of learning and teaching especially in Algerian universities.ICT during the corona virus (COVID 19) pandemic has progressed to become an integral part of the education system. Universities in Algeria are intensely utilizing the ICT curriculum to boost in person learning.

The integration of ICT in teaching can create a more purposeful learning environment. The convenient use of ICT in teaching can help teachers to develop their students' performance, and motivate students to learn and support them for interactive and collaborative learning. As mentioned by Rodrigues (2002, p. 134-135) "effective learning happens when students are interactively engaged in a learning task." ICT also can provide a way for dynamic language skills learning. Of all four key language skills, writing comes to be as the ultimate essential and difficult skill in learning the foreign language. As stated by Richards and Renandya (2002, p. 303) "There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 to master." However, despite the focus provided to writing as a skill in foreign language classes, students still have problems in their writing production.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Information and Communication Technology: Definition and Characteristics

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is a general concept which means all communication technologies, including the internet, hardware and software devices, cell phones, computers, software, middleware, video-conferencing, and social networking. The acronym ICT is being used greatly in education and learning. ICT is considered a powerful tool for educational change and reinstruction. Kent and Facer (2004) claimed that school is an essential place where students can use a set of computer activities.

The use of ICT is a comprehensive process. This process is influenced by a variety of factors related to the student, the teacher, the tool. Thorough knowledge of these factors will prove very helpful for the teachers and students in the appropriate use of such tools. There are mainly internal and external factors that influence their use. A number of external factors have been recognized. These include technology availability, accessibility of ICT tools, and technical and administrative support. Several internal factors also influence technology integration outcomes (Sang et al. 2011).Internal factors are linked to the understanding of ICT use, attitudes toward technology integration, self-confidence and knowledge; technology skills. (Wang and Lin 2012; Sang et al. 2011; Tezci 2011a)

1.2.Writing Skill: Definition and The Current Situation

Writing is a tool of communication. According to Byrne (1991, p. 01), "writing is the act of forming symbols: making marks on a flat surface of some kind." while, Crystal (2006,

p. 257) defined writing as "a way of communicating which uses a system of visual marks made on some kind of surface". Writing is a representation of thoughts and ideas whatever their form and structure in which the aim is to expressing ideas through the written word.

Learning a language means writing it well; correctly and academically. Writing is a skill upon which others judge your learning, and your level; it is the skill that teachers should emphasize on. For that reason, ICTs is a big challenge for teachers to use it in order to develop students' writing production and motivate to utilize the various tools since ICTs encourage students to carry out writing and therefore become more independent.ICT can enhance students' literacy. As stated by Adonis (2006, p. 16) "the effective use of ICT can upgrade the students' literacy and numeracy. Microsoft word, for instance, can motivate the children to learn the writing skill. They can enjoy and be excited typing many new words using the computer."

Since writing in English is a skill that is difficult even for native speakers, developing that skill is a hard task that requires hard work, motivation, consistency, and innovative strategies. For that reason, teachers have to find new ways to motivate students and help them improve their writing performance; they should change the materials that are used in explaining the lessons; the use of ICT in enhancing the writing skill in EFL classes created an active area of study among teachers. Despite the large amount of research that has been done on ICT integration, there are still many questions that remain about how it can best be used to aid in student learning particularly their writing skill. It is supposed that in classes with ICT integration students perform better and interact successively from those students in classes with no ICT use. Therefore, the present study sheds light on the role of ICT in teaching the writing skill by attempting to answer the following questions:

- To what extent ICT integration can help in improving students' writing production?
- What are teachers' difficulties towards the integration of ICT as a supplementary learning tool in EFL writing classes?

2. Method and Tools

2.1 Participants

Concerning the selection of population, teachers of the written expression course from the department of English at Batna 2 University are selected. The sample is selected on purposive sampling type in which the researcher relied on her own judgment when choosing respondents to participate in the present research work based on the idea that it may be the only appropriate method available if there is only a limited number of data sources that can contribute to the present study. And because the population size for teachers is relatively small, the researcher opted for total population sampling which is one of thepurposive sampling techniques where the researcher chooses to investigate the whole population that has a particular set of features. (Orton,2000),

The interviews were semi-structured due to the researcher's goal to support the interviewees to freely address their own attitudes on the depth of the issue. It was undertaken to ten teachers (10). But this number has been reduced to seven (7) responses. The rest (3teachers) were disregarded for one main reason: some of them were absent in the due time because of personal issues.

2.2. Instrument and Data Analysis

An interview is a research tool which includes a number of questions that aim to collect information from a respondent. It is believed that the interview provides a relatively quick and effective way of gathering large amounts of information. Dörnyei (2007) claimed that "the most of ten used method in qualitative inquiries" (p.134). He added that "The typical length of a qualitative interview is about 30-60 minutes"(p.134),Thus, it is easier for the researcher to collect more answers since it is not that time-consuming, and it is very practical as it helps researchers to collect more responses in a short period of time. Hitchcock (1989) stressed that "central to the interview is the issue of asking questions and this is often achieved in qualitative research through conversational encounters".

According to Creswell (2009), "All researchers aspire to produce valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner; and both producers and consumers of research want to be assured that the findings of an investigation are to be believed and trusted" (p.22). That is why reliability and validity of any research tool should be examined and addressed.

Concerning the reliability of the interview, low-inference descriptors were used in order to establish reliability of the qualitative study (Le Compte and Goetz, 1982; Seale, 1999; Silverman, 2001). With regard to the validity of the interview, it was achieved by conducting a pilot study. Five teachers answered the interview. After slight adjustments, a total number of 7interviews were conducted among teachers at Batna 2 University. After that, the data were collected and the interview was reported as valid. In the end, the data was analyzed, the results were discussed and supported by literature, and some recommendations were suggested.

The interview was divided into two sections i.e. Section one contains personal information, section two contains series of questions aimed at investigating teachers' attitudes and perspectives on the relationship between ICT integration and students' writing production.

3. Results and Discussion

In discussing the results, codes (I1 – I7) are used to distinguish the seven teachers (interviewees). The tables below show basic information and overall time of interviewing.

Table 01
General background about Interviewed teachers

Data	Gender	Teaching experience
Teacher1 (I1)	F	9
Teacher2 (I2)	F	5
Teacher3 (I3)	F	5
Teacher4 (I4)	F	12
Teacher5 (I5)	F	13
Teacher6 (I6)	F	6
Teacher7(I7)	F	10

Table 1 shows the information of the interviewed teachers. The interviewer could not get any male teacher to be interviewed as all the seven teachers are female, and they have at least5 years of teaching experience.
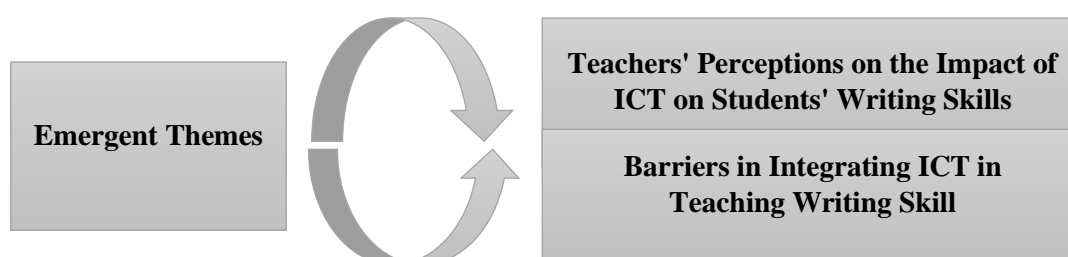
Table 02
Overall time of interviewing

Data	Time spent
Interviewee- 1- (I1)	1 h.12ms
Interviewee -2- (I2)	1 hrs.30ms
Interviewee -3-(I3)	1 hrs. 07ms
Interviewee -4-(I4)	1 h. 33ms
Interviewee -5-(I5)	2 hrs.05ms
Interviewee -6-(I6)	1 h. 15ms
Interviewee -7-(I7)	1hrs. 43ms
Overall amount of interviewing	09 hours &45 minutes.

In presenting the findings, codes (I1 – I7) are used to distinguish the seven teachers (interviewees).and table 2 shows overall time of interviewing.

Results are categorized on two themes, which were identified in the data of the present study and presented as main challenges, prospects and problems regarding the integration of ICT tools. The themes are presented as**:**

Figure 1. Emergent themes according to interview' analysis

Emergent Themes

Teachers' Perceptions on the Impact of ICT on Students' Writing Skills

Barriers in Integrating ICT in Teaching Writing Skill

- **Teachers' Perceptions on the Impact of ICT on Students' Writing Skills**

Students' use of abbreviations in writing tasks, insufficient time and students' malpractices are shown to be closely associated with teachers' attitudes and response regarding the integration of ICT tools. According to (I4)"I feel that informal abbreviations ruin the students' writing style" "I think a lot of time will be wasted when teachers use ICT as they cannot provide effective and continuous assistance and feedback to their students" according to (I5).Similarly, (I6) pointed out that "if you give your students homework assignment, you cannot control their answers. They will use any source to get the right answer. There are numerous ways for students to cheat in online environments".

"Students are always motivated when it comes to computer use in class but become withdrawn and sleepy during traditional class" it is the common response by all of the respondents regarding the benefits of using ICT tools. (I1) stated that: "integrating ICT encourage my students to be creative and learn in an enjoyable setting". ICTs "inform, amuse, startle, anger, entertain, thrill, but very seldom leave anyone untouched." (Biagi, 1996, p. 33)

In agreement with (I1), (I3) raised the idea that students of the present generation are friends with ICT tools, and they are using it in all their activities. As Sweeny (2010) put, it is proposed that if students master all those ICT tools in their daily life, it would help them if the ICT tools are integrated in the teaching of writing as well.

Regarding teaching experiences and age a myriad of researches highlighted the idea that teaching experiences and age affect the successful integration of ICT in classrooms (hernandez-ramos, 2005; giordano, 2007; wong& li, 2008)Accordingly, (I4) and (I5) stated respectfully that "I am too old to integrate those tools, and I am satisfied with my own teaching method" "I believe in the traditional method which helps me to interact actively with my students".

- **Barriers in Integrating ICT in Teaching Writing Skill**

When the teachers were asked about their negative attitudes concerning the use of ICT in their teaching practices, a set of factors which influence teachers' decisions to use ICT in the classroom. (I4) was worried about teachers' hesitancy in integrating ICT "Teachers do not use technological tools, because they are not properly trained or workshopped" (I4). In the same way, (I5) stated that "Lack of ICT knowledge and experience is my problem; I am not confident to integrate ICT tools". Myriad studies such as (Sang et all, 2009; Divaharan and Ping, 2010) support the idea that the efficient integration of technology is reliant on the teachers' ICT skills as well as their attitudes towards ICT incorporation.

Lack of teacher training was one of the focal challenges stated by teachers. This was supported by the results as it was indicated by (I3) saying that "I did not get any training or

lessons regarding the way of using ICT in teaching". Integrating ICT tools in teaching writing skill usually includes sufficient time to prepare lessons in the learning process. According to Dang (2011), the lesson preparation using ICT is time consuming. In this context, (I2) stated that "using ICT in writing classes is really time consuming. There is no time to finish up the syllabus".

4. Conclusion

Through the analysis of the teachers' interview, it is revealed that various challenges are largely facing teachers in teaching writing through ICT integration, therefore; the achieved results seem, to confirm some answers to the research questions. The use of technology is becoming increasingly more common, and the effectiveness of it is important. Teachers' reluctance is a main challenge for ICT integration; according to Jones (2001), the perceptions of teachers towards technology largely effect their decision to adapt it in their teaching practices. Training, motivation and managing time for teachers are mandatory in order to facilitate options for them to integrate ICT tools into their teaching classrooms. The University with all its members has an essential role in minimizing teachers' burden by structuring the administrative tasks and teachers' tasks. Teachers should know that students' of the current generation are familiar with technology, for they should realize this information and should be more advanced than the students to meet their students' expectations. The discussion about the integration of ICT tools in teaching writing skill is still ongoing, the majority of teachers felt overwhelmed by technology use. As findings pose several disadvantages, the present research provides unfavorable support of integrating ICT to teach the writing skill. Nevertheless, further investigation is necessary to determine whether ICT may succeed to replace traditional methods of teaching the writing skill.

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Third Year ENSC Students' Perceptions and Use of Writing through ICTS

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Abstarct

Writing in multimedia environments has now become the norm in Algerian Universities. Third-year students at the Teacher Training School of Constantine are required to submit six essays per semester, most of which are written using the computer and submitted online. The transition from traditional to online writing requires both time and efforts from teachers and students to adapt to new practices. This study investigates third year students' perceptions and use of writing through ICTS. It aims to answer two main questions: 1) How are the writing process stages explored in a multimedia environment in contrast to a traditional one? 2) How is online feedback perceived in contrast to the traditional one? A sample of 46 students from the third-year class responded to an online questionnaire with open and closed questions which quantitatively and qualitatively explore the way third year students handle and view writing practice through ICTS. The questionnaire focuses on learners' preferences and practices concerning the writing process and teacher's feedback. It includes the following writing dimensions (1) Pre-writing, the use of online reading material, and plagiarism issues, and (2) Drafting/revising and the use of online tools, (3) Perceptions of teachers' online feedback. The results are varied and suggest mixed views towards learning to write through ICTS. Many students read online articles and websites to find ideas when they are unfamiliar with the topic; although this is very helpful, googling the keywords before writing makes some of them fall into the trap of plagiarism. It also makes many students unsure about their real level. Concerning the drafting process itself, a minority of students find it more effective to revise when using Microsoft Word Processor and most of them prefer to use pen and paper. The participants have mixed attitudes about the efficiency of teachers' online feedback, and most of them prefer face-to-face interaction.

Keywords : Online writing, Microsoft Word, Online Feedback, Traditional Essay Writing, Writing Process

Introduction

The use of technology in education is more and more common all over the world,especially after the COVID 19 outbreak in 2020. EFL writing in Algerian universities is no exception. A shift occurred from the traditional use of pen and paper into the use of computer, internet,and smartphones to facilitate the writing process and its sharing with the teacher. Throughblended learning, a considerable part of learning occurs in a multimedia environment, while traditional-in-class is maintained with a gradual introduction of some technological tools. This paper examines the attitudes and perceptions of third-year students' on practicing writing essays online. More precisely, it investigates how the writing process stages are experienced by learners when they use the computer as well as their preferences in contrast to the traditional way of writing. This objective is divided into the following research questions:

1-How do students explore each step of the writing process when writing through ICT in contrast to traditional writing?

2-How do students perceive teachers' online feedback in contrast to traditional feedback?

1-Literature Review

1-1-ICTS in EFL Education

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play a central role in nowadays' education. The term ICTS includes several tools that serve to 'gather, record and store information' (UNESCO in Garcia & Marin, 2013, p. 428). It is agreed that these technologies offer language learners a productive environment that enhances their independence, creativity, and motivation (Haddad and Draxler, 2002; Prihatiningsih, 2011). Today's 'digital natives' are used to manipulate computers, smartphones, and other electronic devices from a young age (Trilling & Fadel, 2009, p. 69), this assumed mastery would facilitate a fruitful interaction with their teachers.

In addition to stimulating motivation and facilitating interaction, the use of ICTS offers many benefits that enhance language skills. The extended access to authentic audiovisual material allows a comfortable exposure to the target culture and boosts speaking and listening skills. The reading and writing skills are equally reinforced with the easy access to reading materials and the use of word processing software. The effectiveness of the latter was investigated by Cunningham (2000). The results of his study revealed that students considered that writing was more productive when using the word processor and that it allowed them to focus more on each writing dimension such as grammar, vocabulary, and organization. Similar studies (Lam Penningtin, 1995; Russell and Cook, 2003; AbuSeileek, 2006) have shown the positive impact of ICT on both learners' attitudes towards writing and their writing quality and quantity (Ulsoy, 2006).

1-2-ICTS and the Writing Process

The writing process cycle follows the same steps whether the medium is pen and paper or the word processor. The student-writer generates ideas by thinking and retrieving information from of his/her long-term memory, from reading related documents, or from discussing the topic. After organizing theideas and producing the first draft, this latter is revised and edited to receive online feedback from teachers/peers. The use of technology can facilitate each of the aforementioned processes and make them more productive in several ways.

First, the planning and idea-generation phase can be easily achieved by the options providedby computers. For example, the brainstormed words can be organized into clusters or tables. The fast-writing strategy can be used easily because the word processor speeds upmodifications (Ulsoy, 2006). Hence, the student would not have to re-write the whole first notes or cross the deleted parts which would make the process smoother and neater. Furthermore, the use of software such as, '*Inspiration Software'*, '*ThinkTank*' and Computer Prompting Program like '*Eliza*' inspires writers and induce them to think deeply and to better outline their essays (ibid).

Similarly, the drafting/composing stage is more flexible and faster with the computer because the text is produced smoothly using the keyboard and ideas can be integratedat any moment and any place within the text. Moreover, editing options and automatic insertions assist the writer and reduce the cognitive writing overload (Daiute, 1985; Ulsoy, 2006). A study contrasting computer and pen and paper writing of adolescents indicated that most participants preferred using the computer to compose their essays (MacCann, Eatsment, and Pickering, 2002). Others studies revealed that computer writing allowed students to produce more words than traditional writing (Nichols, 1996; Stanford and Siders, 2001). Additionally, fifth graders' motivation and writing length was assessed through a questionnaire answered by their teachers. Their responses indicate that computer writing fosters both the writing length and motivation of the learners (Daniels, 2004)

Furthermore, many studies proved the role of computers in easing,revising, and proofreading. Obviously, adding, deleting, and reordering are much simpler steps with the word processor and the spell checker. Gupta (1998) examined ninth graders' use of the spell checker. He concluded that it was mainly helpful for unskilled writers(Ulsoy, 2006). However, according to Armstron et al. (2000), despite the simplification of the revising process offered by the computer, the quality, organization and clarity of the product is not necessarily better as the impact is essentially on mechanics (Armstrong and Casement, 2000)

Finally, when submitting the final product, receiving feedback via ICTS offers also a number of advantages. Microsoft Word Processor enables the reader to include comments on the margin via the review option. The final document with the embedded feedback can be then sent via email. Investigations (McCabe et al., 2011 ; McGrath & Atkinson-Leadbeater, 2016) on the students' attitudes towards their teachers' online written feedback suggest that it is preferred over handwritten feedback 'due to its convenience and high quality' (Lv et al., 2021, p. 644). Besides, Ene et al. (2018) point out that online teacher feedback tend to focus more on content than on form (ibid).

2-The Study

The present study took place in the Department of English of the Teacher Training School of Constantine during the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022. Its main objective is to investigate how third year students perceive the shift from traditional writing to writing through ICT.

2-1-Methods

An online questionnaire was shared with the population of the study which consists of the third year class of the school.The questionnaire is made of closed and open questions and is divided into two sections. The first one is devoted to the writing process. It includes questions about the pre-writing phase, enquiring about the preferred method to generate ideas, the use of online documents and their perception of plagiarism issues. It also enquires about the way students compose and revise when writing in multimedia environment. The second section investigates how they perceive online and traditional feedback.

2-2-Results Analysis

A sample of 46 students responded to the questionnaire; a summary of the main results is reported in the next section.

Section 1: Online Pre-Writing and Drafting Idea-Generation Preferences
Figure 1: Learners' Generating Ideas Preferences

When starting writing at home/in the campus, how do you manage the prewriting phase?

46 réponses

- By directly brainstorming, outlining, or freewriting on the word document
- By using the paper and the pen first

80,4%

19,6%

Figure 1 shows that the vast majority of participants prefer to generate ideas and to plan their writing by using the paper and the pen; even when they are required to send their essay via email. The reasons advanced by this category of students are summarized in the following table:

Table 1: Reasons for preferring traditional pre-writing/word processor pre-writing

| Students' preferences for starting with pen and paper	Students' Preferences for starting with the computer
To pay attention to spelling mistakes Better preparation for the exam More Focused/less distracted/Increased better thinking More connected and attached to the topic More inspired, helps in the creative process, more artistic Makes writing more alive and soulful A habit sincechildhood	Spelling mistakes and redundancy detected More flexible than pen and paper, more practical More efficient and fast Easier to erase, less messy, more organized More inspired when hearing the keyboard Welcomes more the flow of ideas

As shown in the table, the most recurring justification among the students who prefer traditional idea-generation, which represents 80% of the sample, is the possibility to be more focused, more inspired, more creative, and feel closer to the topic when using pen and paper. The reasons advanced by the minority who prefer to start the writing process directly with the computer are mainly the flexibility, efficiency and organization that the keyboard and word processor offer.

Reading Online Documents
Figure 2: Students' Consulting and Using online resources when writing

Do you read online articles/websites about the topic before/ while writing?
46 réponses
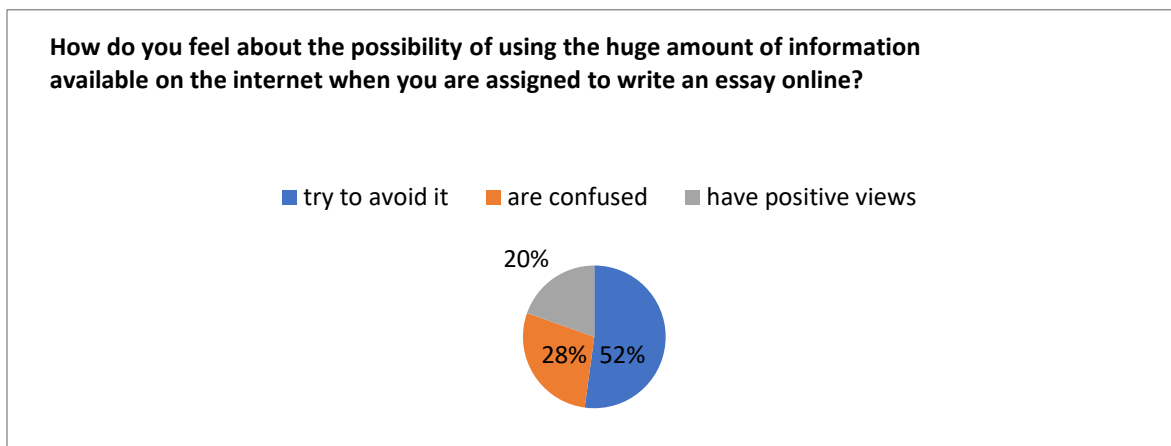

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Never

67,4%
8,7%
19,6%
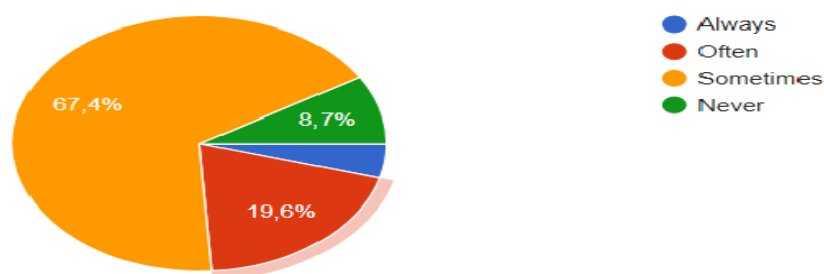
As figure 2 shows, most participants revealed making use of websites and online articles to find more information and ideas for writing their essays. Only, 8.7% claimed never consulting online documents for writing essays. 67.4% and 19.6% said they read them sometimes and often respectively. In addition, a previous question exposed that 60% of

participants are allowed by their teachers to search for online resources related to the topic they were supposed to write about.

This large use of online articles and websites obviously raises to the question of plagiarism, so when asked about this issue almost 70% of participants answered struggling to reformulate and use their own words after taking notes from online materials while 25% admitted using copy/paste and making use of plagiarism, and 23% are not sure whether what they do is considered as plagiarism or not.

Attitudes towards the Possibility of Using Online Information

Figure 3: Learners' feelings about the possibility of reading online material before writing

How do you feel about the possibility of using the huge amount of information available on the internet when you are assigned to write an essay online?

■ try to avoid it　■ are confused　■ have positive views

20%

28%　52%

Concerning their feelings about the possibility of using the huge amount of material available online, half of the participants prefer and try to avoid it to give space for their own ideas and creativity and not be limited to others' ideas.28% of participants are confused and are worried about their real abilities because of their dependency on using reading material.The remaining 20% view the possibility to access online articles before writing as an opportunity to enrich their language abilities and to make them more confident and less apprehensive of writing.

Drafting and Revising

Figure 4: Preferred Method to Draft and Revise

While drafting/revising your essay, which of these methods is more helpful to organize and re-write your essay?

46 réponses

- Using pen and paper
- Using the computer

37%

63%
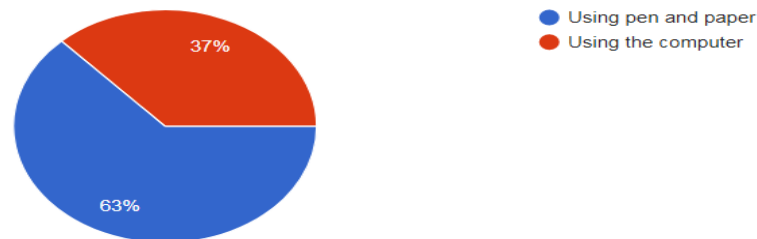
When asked about their drafting and revising preferences, 63% of participants prefer to use pen and paper, and 37% percent use the word process for composing and revising their essay. The reasons advanced are similar to the pre-writing stage, most of them think that pen and paper helps them to focus more, because they got used to this habit. Some participants said the computer makes them distracted as they end up chatting on social media, and that typing on the computer leads them to make typing mistakes. Some also advanced enjoying feeling the paper in their hands, and avoiding hurting their eyes with the computer. Concerning the advocators of word processor, they appreciate its flexibility, practicality and the possibility to highlight words and modify the organization and order of paragraphs easily and smoothly.

Section 2: Online and Classroom Feedback

In this part of the questionnaire, participants were asked about their attitudes towards online feedback. What is referred to as online feedback in this study is the written remarks included in the review option of the Word Office Processor.

Figure 5: Learners' Preferred Type of Feedback

Which one is the most effective?

47 réponses

- Feedback received in class
- Feedback received online
- Undecided

25,5%

8,5%

66%

As figure 5 shows, most students prefer face-to-face feedback, 25 %prefer the online one, and 8.5% are undecided.

The reasons advanced by learners for their preferences are summarized in the following table:

Table 2: Participants' Preferred Feedback

Reasons for preferring in-class feedback	Reasons for preferring online feedback
• The feedback is better explained. • Easier to access the teacher and to ask for more explanations, more guidance • More space for further discussion, more comfortable/avoids misunderstandings (easier to understand each other's intentions) • Building stronger relationship, with the teacher, richer, more fun, benefitting from peers' ideas and mistakes • Students are more focused and take it more seriously. • Online feedback is too brief, and students have difficulties to address their mistakes on their own.	• More accurate, more organized, « cleaner », more specific • Feeling the interest of the teacher to analyze each sentence of the essay, the feedback is more detailed • Feedback is saved (learners can go back to it later) • To avoid being embarrassed in front of classmates/ more private/ more personal and individualized • In class feedback takes time, not all the students get the chance to receive it

3-Pedagogical Implications

The necessity of implementing ICTS in our era is undeniable; hence,instructors need to gradually find solutions and alternatives to each problem pointed by participants who stick to pen and paper.

It is required to encourage students to move from paper to word processing. One of the repeated reasons for preferring traditional writing is that on theexamination day, they are requiredto write using paper and pen; and therefore, they wish to train themselves with this method in order to be ready for the exam. This suggests the need to start organizing official written examinations and tests using the word processor to encourage students to take this method more seriously. The participants also often mentioned that they feel more at ease and more inspired to use pen and paper because they are used to this habit from childhood. This implies considering the introduction of word processing earlier in the students' path. In fact, much time is needed for learners to own the use of computers as a natural and spontaneous method for writing essays.

Another implication from the research findings is to raise students' awareness about the exact meaning of plagiarism and how to avoid it. The percentage of participants who were confused about the meaning of plagiarism and the easy access to online articles and websites indicate the need to train students at an early stage to cite resources and to be aware of ethical issues. In this way, they would make the necessary efforts to evolve in their writing practice in multimedia environments, and they would not develop unhealthy copy-paste habits.

Finally, online feedback needs to be more interactive for granting learners a chance to ask for further clarification and effectively revise their drafts. In fact, as the main reason advanced for preferring in-class feedback is the lack of explanation and convivial interaction teachers ought to expand the written remarks typed in the review option of the word office processor. This can be done by asking questions that open a dialogue between teachers and students so as to negotiate meaning virtually. Another way to deliver a more inviting and user friendly written online feedback is by maintaining a close and cheerful interaction with students through online group chats via social media networks, and by encouraging students to send a modified version of their drafts after receiving the feedback.

Conclusion

To sum up, the results of this study show that although participants are familiar with technology, most of them are still inclined towards the use of traditional writing mainly because they feel more focused and they are more familiar with it.Moreover, in spite of their use of online documents before/while writing, students are aware of its drawbacks and the risk of plagiarism, and they are concerned about their real abilities. Concerning feedback, most learners prefer in-class feedback for its immediacy, clarity, and conviviality. Online feedback; on the other hand, is preferred for its accuracy, organization, and privacy. The results indicate the necessity of introducing some steps that encourage learners to use ICTS in writing in a more spontaneous and successful way.

On the whole, in spite of its challenges, learning writing through ICT's is making its way in higher education. It is only at its beginning in the Algerian context, and its use will certainly be refined gradually by becoming more natural and effective for both teachers and students.

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Improving EFL Writing through ICTs: ENSL Lecturers and Third Year Students' Perceptions about the Use of ICTs in the Writing Class

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Abstarct

Many Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools have been used by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) University teachers in order to facilitate the reading and writing skills, communicate, and engage EFL graduate students in a better learning environment. The utilization of ICTs has become part of the teaching-learning interaction situations where EFL University teachers seek to improve their students' higher order thinking skills and enhance their reading for a better writing performance. Several e-learning platforms have been adopted as alternatives to face-to-face instruction, including Moodle platform that has been used in Algerian higher education. E-learning at the university has been adopted as a central component of students' learning process. Furthermore, it utilizes information technologies intended to promote growth and improve the quality of higher education. Therefore, the aim of this study is to demonstrate the importance of using ICTs, and more particularly MOODLE in the Writing Classroom, and to identify the perceptions of both EFL/ ENS Laghouat teachers and students about the use of ICTs in relation to the writing skill. In this light, the study attempts to answer the following questions: Does ICT integration in education help in improving the students' writing skill? Can Moodle-based Writing courses enhance students' writing autonomy? And, what are third year EFL/ENSL students' and Writing teachers' opinions about learning/teaching Writing through Moodle platform? It has been hypothesised that 1. ICT-based education can help students to improve their writing skills. 2. Moodle-based Writing courses can enhance students writing autonomy, and 3. Third year EFL/ENSL students and Writing teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of Moodle platform to learn/teach Writing skills. In order to achieve the aim of the study, a total of seven EFL/ENSL Writing Lecturers and thirty Third Year ENS students have been queried through the use of two questionnaires. The results of this quantitative study have been analysed and discussed. The two first hypotheses have been confirmed. The Writing teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of Moodle platform to learn/teach the Writing skill, while the students have negative attitudes. It has been recommended that EFL teachers should encourage students to use Moodle in order to facilitate learning and save time.

Keywords : E-learning; ICT, Learning, MOODLE

Introduction

Nowadays, it becomes impossible to think about education and the learning process without including technology. Internet has taken a big part in our lives. It also affected our society in general and the individual in particular. The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) which can be represented through e-learning and distance learning can provide resolutions to the challenges of traditional teaching methods and tools. E-learning can provide students with more opportunities by making them independent and flexible, as students managed to use innovative materials to reflect on their own learning, (Dhawan, 2020). Writing is considered as one of the main skills that every student should master. It is the way to express and interpret ideas.

Writing is a process where teachers have to give his/her students the topic, and most importantly enough time to let them think about what to plan and write on the paper. Actually, this is not sufficient. Graduate students probably possess a certain level that permits them to write an essay without the teacher's guidance. In addition, their own interests and preoccupations must be taken into consideration, so they have the right to tackle subjects of their proper choice. The freer the students are, the more autonomous and independent writers they become. Freedom in writing is urgently needed in our educational system (Badger and White, 2000).

Using technology as a tool for making research is prominent in learning. Moodle is the best example to be mentioned. It is a free platform that both teachers and students use to create effective learning. Moreover, it allows students to be closer to their teachers and classmates as well. In a virtual space, students can exchange information and knowledge through different activities, where the teacher can help the students to be more autonomous. Furthermore, teachers keep in touch with other colleagues from all over the world. In general, this platform is considered as one of the most successful software that aids both teachers and students in making progress in the field of education.

Education is the key and the basis of any nation. Teachers work hard to convey the information to their students. They usually use certain teaching methods that help the students understand what they learn. However, students get bored from the traditional, and unhelpful methods of teaching, they eagerly want some fun and flexibility in their learning style. Writing is one of the main issues that most teachers encounter troubles in making progress. (Cremin, et al., 2005)

On the other hand, students have always been guided by their writing teachers' requirements. Nowadays, students have become more attached to technology which has become an important tool for study. Moodle can be a good example of the platforms which are widely used for making research. In Algerian higher education, students of different levels meet and exchange information, not only students can benefit from these platforms, but also teachers. They help each other in making exams, assessments and even preparing lessons. (Affouneh et al, 2020)

Moodle shortens the distance between the teacher and his students, and allows them to discuss lessons in better circumstances. Consequently, students can achieve better results through the use of such platforms. (Ayse, 2008)Therefore, the need to look into its contributions is really required for a better academic achievement of EFL students.

The main objective of this study is to demonstrate the importance of using ICTs in the Writing Classroom, and its contribution in enhancing the learner's writing autonomy. It also aims at investigating both EFL/ENS Laghouat teachers' and students' attitudes towards learning/ teaching the writing skill through Moodle platform.

Subsequently, the present study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. Does ICT integration in education help in improving the students' writing skill?
2. Can Moodle-based Writing courses enhance students' writing autonomy?
3. What are third year EFL/ENSL students' and Writing teachers' opinion about learning/teaching Writing through Moodle platform?

Three hypotheses have been put forward in order to answer the aforementioned questions:

H1. ICT-based education can help students to improve their writing skills.

H2. Moodle-based Writing courses can enhance students writing autonomy.

H3. Third year EFL/ENSL students and Writing teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of Moodle platform to learn/teach Writing skills.

1. Technology- based Teaching

Technology has become a significant tool in education, which is considered as an important resource in foreign language teaching. Technology has created online environments so that students can benefit from them. For many years, a lot of English teachers have been looking for effective ways to encourage students to learn English in order to achieve better academic performances. Wiki, blog, and webpage are forms of E-learning used to achieve their goals.

Internet and computers are the best examples of tools to enhance both learning process and teaching. (Gunawardena, 1995) Computers are commonly used and they are very helpful in delivering drills for practice and improving all the skills whether in grammar, listening, speaking or vocabulary as they are totally comfortable in doing so. (Celce-Murcia, 2001 cited in Suppasetseree and Dennis, 2010)

In fact, there are many reasons why multimedia tools are very useful in EFL and ESL classrooms. First, they motivate students to activey engage in learning. Second, students feel more comfortable using the target language which makes them independent in expressing themselves while doing the online drills. Online communication helps the students' thinking ability to increase. Online learning offers a big chance to communicate with native speakers, and students can learn by themselves in their own way without having to worry about the competition in the classroom. (Warschauer, 1996) E-learning is the use of internet in order to

learn and teach. It helps students to communicate with their teachers and peers, and accomplish their writing assignments as well.

2. Teaching Writing Through Technology

Nowadays, students have the opportunity to write using digital technologies, such as: e-mails, and create software packages. Using technology in the writing process can be very helpful for students for it provides them with different tools to write easily and without mistakes. (Yancey, 2004) There are a variety of digital tools that make the writing process much easier than it was before for both teachers and learners. These tools can support learners in planning and organizing their writing pieces. (Lamb and Reinders, 2008)

They can use electronic mapping, outlining, and draft templates. This can help them to brainstorm and organize their thoughts. Students can also use internet-based reference tools such as; electronic dictionaries, spell checkers, and translators. This assists them to use and find suitable words and vocabulary. (MacArthur, 2000) Another tool that learners can use is editing and revising, which makes it easier for the students to correct their errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, revising, and help them to organize their ideas.

3. Moodle Platform Learning

Moodle is an open-source Course Management System. It stands for 'Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment'. It is a free software package meant to assist teachers and students in the development of high-quality teaching materials. (Hasan and Akhad, 1970) It is considered as one of the most widely open-source online platforms that allow students to create a course website, ensuring the access of subscribed ones. This new platform permits the exchange of information among users through chatting and discussion forums. (Costa, et al., 2012)

Roberts (2008) defines Moodle as "a place for creating learning opportunities, enabling learning through doing in a virtual environment." (p.03) Moodle is a tool which can provide advanced support network, and opportunities of innovation for the students. In addition, Moodle provides a very effective learning tool that supports blended learning and encourages the learner's motivation. Moodle is an online course management system, which is appropriate for language learning in particular. It is consists of many helpful and easy tools to operate and create the courses. (Su, 2006)

According to Suppasetseree & Dennis (2010), Moodle is considered as a free online platform which is adequate for language teaching, and an easy tool to create online courses as English tutors. Users of Moodle approve that an online course can assess the students to learn at a higher degree of personal comfort level. Students are able to download courses and practise exercises to review their lessons anytime and anywhere they want and of course receive feedback. Students also have fun using it to help their levels go up. Moodle can assist teachers and students in the development of high-quality teaching materials. It is also known as a Learning Management System (LMS) or a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that is useful in creating discussion boards, and online quizzes. (Kameron and Saskia, 2006)

Back in the 1970s, Moodle was designed and developed by Martin Dougiamas who gave insight into distance learning.(Moodle Documents, 2021) In 1999, he experienced the WebCT and investigated an alternative method of online teaching at the University of Curtin, in Australia. He registered the word *"Moodle"* as a trademark. Moodle was released in August 2002. (Goodwin-Jones, 2003) Users were discussing Moodle on a new forum, translating Moodle into different languages and creating themes. A year later, the first contributed module (workshop) was released and Moodle.org became the community arm of Moodle, with Moodle.com representing the commercial aspect. Moodle grew quickly: the first ever Moodle Moot was held in Oxford in 2004. (Chung at al., 2013)

Through collaboration and cooperation, Moodle has become an efficient learning plaform, impowering educators all to deliver higher quality learning experiences. (Gunawardena, 1999) The following figure represents the Webpage on Moodle Platform, and how teachers have the access to this platform.

Figure1: ENS Laghouat Moodle Webpage
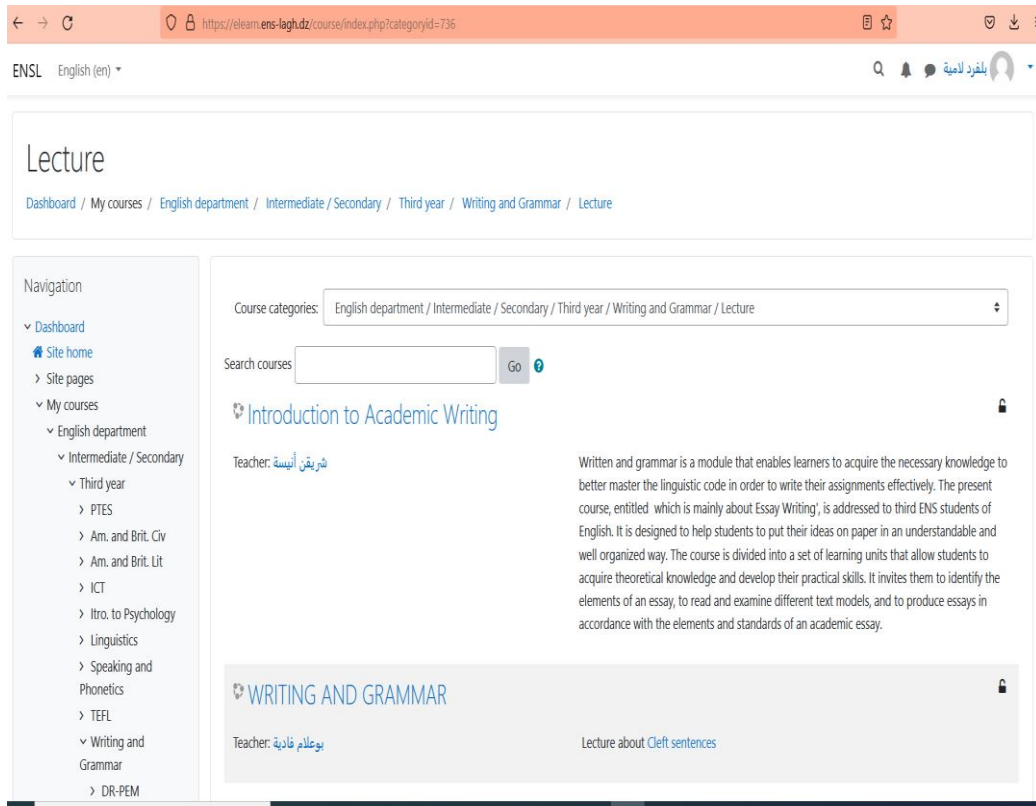

As is shown in the above figure, both teachers and/or students have to write their email address and their password in order to sign in. They can also memorize the user's name and the password for future connection. Once logged in, teachers have to select the level and the lecture they want to upload.

Figure2: Moodle Course page

As shown in the above screenshot, teachers have the access to diverse lectures. They have to click on the desired lecture, fill in the boxes with the appropriate information about their lectures, and they can upload their lessons, assign homework or activities to their students according to each level and group. Once teachers accomplish the tasks, they have to save their work and log out. Moodle is considered as one of the most widely used platforms that allow students to create a course website permitting the subscribed students to exchange information among users all over the world. (Ahmad and Al-Khanjari, 2012)

4. Method of the Study

The study is quantitative in nature since it requires the use of numbers obtained from the collected data, the interpretation and the analysis of the results. Any kind of research requires a set of instruments that can help the researcher achieve the purpose of the research. In order to collect data, achieve the aim, and affirm and approve the hypotheses of the study, two questionnaires were used; one for teachers, and the other one for students. Both questionnaires encompassed a set of multiple-choice questions, Yes/No questions, and open-ended questions to collect the needed data.

The questionnaires aimed to collect the students' and the writing teachers' opinions about the use of the new platform of Moodle and its effects on the ENSL students' learning. Both questionnaires were analysed in terms of numbers and turned them to percentages to

indicate the teachers' and students' attitudes towards each issue accurately. In order to achieve the aim of the study, a total of seven (7) writing teachers and thirty (30) EFL/ENSL 3rd Year students have been requested to fill in the questionnaires.

5. Analysis and Discussion

The study consisted of the students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards their use of Moodle platform in learning and teaching writing skills. A summary of the most important results is presented as follows:

Pie chart1: Teachers' integration of technology in the Writing classroom
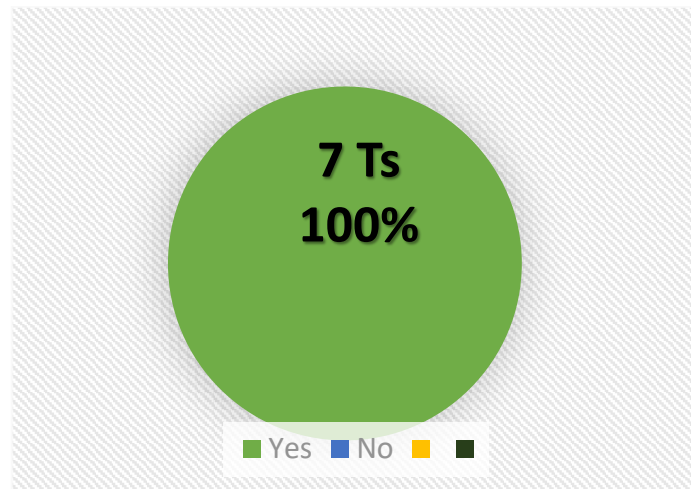
The above pie chart represents Teachers' integration of technology in the writing class. According to the results, all 7 teachers (100%) included technology, and agreed that including E-learning tools inside the writing class facilitated the teaching and learning process and contributed in developing learners' autonomy and creating suitable conditions for learning. It is noticed that all writing teachers thought that technology could facilitate learning and make it easier. The following piechart shows the result of the respondents' views about the importance of Moodle in teaching writing.

Pie chart 2: Importance of Moodle in Teaching Writing

As shown in the second pie chart, 5 teachers (71.43%) believed that the teaching of writing can be efficient through the use of Moodle; whereas 2 teachers (28.57 %) did not think that teaching writing needed the use of Moodle platform. It is noticed that most of the respondents were aware of the importance of using Moodle in enhancing writing autonomy. This may refer to the fact that Moodle helped change the atmosphere of learning and urged learners to rewrite their lectures using their own style.

The next pie chart shows the results of teachers' opinions about Moodle's use to teach writing.

Pie chart 3: Teachers' Opinions about the Use of Moodle in Writing Classroom
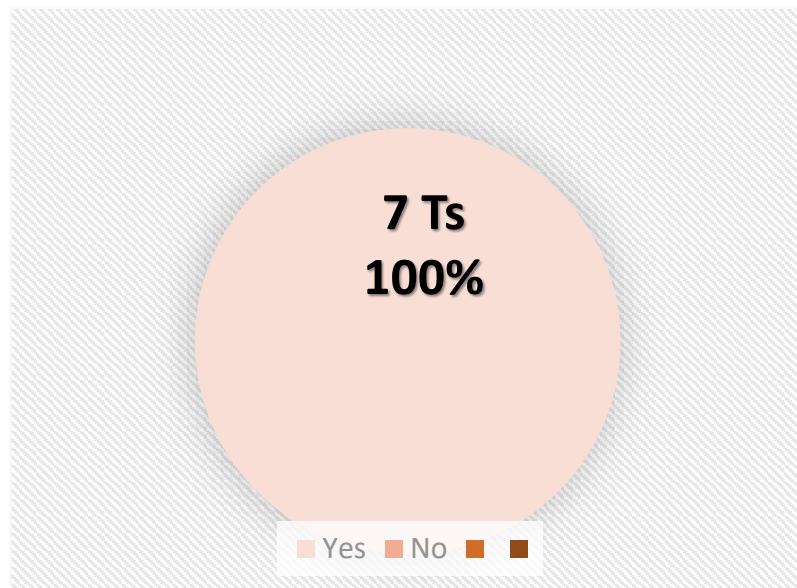
According to the results obtained, all teachers (100%) had positive attitudes towards the use of Moodle in the writing class since it can facilitate communication and help both teachers and students get instant feedback. The following part is about students' questionnaire results of the most important items. Pie chart 4 shows the students' choice and preferences of the best learning method.

Pie chart 4: Students' Best Learning Method
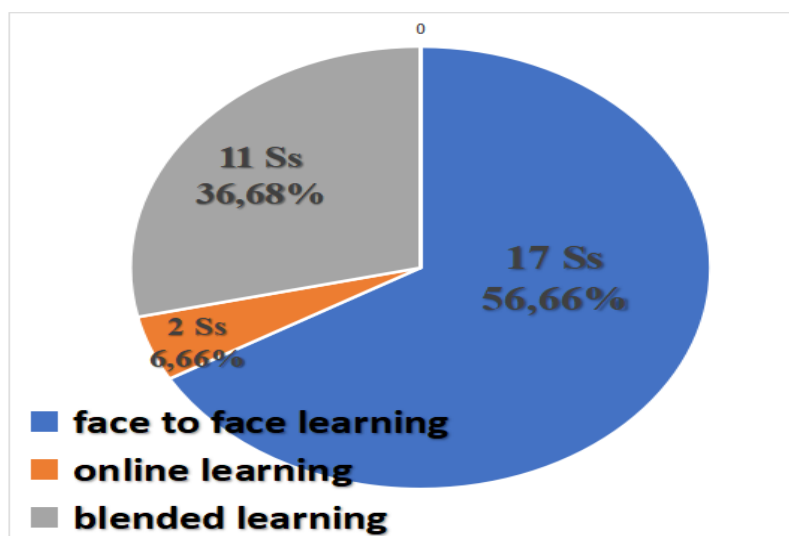
Results in pie chart 4 show that 17 students (56.66%) out of 30 preferred face-to-face learning because they found themselves more active with better teacher/learner interaction. 11 students (36.68%) preferred blended learning because it provided better education quality whereas 2 students (6.66%) found online learning method more effective because it was more beneficial. The last table represents the students' opinions about the use of Moodle in the writing class.

Table 1: Students' Opinions about the use of Moodle in the writing class

Answers	Students' number	Percentage
Yes	13	43,34%
No	17	56,66%
Total	30	100%

The results of the above table show that 17 students (56.66%) showed negative views about Moodle use because they preferred traditional-based writing classes; whereas, 13 students (43.34%) favoured the use of Moodle because it encouraged them to learn more effectively and improve the learning quality.

Discussion

The results obtained from both students' and teachers' questionnaires helped in confirming the two first hypotheses H1 and H2. The third hypothesis which stated that «Third year EFL/ENSL students and Writing teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of Moodle platform to learn/teach the Writing skill» was rejected since students had negative

views about the use of Moodle in the writing class. Therefore, Moodle has had a negative pedagogical impact on students' achievement in the writing classroom. However, the teacher showed a high level of satisfaction towards integrating Moodle Platform in teaching the writing skill.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, teachers believed that teaching writing needs the use of technology inside the classroom; therefore, writing teachers and even other EFL teachers should encourage students to use Moodle in order to facilitate learning and save time. They should choose suitable writing topics, and encourage their students to write without the fear of making mistakes. Furthermore, teachers should raise their students' motivation to be free writers, and encourage them to read much to enrich their writing styles. Thus, they have to create a comfortable and friendly atmosphere and give constructive feedback to help their students write more effectively. Finally, teachers may explore other effects of Moodle on learners' writing achievements.

Moodle-based blended course plays an important role in developing the writing skill of students. Technology does not only make the writing course more engaging and productive for both instructors and learners compared to the conventional face-to-face learning, but also helps extend the learning opportunities of students beyond the classroom.

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The Efficiency of ICTs and Social Media in the Development of EFL Learners' Writing Skills: The Case of Second Year Students of English at Skikda University

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Abstarct

Writing is a visual productive language skill that promotes effective communication, as it relates to the complex and cognitive processes of a person, hence, most of English as a Foreign Languagestudents find it difficult. Meanwhile, technology provides a large number of modern tools and applications appropriate for developing the writing skill of the students. This paper is planned to investigate the effectiveness of Information Communication Technologies for enhancing the writing skills among students of English at Skikda University. Seventeen-second year students of English are selected randomly as a sample. The first part of the study presents the writing skill as an important aspect of language learning and its relation to ICT tools, particularly social media. The second part is devoted to the experimental fieldwork. A quantitative research is conducted, which is based on a questionnaire administered to secondyearstudents of English at Skikda University to gather information about their use of social media and how it affects and develops their writing in English.The results revealed that students have a huge exposure to social media and use it to share educational materials.The results also have given sufficient proof that social media is a convenient tool to develop better writing skills, as it has positive effects on university students' writing ability. .

Keywords : ICT, social media, writing skill, EFL, University students

Introduction

The age of globalization had raised a revolution of ICT, one of the most remarkable changes that permit us with more potential to communicate (Shand, 2019). Nowadays, more significant opportunities have been brought to people's lives by technology advancement. Students reported having a higher preference in learning the language with the integration of ICT, including Web-based, Computer-Assisted and Mobile-Assisted language learning (Yunus, Abdul Rahman & Suliman, 2019). According to (Yunus, Abdul Rahman &Suliman, 2019), writing has been a daunting task in the formal setting of the classroom. Students feel that it is difficult to practice writing in the classroom due to minimal contact hours as teachers do not have ample time to discuss the level of language acquisition of each student. There is no doubt that social media somehow helps to promote learning among students, especially writing skills. However, there is always a misconception whenever it comes to writing, as most of us would think that writing should be on paper. With the emergence of recent ICT, writing should not be restricted on paper only. Writing should be integrated with images, audio recording, and a system of fast writing. However, vowels and punctuation are sometimes irrelevant and time-consuming. Hence, ICT plays a vital role to facilitate and speed up the learning process well (Chua,Yunus &Suliman, 2019). Thus, this study seeks to find out the role of social media in students language learning and its impact on their writing skills, as it aims to answer the following questions:

Q1: Do university students use SM for academic and pedagogical purposes?

Q2: Is there a significant relationship between SM and university students' writing proficiency?

1Literature Review

This section aims at providing some theoretical notions of writing skills and its relation to social media in addition to the importance and effectiveness of integrating social media into EFL writing classroom.

1.1The Importance of Writing Skills

Writing skills serve as the core of communication (Naveed & Bhowmik, 2016). Writing takes a major part in our life. This is proven when people write to communicate their thoughts and let others understand what is in their minds every day. Hence, excellent writing skills allow an author to express his or her message with clarity and require a shorter time for the reader to comprehend what he wrote. According to Dean-Rumsey (1998), writing skills serve as vital components of literacy; learners are required to be skilful and well trained to involve in the literate society of the future. Naveed and Bhowmik (2016) opine that writing comprises of many processes, which starts from pre-writing, then proceed to while writing, and lastly post activities. Pre-writing is a preparation stage, which involves thinking, reflecting, and planning about what to be conveyed. While-writing is the effort of using the pen to transfer the ideas from the brain and translating expressions into meaningful sentences. Writing

requires discovering, exploring ideas, and bringing out images onto a piece of paper. Post-Writing refers to the written work that needs reading and reviewing in detail.

1.2 Social media and language learning

Due to the social aspects featured in the social media, many educators viewed social media as an educational site in which teachers can truly access the learning potential of their students through proper designation of learning activities.

The efficacy of social media in education, especially in language learning and teaching, is arguable. It has been suggested that students might not gain the personal experience they need to learn a language through social media, which might be a barrier to language learners (Chua, Yunus & Suliman, 2019). Other researchers, however, do not hold this view. Given that social media is used properly, it can be a very effective educating tool (Chua, Yunus & Suliman, 2019). This tool can be highly effective and it is believed to provide a better opportunity and environment for learning and teaching.

It is hard to engage EFL learners in writing due to insufficient motivation, anxieties, afraid of committing errors or lack of idea to produce a good writing (Cited in Chua, Yunus & Suliman, 2019), their spelling or their potential to make sentences and paragraphs. A way of provoking students' engagement with writing is to encourage them to write to each other and this could be done by employing social media as writing platform (Cited in Chua, Yunus & Suliman, 2019).

The popularity of social media sites has motivated social communication and engagement at an unprecedented scale. These encompass improving relationship, enhancing motivation in learning, offering personalized course material, and reinforcing collaboration (Chua, Yunus & Suliman, 2019). This means that social networking activities have the possibility of transforming passive individuals into active learners as they participate in virtual group learning, with less stress and hesitation.

1.3 Integration of Social Media into EFL Writing Classroom

With the increasing number of ICT tools and the increasing number of users, social media is undoubtedly influencing students' language learning skills, particularly their writing (Saad, Yunus, Embi, &MohdYasin, 2014). The rapid evolvement of technology and its effectiveness, researchers claim for the incorporation of social media in the teaching and learning process to develop learners' abilities in writing skills. The appropriate method, technique or media ensure a successful writing process. Previous studies of integrating social media in EFL writing classroom has yielded positive results in learners' writing attitudes, for example, developing language awareness through collaborative writing on social media (Tay& Allen, 2011), enhancing their writing motivation (Chandran, Plaindaren, Pavadai, &Yunus, 2019) and building confidence in learning ESL writing (Yuk, Yunus&Suliman, 2019).

The integration of social media in writing activities promotes successful interactions among both teacher-students and student-student. At the university, students often write only for the

teacher but when they share their writing on the social media, they make more efforts into writing (Yuk, Yunus&Suliman, 2019). Therefore, this shows that social media enhances learners' motivation and self-worth towards writing.

2 Methodology

This section displays the research design of the study, followed by the procedures of data analysis, data collection method and the main results. The findings of the survey will be presented, and followed by some conclusions and recommendations.

2.1 Research Design

The research design of this study is quantitative. A quantitative survey study was carried out by distributing online questionnaire to seven teen respondents. The items in the questionnaire served a purpose of exploring students' perception of utilizing various types of social media in promoting writing skills among second year students of English at Skikda University. The concern of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of social media as a tool to promote writing. The researcher believes that social media promotes writing skills among University students of English by fostering and encouraging them to write in English when they are using social media.

2.2 Data Collection Procedures

An online survey questionnaire developed by the researcher was used as the primary tool to gather data of the respondents' perception on the use of social media to promote writing skills among second year students of English at the University of 20 Aout 1955-Skikda- .

2.3 Data Collection Method

The questionnaire comprised of three parts, the first part highlighted students' access to ICT tools and how frequent they use social media, and the second part is to discover the purposes behind students' use of social media and their teachers' use of ICT tools in the teaching process. Next, the third part was expected to be able to explore students' perceptions on using English in writing on social media. The survey questionnaire was distributed to second year students of English respectively. The researcher gathered the result obtained, which were computed and further analysed and will be explained below.
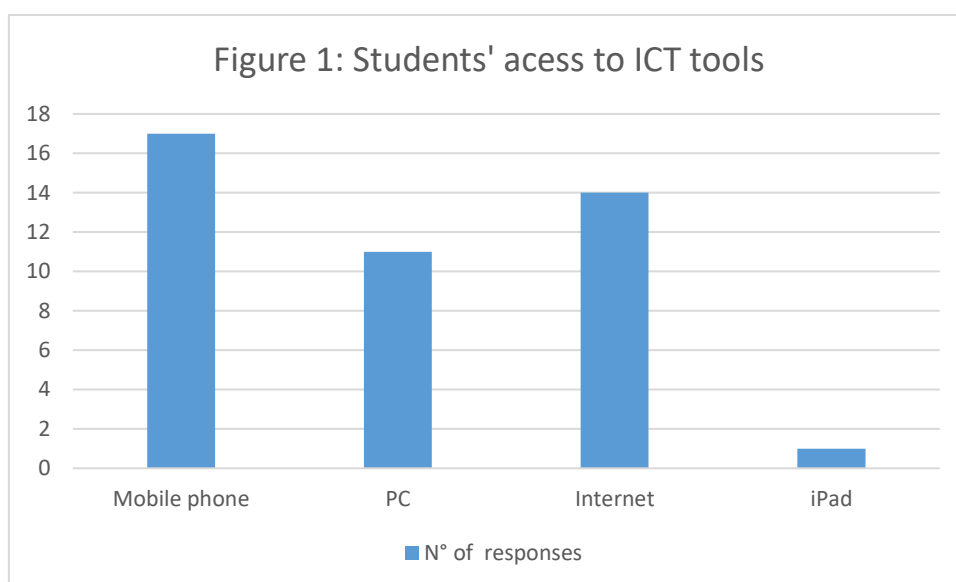
3Findings and Discussions

3.1Results

Part one: Students' access to ICT tools

1- Do you have access to the following ICT tools? You can select more than one choice

Table 1: Students' access to ICT tools

| ICT tools	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Mobile phone	17	100%
PC	11	64.71%
Internet	14	82.35%
iPad	1	5.88%

Figure 1: Students' acess to ICT tools

Based on Table 1, it is noted that all respondent has access to a Mobile phone compared to other electronic devices like a PC (64.71%) or iPad (5.88%). This is probably because the students prefer smartphone as it is sleek and easier to carry compared to the big size of computers and IPad,thus, making it the most accessible device among the students. Even though 82.35% of them has regular access to the Internet at home, all of them admitted using social media on a daily basis. The remaining 17.65% of the studentsmight not have a steady Internet connection as their residential area is probably in more rural areas compared than others in which internet connection is scarcely available. Therefore, it is suggested that most of the respondent is familiar with the use of social media.

2-How much time do you spend on social media?

Table 2: Time spent by students on social media

Time	N° of responses /17	Percentage/100%
1hour daily	1	5.88%
2-3 hoursdaily	3	17.65%
4-5 hoursdaily	12	70.59%
weekly	1	5.88%

Figure 2: Time spent by students on Social Media
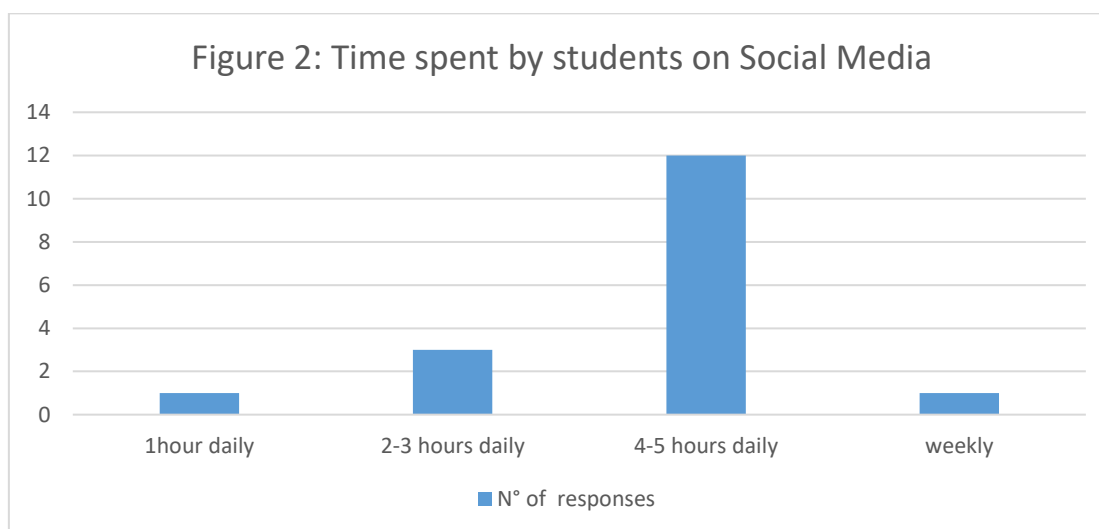
The participants were asked about their social media usage daily. Table 2 shows how frequent the participants used social media on daily basis. As the table indicates, all participants use social media daily. Among the participants, one student (5.88%) stated that he uses social media one hour a day. At the same time, 3(17.65) of the participants claimed that they spend 2-3 hours on social media per day. The result for 4-5 hours a day was 12(70.59%) participants, which was the highest among the answers. The last option was chosen by only one student (5.88%) for those who use social media weekly.

Part two: Teachers' and students' use of social media in the teaching/learning process

3-Why do you use social media? And for what purpose?

Table 3: Purposes behind students' use of social media

Purpose	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Socializing	5	29.41%
Entertainment	11	64.71%
Sharing	1	5.88%
Learning	0	0%
Anyother	0	0%

Figure 3: Purposes behind students' use of Social Media
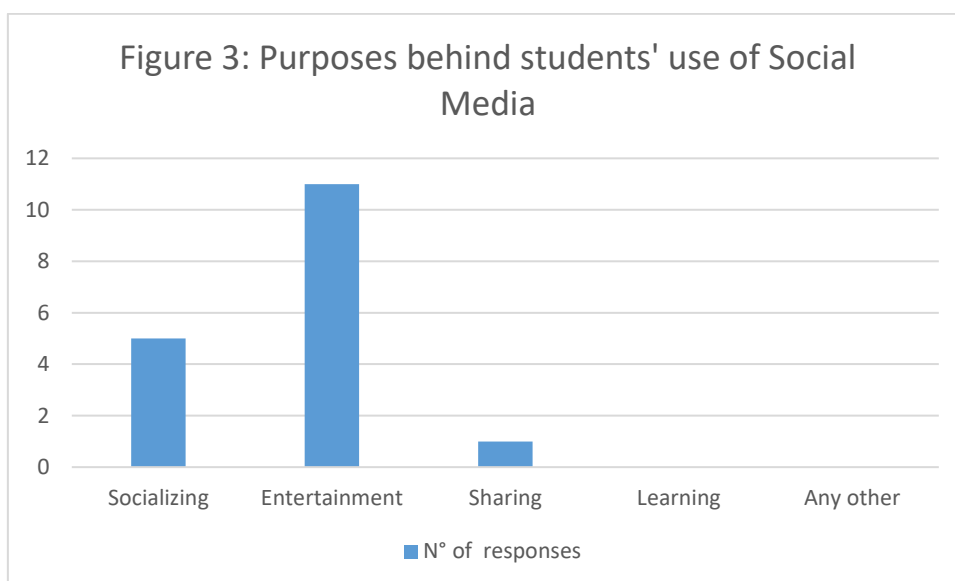
It was found that respondents use social media for various purposes. Most of the participants, 11(64.71%), claimed they use social media for the purpose of entertainment. In contrast, the fewest (5.88%) indicated that they use social media for sharing (Photos and Videos). In addition, 29.41% stated they use social media to chat with others (Socializing). No one of the participants uses social media learning. Figure 3 demonstrates these preferences.

4-Do your teachers use Facebook or any other social media for teaching purposes in the class?

Table 4: Students' opinion about their teachers' use of SM in the classroom

Yes/No	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Yes	14	82.35%
No	3	17.65%

Figure 4: Students' opinion about their teachers' use of SM in the classroom
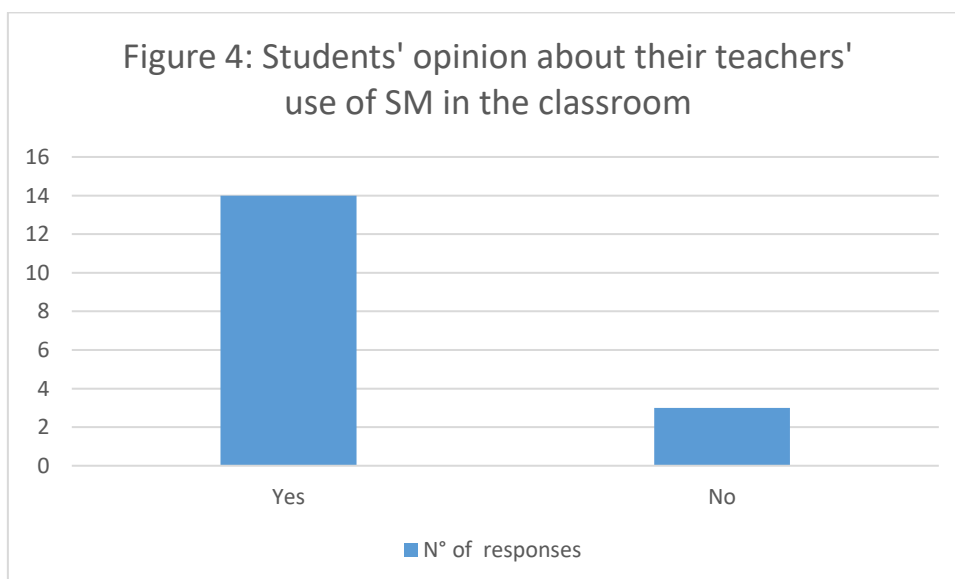
As shown in table 4, 82.35% of students are of the opinion that their teachers use Facebook and other social media for teaching purposes in classroom.

5-Do you think social media can facilitate to resolve educational and professional issues adequately and timely?

Table 5: Students' opinion about the efficiency of SM on educational and professional issues

Yes/No	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Yes	16	94.12%
No	1	5.88%

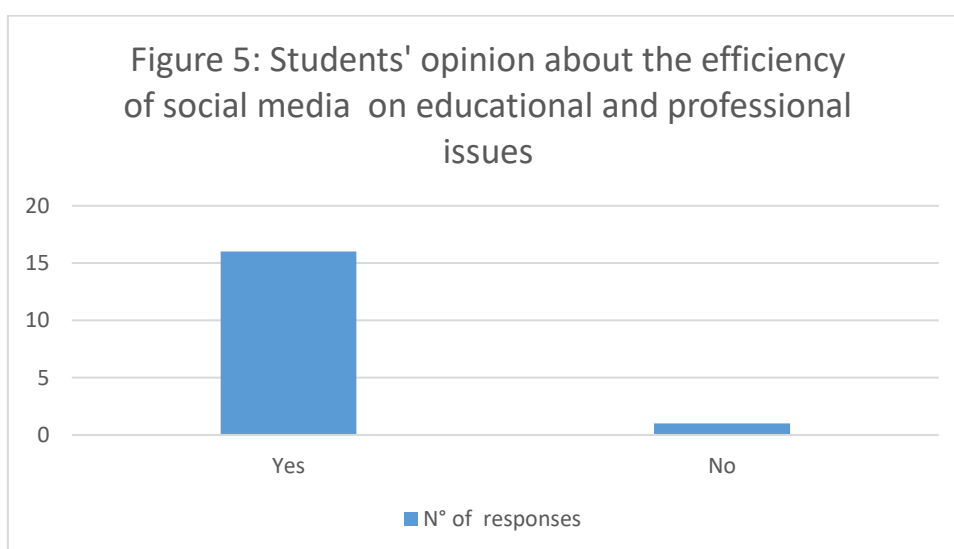Figure 5: Students' opinion about the efficiency of social media on educational and professional issues

Table 5 shows that 94.12% of students believe that the use of social media can be an effective tool to resolve different educational and professional issues adequately and timely.

6-Do you use social media for sharing educational materials e.g. presentation, handouts, timetable, etc.?

Table 6: Students' use of SM for sharing educational materials

Yes/No	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Yes	14	82.35%
No	3	17.65%

Figure 6: Students' use of SM for sharing educational materials
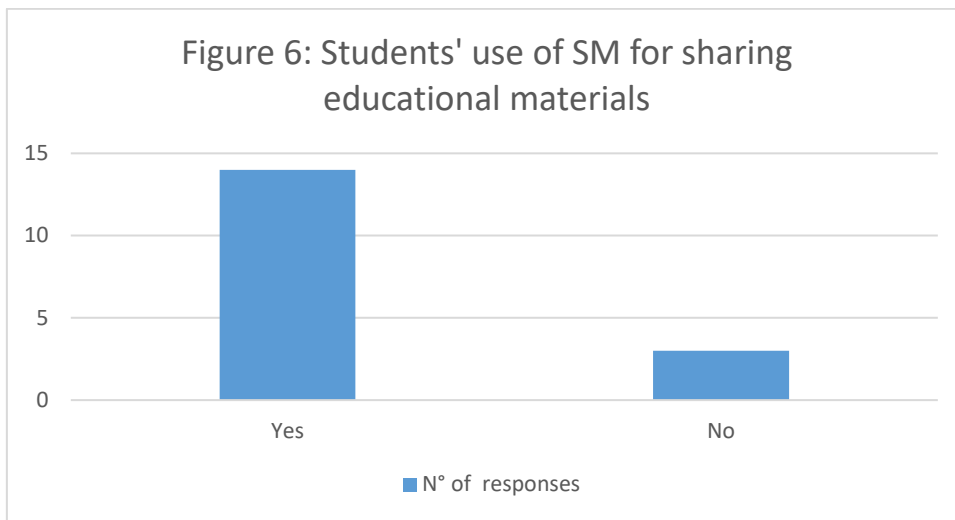
As it is shown in table 6, a high percentage of students at the University (82.35 %) use social media for sharing different educational materials like presentations, handouts, timetable, etc.

Part three: Students' perceptions on using English in writing on social media

7-I prefer English when using social media.

Table 7: Students' preference of English when using social media

Rate	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Stronglyagree	9	52.94%
Agree	5	29.41%
Moderatelyagree	2	11.76%
Disagree	1	5.88%
Stronglydisagree	0	0%

Figure 7: Students preference of English when using Social Media
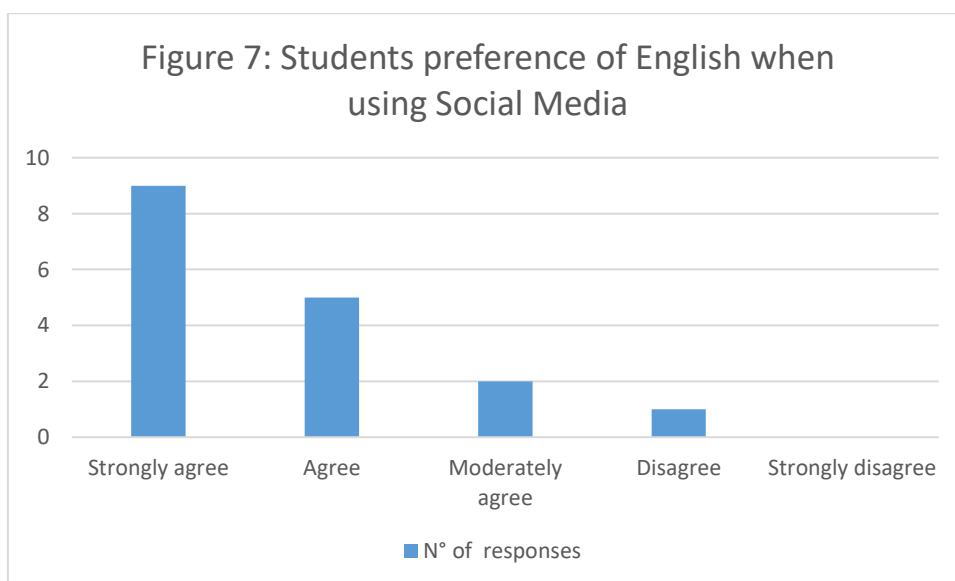
From table 7, It is clearer that the use of English in writing was frequent among students even when they were on SM. Nine respondents (52.94%) strongly agree that they prefer English when using SM. In addition, five respondents (29.41%) agree about their preference of using English on SM. However, only two students (11.76%) moderately agree, and one student (5.88%) revealed that they do not prefer English to write on SM.

8-I read what I have written to see if it is good before I post on SM.

Table 8: Students' reading of their writing before posting on social media

Rate	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Stronglyagree	8	47.06%
Agree	4	23.53%
Moderatelyagree	3	17.65%
Disagree	2	11.76%
Stronglydisagree	0	0%

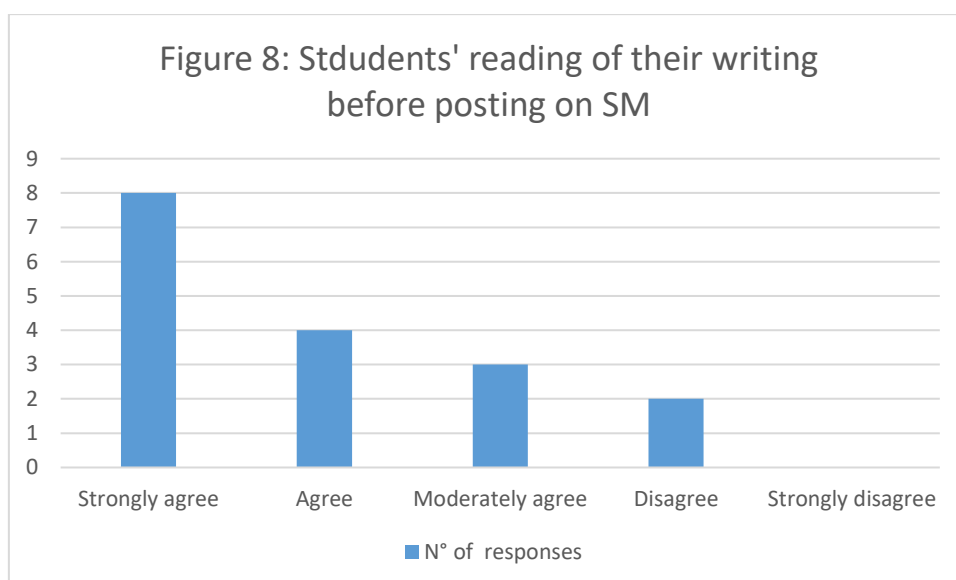Figure 8: Stdudents' reading of their writing before posting on SM

Table 8 indicates that students read what they had written to see if it was good before they posted it on SM. As stated in the result, 47.06% of participants strongly agree that they read what they have written before they post on SM, and 23.53% agree on that. However, 17.65% moderately agree, and only 11.76% disagree and do not read what they have written before they post on SM.

9-I am aware of punctuation and spelling when I write on SM.

Table 9: Students' awareness of spelling and punctuation when writing on social media

Rate	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Stronglyagree	5	29.41%
Agree	3	17.65%
Moderatelyagree	5	29.41%

Disagree	4	23.53%
Stronglydisagree	0	0%

Figure 9: Students' awareness of spelling and punctuation when writing on SM
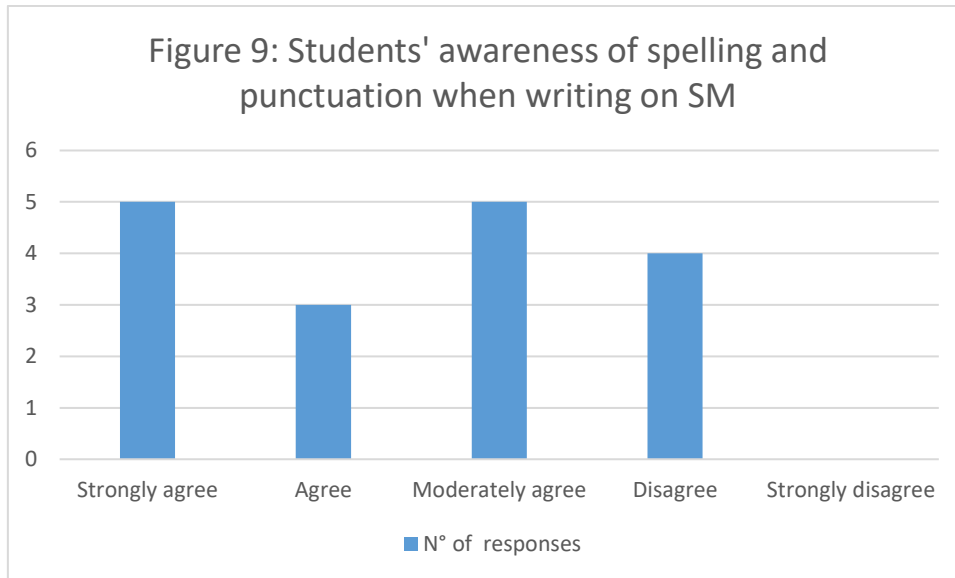
As it is shown in table 9, 29.41% of respondents strongly agree and perceive themselves as aware of spelling and punctuation in writing on SM. In addition, 17.65% agree on that, and 29.41% moderately agree. However, 23.53% of students strongly disagree and perceive themselves as unconscious about spelling and punctuation when they write on SM.

10-Social media gives ideas to write more in English.

Table 10: Students' opinion about SM influence on their writing in English

Rate	N° of responses/17	Percentage/100%
Stronglyagree	6	35.29%
Agree	10	58.82%
Moderatelyagree	1	5.88%
Disagree	0	0%
Stronglydisagree	0	0%

Figure 10: Student's opinion about SM influence on their writing in English
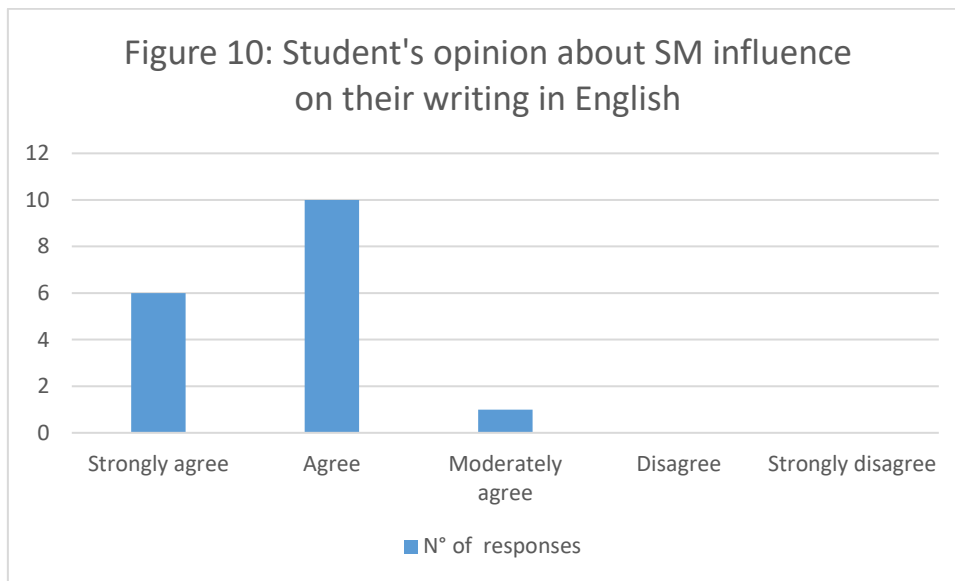
In order to explore students' perceptions apropos the impact social media exerts on their academic writing, students were asked if they think social media use, in general, benefit them academically in writing. The overwhelming majority said that social media does indeed benefit them academically. Table 10 demonstrates that 58.82% of the participants agree that social media gives ideas to write more in English, and 35.29% of them strongly agree, but only one student moderately agree on that.

3.2 Findings

Results have noted that the students have reasonable access to ICT, the Internet and using social media on a daily basis. The study also specified the reasons for using social media. Majority of the respondents believe that the use of social media is found to be useful in assisting writing skills. The results also revealed that students use social media to share educational materials such as handouts, timetables, and presentations.

The overall results of the questionnaire showed that all the students have exposure and experience in using social media. Thus, it should be no problem for the educators to incorporate social media platform in learning writing among EFL University students. Teachers should look into adopting the features from ICT tools such as: YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp in choosing the right leaning-writing platform for students so that they can access to it and learn writing skill at ease.

Significantly, social media have positive outcomes on writing ability when students use it for academic purposes. University students show mindful awareness and healthy attitudes towards using social media in enhancing written communication skills.

4 Recommendations

A successful integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) paves the way for the delivery of quality teaching and learning. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate web-based technologies in and out of the classroom and thus engage students in online

educational activities that enhance students' writing skills. EFL teachers are advised to depart from traditional pedagogical methods in favour of a digital method that would increase students' writing abilities. It is also suggested that the teaching and learning of writing skills could either be conducted in fully online or in blended setting.

Students are recommended to develop a daily writing practice and good habits for productive relationships with online community members willing to improve English language and writing skills through social media and available ICT technologies. Students should learn how to make a good use of social media, such as doing group discussions in preparation for exams, having discussions on class assignments, and most important of all decreasing the usage of informal style while texting in chat rooms.

Conclusion

This study quantitatively explored the use of social media by university students using an online questionnaire. Inconsistency was found in the literature on the impacts of social media on English language learning. However, it was discovered that social media is used extensively around the globe by all people and EFL learners. This study was designed to discover whether social media affects university students of English writing skill. The results indicate that university students of English use social media extensively in their daily lives; They use social media for various purposes, socializing, entertainment, chat, and also for sharing educational materials such as, presentations, handouts, timetables, etc. To conclude, it can be said that with the advancement in technology language classes should be upgraded by incorporating social media with traditional classroom practices in order to motivate and engage students in this growing digital world.

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III. ICTs and Language Learning

Reading and writing with ICTs: Teachers' perceptions

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Abstarct

Technology is the marked print of this age as Information and communication tools are spread all over the world and approximately all families do use them on a daily basis. Education is not an exception especially with the wide spread of the COVID 19 pandemic; technology becomes the only possible solution to guarantee learning. Reading and writing are two intertwined literacy skills as the type of reading affects the quality of writing. In the past, with traditional ways of learning and teaching, teachers were suffering while correcting their students written assignments and even their exam papers. The focus, then, is on investigating reading and writing in relation to ICTs with a special interest in teachers' perceptions. Therefore, a questionnaire was used as a research tool with teachers from Annaba and Guelma universities. The results showed that teachers are aware of the significance of reading for writing and explained the different ICTs that might be used to develop these literacy skills in the most effective way..

**Keywords :** macro skills, micro skills, ICT, reading, writing

Introduction

Information and communication technology (ICT) is the marked print of this age. They are spread all over the world and almost every house possesses internet and at least a smart phone. With the outrageous spread of COVID 19, confinement was emergency measure all over the world. ICT solved the problem of isolation and guaranteed the continuation of work from home. This situation raised our curiosity to investigate teachers' perception of ICTs role in developing learners' reading skills and writing skills. These skills are interrelated and it is believed that a good reader makes a good writer. Then the question is : " How do teachers perceive the role of ICTs in developing the reading and the writing skills? It is hypothesized that teachers' are aware of the significance of ICTs in teaching and even learning English as foreign language and they do use ICTs in reading and writing. In order to investigate the research question, a questionnaire was used as a research tool. In fact, this article aims at investigating teachers' perceptions of ICTs use in reading and writing in addition to raising teachers' awareness through the questionnaire of the need to rethink their practice to match the 21st century requirements.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Reading

Reading is not just focusing one's eyes on a text; Yang (2014) explains that reading is about understanding written texts that involves perception and thought. Hence, it consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Cameron (2001) further clarifies that the whole process of reading starts with the visual recognition of symbols, phonological information, and semantic information as shown in the following figure:

Figure 1: The Integration of Information in Reading a Text (Cameron, 2001, p. 125)
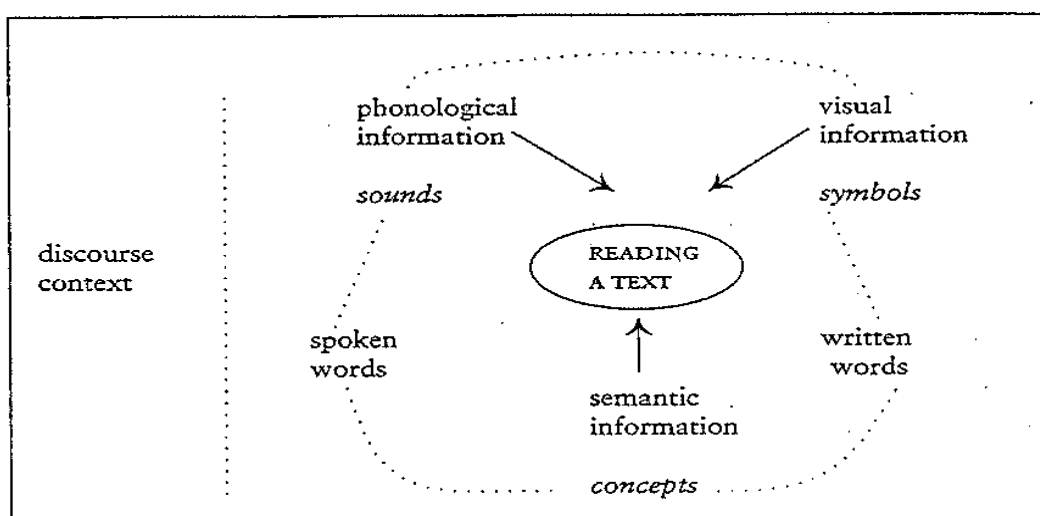
Davis (2011, p. 4) deals with reading comprehension by focusing on certain information and processing strategies. In the one hand, information is first based on **Semantic information** as it refers to the meaning gained from the words or images. 'Does what I have read make sense?' Second, **Syntactic information** denotes the grammatical structure with parts of speech, word order and tenses 'Does what I have read sound right?' Third, **Visual and graphophonic information** indicates the features of the letters and words and conventions of print. 'Does what I have read look right?'On the other hand, the processes can be described as follows:

1) **Attending and searching:** focusing attention on particular letters and letter clusters and drawing on knowledge of letter–sound relationships; identifying words they already know; looking for information in illustrations and diagrams; using analogies, e.g. their knowledge of familiar words to work out new words.

2)**Anticipating/predicting:** drawing on letter–sound knowledge; decoding strategies; awareness of patterns in text; using detail in illustrations and diagrams; using prior knowledge.

3)**Cross-checking and confirming:** drawing on meaning from text; looking at patterns in text; using illustrations and word knowledge to check and confirm; using re-reading strategy to check and confirm.

4) **Self-correcting:** thinking about what they are reading and the meaning of what they have read and self-correcting when needed (Davis, 2011p.4).

Küçükoğlu (2013) refers to the following reading strategies that assure effective reading (p.710- 711):

- *Predicting*: In order to be a good reader, learners should set a goal for their reading; predicting helps the reader set a purpose for their reading.
- *Visualizing*: Visualization requires the reader to construct an image of what is read
- *Making Connections*: By makingconnections, the learners can activate their prior knowledge and connect the ideas in the text to their own experiences
- *Summarizing*: The process of summarization requires the reader to distinguish the main ideas from the supporting ideas. Distinguishing the related knowledge from the unrelated ones is another point in the summarizing process. Summarizing is a strategy which helps the students to organize the ideas even in the long reading passages which are usually perceived as threat for the students.
- *Questioning*: Readers can use the questioning before, during, and after reading. In this strategy, the students return to the text throughout the reading process to find the answers to the questions asked by the teacher before, during and after the reading.
- *Inferring*: Inferring refers to reading between the lines. It is the basis to draw conclusions, make predictions, identify underlying themes, use information to create meaning from text.

Duke, Pearson, Strachan and Billman (2011) see the "teacher in reading as the tour guide ensuring that students stay on course, pausing to make sure they appreciate the landscape of understanding, and encouraging the occasional diversion" (p.52). They focus on ten essential elements of effective reading comprehension instruction that research suggests every teacher should engage in to foster and teach reading comprehension:

1. Build disciplinary and world knowledge.
2. Provide exposure to a volume and range of texts.
3. Provide motivating texts and contexts for reading.
4. Teach strategies for comprehending.
5. Teach text structures.
6. Engage students in discussion.
7. Build vocabulary and language knowledge.
8. Integrate reading and writing.
9. Observe and assess.
10. Differentiate instruction.

Moreover, Davis (2011, p.7) refers to metacognitive strategy instruction which is an approach to teaching and learning that focuses on providing explicit instruction and feedback about how and when to use strategies to support learning. It includes:

- Metacognition, prior knowledge and making connections.
- The regular integration of formative assessment with teaching and learning
- Explicit strategy instruction through group and peer-assisted teaching approaches
- Deliberate opportunities for students to talk and learn about learning
- A strong recognition of the importance of motivation and engagement of learners (p.7).

1.2. Writing

For Cheung (2016), "writing competence is about composing an effective piece of written work to fulfill a specific purpose" (p. 4). The writer should consider the purpose, the audience, the genre and the context of writing. Brown (2004, p. 221) offers a list of micro and macro skills of writing that concentrates on both form and function of language as shown in the following table designed by the researcher.

Table 1: Brown's (2004) Writing Micro and Macro Skills (Designed by the researcher)

Micro skills	*Macro skills*
1. Producing graphemes and orthographic patterns of English	1. use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse
2. Producing writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose	2. Appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written texts according to form and purpose
3. Produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order patterns	3. Convey links and connections between events, and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification
4. Using acceptable grammatical systems (e.g. tenses, agreement, patterns, and rules)	4. Distinguish between literal and implied meaning when writing
5. Expressing a particular meaning in different grammatical forms	5. Correctly convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text
6. Using cohesive devices in written discourse	6. Develop and use a battery of writing

	strategies, such as accurately assessing the audience's interpretations, using prewriting devices, writing with fluency in the first drafts, using paraphrases and synonyms, soliciting peer and instructor feedback, and using feedback for revising and editing.

The micro and the macro skills of writing have a crucial role to play for more effective writing. Brown (2004) argues that they aid teachers to specify the final basic norms of an assessment procedure. Furthermore, Starkey (2004) highlights that effective writing is tied to the basic elements as organization, clarity, coherence, word choice, and mechanics (grammar, capitalization, and punctuation). Cheung (2016) believes that writing is a complex activity and understanding this complexity is the key to effective teaching of writing. She adds "It is important that we explicitly teach students the thinking processes in planning, organizing, writing, and revising their essays" (p.14). Then, she suggested the following pedagogical principles:

a. Teachers need to explain the purpose of writing to the students through activities requiring learners to identify the purpose of writing -through providing model texts.

b. Writing lessons would address the knowledge-transformation approach to writing: Explicitly teach students the thinking processes in planning, organizing, writing, and revising the essay using the knowledge-transformation approach to writing. In addition, apply class activities that raise students' awareness of the differences between the information-focused approach and the knowledge-transformation approach to writing

c. Second language writers' writing performance can be enhanced by understanding coherence in a broader sense. Teach the features of a coherent text at a discourse level and make distinction between coherence and cohesion.

d. Writing is a complex activity: Teach student that writing is a non-linear process involving many stages, not limited to conceptualizing, formulating, reading and revising. Recognize that students will encounter difficulties during the writing processes and plan group activities that heighten students' awareness of the nature of writing. Help students develop an understanding that pre-writing, drafting, and revising cannot be separated from each other into neat independent stages (pp. 14-15)

1.3. Reading, Writing and ICT

According to Cameron (2001), literacy skills include being able to read and write different texts for different purposes (p.124). Katherine, Becker, Rowe, and Pearson (2016) define literacy as " the process of using reading, writing, and oral language to extract, construct, integrate, and critique meaning through interaction and involvement with multimodal texts in the context of socially situated practices" (p.7). For Bazerman (1980), "

The connection between what a person reads and what the person writes seems so obvious as to be truistic" (p.656). Besides, Elbow (1993) asserts that readers are the best writers. Hadis, Awang and Manvender (2015,) see that meaning creation is the production of a close negotiation between reading on one hand and writing on the other (p. 1117)

According to Ghani, Mahmood, Halim, and Rajnidra (2014), the new era of technology led to a new form of learning. They explain

> The traditional way of reading is now being replaced by interactive reading whereby buttons on the computer screen leads a reader from one page to another. A mouse cursor on the other hand, enables the reader to navigate through the text; choosing the information he needs and discarding those that are irrelevant. An electronic text reader can also change and modify the layout of the text or the presentation of the screen according to his personal preference. This style of reading is called electronic literacy (p. 15)

The concept of electronic literacy also refers to texts produced by electronic gadgets such as the computer. Electronic texts are different in nature from the conventional print based texts. They add that "electronic text enables the reader to jump between two consecutive pages in a non-linear fashion; this concept is called hypertextuality" (p. 15).

2. The Study

2.1. Research method

In order to answer the research question of "How do teachers perceive the role of ICTs in developing the reading and the writing skills? And test the hypothesis that teachers are aware of the significance of ICTs in teaching and even learning English as foreign language and they do use ICTs in reading and writing. A questionnaire was administered to written expression teachers from Badji Mokhtar University-Annaba and 8 May 1945-Guelma. 25 teachers of written expression were involved in this study.

2.2. Description of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into five sections. The first section is 'general information about the teachers: their age, degree, experience as university teacher and experience as written expression teacher. The second section is about the writing skill which considers teachers' appreciations of their students' level in writing, the difficulties these last encounter in writing in addition to the type of teaching approach teachers' adopt in written expression. The third section is about the reading skill considering teachers' opinion about the importance of the reading skill, the opportunities and the strategies they provide their learners' with in order to read in their sessions, their perception of the effect of reading on writing and the type of reading tasks they integrate in their sessions. Section four is about reading and writing with ICTs. It includes questions about teachers' use of ICTs in their sessions, the type of ICTs they use, the purpose of using ICTs, their appreciations of ICTs use in reading and writing, the

benefits of ICTs in developing reading and writing. The last section is about suggestion of how teachers use ICTs effectively in reading and writing.

2.3. Analysis of Questionnaire

Teachers are between the age of 30 and 35 years old. 84% have the magister degree while 12% the master degree and 4% Doctorate degree. 56% have an experience of 6 to 10 years of teaching English at the university. 72% of them have the experience of teaching written expression from 1 to 3 years, 20% from 4-6 years and 8%percent more than 6 years. 88% of the teachers confirm that the level of their students in written expression is average.

The problems students face in writing can be ranked as follows:

1. Mechanics (grammar, punctuation and capitalization)
2. Planning their writing
3. Coherence
4. Cohesion

84% confirm that they use the process approach while teaching written expression. For reading, all teachers affirm that it is a significant skill as they al provide their students with opportunities to read in their sessions and provide students with some strategies as: as mind mapping, skimming, scanning, predicting, paraphrasing, questioning, using prior knowledge, intensive and extensive readings, chunking the texts into parts, . They also assure the importance of reading in developing the writing skill.

In dealing with the section on ICT use with the two other skills, 48% of the teachers affirm that they rarely use ICTs in their sessions as shown in the following figure:

Figure 1: Frequency of ICT use in the written expression session
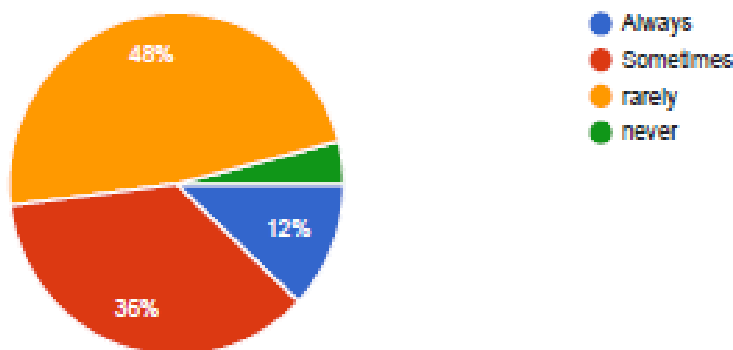
Written expression teachers opted for the following ICT tools: Smart phones, Internet, datashow, computer and IPod. All teachers confirm they use ICTs inside and outside the classroom for the following reasons:

1. To find model texts
2. To use e-dictionary for definition, synonyms and antonyms
3. To send/share e-version of the lesson to the students.
4. To motivate students to use ICTs in their Learning
5. To use phone camera to take picture of texts or lessons
6. To use applications to edit, check then submit their work.
7. To ease access to lessons/information/dictionary and save time and energy.
8. To save e-books and articles

96% of the teachers see that ICT can be used as effective teaching tools in improving learners' reading skill. They advance the following reasons:

- Practicing reading and listening via those tools.
- ICTs provide learners with opportunity to read anytime anywhere and to find any reading material intended.
- The multiple type of references and resources encourage students to read
- Reading leads to writing Giving students a chance to read different types of writing and helping them learn how academic writing should be
- There are software, applications, and extensions which can help them get familiar with the meaning of difficult words , so that they extend their vocabulary knowledge
- If someone reads for them and show the strategies of reading
- They can have reading tasks done on their Smart phones then shared with the teachers
- Cheap and easy tools to read and share written texts (sometimes with an indexed dictionary to check words meaning).
- Using technology facilitates the accessibility of better learning process for both students and teachers.
- Students have access to different types of texts and information. They have the chance to read topics of interest, to learn more about the world, they have the possibility to check their comprehension of what they read, to enlarge their vocabulary, they have access to dictionaries, they can read some texts accompanied by CD ROM.
- When they can carry their readings on their smartphones, they can be more comfortable reading anywhere, anytime.
- Reading will be easier through the available access to the same sources of lecture. Teachers will no longer depend on handouts or ask students to make copies. Reading an article for example in the class by using ICTs will give importance to understanding and analysis rather than just reading.
- Using a data show for example to practice visual learning as graphic organizer and mind maps to make the students draw a mind picture and develop their reading skill.

Hence, ICTs can be effective tools in improving learners' reading skills as they download different types of electronic readings (ebooks, articles, lessons, assignments, novels) on their smart phones/ computers/IPods where these last are accessible whenever needed by the learner. In addition, ICTs provide the opportunity to enhance the reading skills through the use of different applications with different types of note taking methods, highlighting besides e-dictionary. One of

the teachers advances that ICTs may enlarge learners' vocabulary repertoire and improve their writing skill. ICTs provide opportunities to interact with the text in an innovative and creative way.

Likewise, all the teachers affirm that ICTs can be used as effective tools to improve learners' writing as writing through word processor helps students with correct spelling as the wrong spelling is easily detected. In addition, wilkis and writing platforms do improve learners' writing skill. Indeed, with grammar and spelling checkers, students have more chances to improve their writings. Since rich vocabulary is necessary for an effective piece of writing, Internet and vocabulary applications are of great help. Besides, students are motivated to use ICTs, and this will engender their curiosity and interest in reading through these tools and discovering different genres of writing. ICTs are also efficient in developing learners' autonomy through reading and writing outside the classroom.

ICTs are part of innovative teaching approaches as video conferencing, workshops, and students can edit a written assignment together from different places. They also solve problems related to writing difficulties by providing quizzes. One teacher advances: "Easy to organize ideas using many structures, easy to omit or add information, easy to read in order to edit. They have lots of options concerning grammar correction". Then they facilitate the writing process: planning, drafting, editing and publishing.

According to the teachers, in order to use ICTs to enhance their learners' reading and writing skills, they need:

- To be Updated to latest technology and integrate it in their teaching techniques
- To have the willingness to be lifelong learners.
- To master many ICT tools and try to integrate them very often in their teaching practices.
- To be involved in training to enhance the teachers' skills in order to use these tools more.
- To have Data show, high internet speed, and Laptop for each student
- To provide the needed ICTs by the authorities such as computer, internet, printer and data show.

However, they highlight that even with ICTs; teachers' role is primordial as "nothing can change the crucial role of a good teacher". Besides, both teachers and learners need to be involved in ICT training by professionals for an effective use of this last. In addition, teachers need to focus on reading and writing as one of the teachers advanced: "Reading and writing are interrelated literacy skills that every student is in need to master, hence they must be considered by schools and researchers in order to develop new teaching procedures at different levels". Therefore, another teacher sends this call to be innovative in teaching written expression as follows:

> Though I believe that there is no tool replaces hands and papers when it comes to writing, I see that allowing students to move from a pen and paper towards the use of ICT gives new possibilities of interaction and opens better relationships between teachers and students, mainly because students feel comfortable using tools they know well. ICTs are indispensable nowadays, especially in these dire times when we find no means for teaching and learning other than online platform. I like the topic and answering the questions.

Although all teachers insist of the integration of ICTs in the written expression module, one teacher is calling for the cautious use of ICT: "Using ICT in classrooms needs to be to certain level. Teachers must give students other activities in order to intense their individual efforts without resorting to such assistance".

2.3. Pedagogical Implications

The questionnaire answered the research question "How do teachers perceive the role of ICTs in developing the reading and the writing skills? It showed that the written expression teachers are aware of the significance of ICTs in teaching and even learning English as a foreign language and they do use ICTs in reading and writing. All the teachers insist on the integration of ICTs in teaching reading and writing because it becomes a necessity with the outbreak of COVID19.

In fact, the word' illiterate' has been redefined! It is no more related the person who does not read and write but to the person who is unable to use technology. This explains why teachers ask for teachers' and learners' training on educational technologies. The training will develop their awareness and their skills in using ICTs to improve the reading and the writing skill. Then, no way out from ICT integration but with caution as ICTs will never replace teacher's role, they just facilitate his role.

Therefore, if teachers are aware of the significance of ICTs in their teaching they will transmit this to their students. The teacher is the model for his students, and this model should develop up-to-date skills in himself and in his learners. However, in some situations, the students – the digital generation- can help in ameliorating teachers' skills. Therefore, ICTs with internet are indispensible nowadays in order to download applications, connect to writing platforms, and integrate in online reading or writing session, all this anytime and anywhere.

Conclusion

To sum up, teachers' questionnaire validated the hypothesis and affirmed that the teachers under investigation are aware of the important role of ICTs in developing the reading and the writing skill. They use different ICT tool inside and outside the classroom. ICTs provide teachers and students alike with infinite sources aiming at developing these literacy skills. Its integration in education becomes a reality and even a necessity as it was the only possible emergency measure during COVID19 that assured the continuity of education during the confinement.

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Proofreading in the Massive Age of Artificial Intelligence: When a Software Replaces a Human Proofreader

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Abstarct

Over the previous two years, artificial intelligence (AI) has made great progress in improving the quality and efficiency of our writing, particularly with the introduction of the language generator GPT-3 (Generative Pre-Trained Transformer). From smarter translation technology to algorithms that can "read" text in images, companies like Microsoft, Google, and NVIDIA can now create perfect-quality texts on any given topic without the need to learn how to use word processor programmes or hire a writer.An additional tool that is getting smarter as a result of AI is the proofreading services tool. The days of basic technologies such as Microsoft Word, Google Docs, and Adobe PDF are coming to an end. Now with AI sophisticated proofreading tools, clearer and more effective content in the minimum possible time can beguaranteed. The purpose of the present research is to assess the effectiveness of three of the most widely used automatic proofreading technologies (Grammarly, ProWritingAid, and Ginger). Furthermore, this study considers whether these proofreading tools could be used as "personal assistants" to help our students improve their writing. For this purpose, we have selected the appropriate text in English: a text written by a first-year EFL student at Batna2 University; it contains specific mistakes, mainly in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence construction. We proofread the text by using the three previous tools. The examination of the gained results showed that proofreading programmes can detect only the most common errors, but when more complex errors appear, they are unable to detect them. However, the same programmes can suggest alternative words or phrases that we can use to expand our vocabulary and improve our writing, and they are both time and cost effecient.

Keywords : artificial intelligence, proofreading software, Grammarly, ProWritingAid, Ginger

1. Introduction

The world is changing faster than we can keep up with it. It is all happening in this age of big data, where artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming a booming domain capable of transforming every aspect of our lives from self-driving cars to making food recommendations. In education, AI has begun producing new learning and teaching solutions that are now undergoing testing in different contexts. In EFL education, for example, the ability of AI to improve the content and efficiency of our writing has advanced significantly over the last two years, particularly with the development of the language generator GPT-3 (Generative Pre-Trained Transformer). From smarter translation technology to algorithms that can "read" text in images, companies like Microsoft, Google, and NVIDIA can now generate "human-like" text using this technology. Another tool that is getting smarter thanks to AI is the proofreading services tool. The days of Microsoft Word's spell checking are coming to an end; therefore, replacing it with new devices from automated proofreading services would make everyone better writers.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Many studies have been done to investigate the impact of proofreading on the effectiveness of our writing style and the clarity of our ideas. Also, there are many articles that discuss the effectiveness, the advantages and disadvantages of using computer software, the reasons to use computer software in the teaching and learning process, and so on (see Razak, Saeed, & Ahmad, 2013; Daniels & Leslie, 2013; Qassemzadeh & Soleimani, 2016). However, the gap here in the EFL literature is, to the researchers' knowledge and literature review, that few studies have been done to test the effectiveness of using proofreading software applications. Therefore, the present paper tries to examine the efficiency of three of the most popular automated proofreading tools (Grammarly, ProWritingAid, and Ginger). The paper, also, looks at the possibility of adopting these proofreading tools as "personal assistants" that could improve our students' writing.

1.2. Research Questions

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives of the study, the following questions need to be investigated:

Question 1. How effective are the most popular automated proofreading tools (Grammarly, ProWritingAid, and Ginger) at improving the writing skill?
Question 2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these proofreading tools (Grammarly, ProWritingAid, and Ginger?

This article starts first with a brief introduction to AI as an important domain in our lives; it reviews AI implementation in education and its use in the writing process. Lastly, findings of the experimental examination we conducted on the three previously mentioned proofreading tools are presented.

2. Literature Review

2.1. A Brief Introduction to Artificial Intelligence

Since its birth in the 1950 influential paper "Machinery and Intelligence", by the 'father of computing sciences' Alan Turning, the field of AI continues to attract interest from governments, businesses and industries. In fact, few technological developments in recent history have been as polarizing as AI. However, in the current decade, buzz terms such as: AI, Machine Learning, Deep Learning and others are sometimes used interchangeably which may create confusions. To avoid this, the following paragraph contains a brief explanation of these concepts, clarifying their differences and showing how they work together.

The expansive goal of artificial intelligence has generated many questions and debates. Most research in AI has focused chiefly on *learning, reasoning, problem solving, perception* and *using language* as the main components of intelligence. Therefore, in this paper, AI is best understood as:

> The ability of a digital computer or computer-controlled robot, endowed with the intellectual processes characteristic of humans, to perform tasks commonly associated with intelligent beings, such as the ability to reason, discover meaning, generalize, or learn from past experience (Copeland, 2021, para. 2).

Artificial intelligence generally falls under two broad categories:*narrow* and *strong*. *Narrow*AI,also called *Weak AI* or *Artificial Narrow Intelligence* (ANI), is all around us, and it isthe most successful realization of AI to date. Narrow AI is trained and focused to perform specific tasks; it includes: Image recognition software, Google search, Self-driving cars, IBM's Watson[1], Siri[2], Alexa[3] and other personal assistants. Whereas *Strong* AI, made up of *Artificial General Intelligence*[4] (AGI) and *Artificial Super Intelligence*[5] (ASI), is a theoretical form of AI where a machine would have an intelligence equaled to humans. It would have a self-aware consciousness that has the ability to learn,solve problems, and plan for the future.In the meantime, the best examples of ASI might be from science fiction, in which super-intelligent robots invade humanity, but experts agree that it is not something we need to worry about anytime soon (Tripathi, 2021).

A few years after AI's birth, in 1959, Arthur Samuel[6] coined the term *Machine Learning*, defining it as "the ability to learn without being explicitly programmed". At its core, Machine learning,which is a subset of AI,is "the study of computer algorithms[7]that allow computer

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[1]IBM Watson is a question answering computer system capable of answering questions posed in natural language

[2] Siri is basically a digital assistant for Apple devices, specifically the iPhone

[3] Alexa is a kind of a home assistant found in Amazon's line of Echo smart home devices

[4] The hypothetical ability of an intelligent agent to understand or learn any intellectual task that a human being cando.

[5] A software-based system with intellectual powers beyond those of humans across an almost comprehensive range of categories and fields of endeavor.

[6](December 5, 1901 – July 29, 1990) was an American pioneer in the field of computer gaming and artificial intelligence.

[7] A series of instructions telling a computer how to transform a set of facts about the world into useful information.

programmes to automatically improve through experience which allows a machine to automatically learn from past data without programming explicitly" (Tom, 2021).Robinson (2018) considers Machine Learning as 'the field of prediction' which enables a computer to use mathematical models of data in order to learn without direct instruction. The computer system, therefore, continues learning and improving on its own, based on experience.

Another widely used term that is also taken as alternative to AI is *Deep Learning*. Deep Learning is an invention of Geoffrey Hinton[8], dated 1986. Basically, Deep Learning is an enhanced version of the Machine Learning which uses a technique that gives it a superior ability to detect even the subtlest patterns. Just like we use our brains to identify patterns and classify various types of information, deep learning algorithms can be taught to accomplish the same tasks for machines, such as image recognition, sound recognition, recommender systems[9], natural language processing etc.

Artificial Intelligence has become widely used across various sectors. Some examples include:

> *Chatbots. A* computer program that simulates human conversation through voice commands or text chats or both. There are a number of synonyms for chatbot, including "talkbot," "bot," "IM bot," "interactive agent" or "artificial conversation entity."
> *Customer service chatbots. T*hese are similar to chatbots, except they can also handle customer complaints.
> *Visual recognition. T*his involves recognizing objects in images. This includes facial recognition, object detection, and image classification.
> *Speech recognition.* This involvestaking audio recordings and turning them into written text. An example of this is the various voice assistants such as Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant, and Cortana.
> *Machine learning.* It isalready defined.
> *Natural Language Processing.* This involves using algorithms that can understand text and spoken words in much the same way human beings can.
> *Recommendation engines. T*hese programs help you find things online based on your preferences. For example, if you search for "best laptops under $1000", Amazon might recommend specific brands.

According to Eurostat[10] (2021), the amount of money invested annually into startup companies working in the AI market worldwide has continuously increased. "In 2020, AI startups attracted around 36 billion U.S. dollars …. Just in the first six months of 2021, this figure reached 38 billion U.S. dollars"; AI is, arguably, the driving technological force of the first half of this century, and will transform almost every industry. Therefore, it should come

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[8](born on December 6th, 1947) is a British-Canadian cognitive psychologist and computer scientist, most noted for his work on artificial neural networks

[9] Algorithms aimed at suggesting relevant items to users (items being movies to watch, text to read, products to buy or anything else depending on industries).

[10]Eurostat (European Statistical Office) is a Directorate-General of the European Commission located in Luxembourg . Eurostat's main responsibilities are to provide statistical information to the institutions of the European Union and to promote the harmonisation of statistical methods across its member states.

as no surprise that this powerful technology has an impact on a field which is as vital as that of the education industry where intelligent tutoring systems, teaching robots, learning analytics dashboards, adaptive learning systems, human-computer interactions, etc. have already been applied in educational practices (Chen, Xie, & Hwang, 2020).

2.2. Artificial Intelligence in Education

According to a report on the Artificial Intelligence Market, between 2017 and 2021, the use of AI in education in the US will grow by 47.5 percent, mainlyduring the COVID 19pandemic which has in no doubt super-charged the need for the education sector to embrace the use of AI in online learning and teaching. This growth is not restricted to the US alone. As stated by the Market Research Engine[11], worldwide AI usage in education is estimated to have an annual growth rate of 45 percent and is predicted to reach $5.80 billion by 2025 (cited in Harper, 2021).

Here are some of the different ways AI is/ will beapplied in education as explained in Harper(Artificial Intelligence in education, 2021, para. 5). First,teachers usually do not just teach. In addition to their classroom management, they spend a lot of time on numerous administrative and organizational tasks. Such as, grading tests, organizing resources and materials for lectures, evaluating homework, filing the necessary paperwork, etc. Therefore, AI, with its automate grading systems, its various online lesson planning tools and many others, will automate these tasks for teachers to have more time to do their primary work of teaching.

Second, AI offers a universal access for all students.Through AI many tools, educational classrooms can become globally available to all students; even those who speak different languages or those withhearing or visual impairment. Students who are sick and absent from schools, students who want to learn a subject unavailable in their school, or who need to learn at different levels, AI can break the silos and offer them these opportunities. Third, AI will allow a differentiated and individualized learning. We all agree that it is impossible for teachers, who oftenhave more than 30 students in each class, to manageeach individual. Therefore, AI can ensure that educational software is personalized for them through programmes that already exist, such as adaptive learning software and games. For example, companies such as Content Technologies and Carnegie Learning are currently developing intelligent instruction design and digital platforms that use AI to provide learning, testing and feedback to students from pre-K to college level (Marr, 2018). These systems emphasize each individual's needs, identify gaps in their knowledge and repeat subjects they have not mastered.

Fourth, AI carries the advantage to make learning and teaching more interesting than ever beforeand more comfortable for both teachers and learners. This may happen through the creation of smart content, such as information visualization, andthe creation of virtual human-like characters(avatars) who can think, act, react, and interact in a natural way. Fifth, AI can

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[11]Market Research Engine is a research-centric company that offers multiple consulting services across several industries.

complement the teacher's work in a classroom to identify some of the weaknesses within the classroom. In education, AI is not meant to replace teachers, yet it is meant to complement them. For example, AI will be able to alert the teacher when some students miss specific questions; the teacher will know he has to reteach the material; hence, this will make him more accountable and adhere to the best teaching practices. Sixth, AI offers students a 24/7 assistance. With AI bots such as Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Google Assistant and Siri, students can get help on any topic at any time of the day. They do not have to wait to meet their teachers in their offices or in the classroomtoanswer their queries.

As AI continues to bring change in the domain of education, it seems there is a fear that human educators can or will be replaced by AI technologies in the coming decade. However,it seems more evident to support the idea that both intelligent systems and humans are needed to manage different aspects of students' academic and social competencies. AI will likely not replace educators but will serve as an invaluable extension of the human expert, helping teachers to more effectively meet the diverse needs of many students simultaneously.

2.3. Writing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

AI is already employed in writing by using the two technologies we introduced earlier, *deep learning* and *natural language processing*. While deep learning tries to simulate the human brain in how it processes data and patterns, natural language processing "attempts to analyze and generate language in a way humans use naturally." (Deborah, 2021, para. 1). From a technology point of view, the AI content generator appears very simple: first, the algorithms learn word definitions, rules of grammar, formats and templates, then they process the data and convert it into text faster than human do. Two years ago, British newspaper *The Guardian* ran an article titled *A robot wrote this entire article. Are you scared yet, human?* written by an AI robot called GPT-3 (Generative Pre-trained Transformer 3). GPT-3, which is an autoregressive language model that uses deep learning to produce human-like text, was fed a short introduction and was instructed to write around 500 words, focusing on why humans have nothing to fear from AI. In response, the AI robot produced eight different essays; it even quoted Mahatma Gandhi in its article. The Guardian picked the best parts of each and ran the edited piece (Biswas, 2021). The Gardian article is not the first AI written work, in fact the world's first-ever AI-written novel ('True Love') was published in Russia by the Russia's SPb publishing companyin 2008. Since then, a rapid revolution in the field of AI and Natural Language Processing is going on.Another example of the capabilities of GPT-3 is its ability to produce pastiches[12] of particular writers. For instance, when given the title, the author's name, and the initial word "It", the AI produced a short story called *The importance of being on Twitter,* written in the style of JeromeK Jerome[13]. Furthermore, GPT-3 can

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[12] A pastiche is a work of visual art, literature, theatre, music, or architecture that imitates the style or character of the work of one or more other artists.

[13] Jerome Klapka Jerome (May 2nd, 1859 – June 14th, 1927). An English writer and humourist, best known for the comic travelogue Three Men in a Boat (1889).

generate any kind of text, including guitar tabs or computer code; it is able to write, itself, a reasonably informative article about GPT-3 or synthesizing text it has found elsewhere on the internet.

There are many different tools (software/ algorithms/ automated assistants/ applications) that can be used for AI writing, and some of them are very simple to use.An AI writing software can use an existing template, make some changes, and add personal elements such as images or videos. Another one can use some recommendations and produce a completely new content. One more software is able to have conversations with the audience, answer questions or solve problems. And an additional AI writing algorithm can check the uniqueness of texts as well as find and correct punctuation, spelling, formatting, and grammar errors, this last tool refers to automated writing proofreading software which is our concern in the present paper.

We all know that proofreading is an essential step in the writing process. When we proofread, we are focusing on finding and correcting errors in writing, grammar, and language. Hence, it helps with the effectiveness of our writing style and the clarity of our ideas. The days of basic tools such as Microsoft Word, Google Docs and Adobe PDF are coming to an end, now with AI sophisticated writing tools, the several automated proofreading algorithms ensure cleaner and more effective content in the minimum possible time (Dinita, 2021). A quick search on google for these automated proofreading tools will give us a long list of applications/ software, some are free; others are not. Examples of these are: Grammarly, Prowriting aid, Copyleaks, Ginger, Copyscape, Writefull, Outwrite, UniCheck, etc. For the purpose of the present paper, we selected only three of them: Grammarly, ProWritingAid, and Ginger, these three tools are considered among the best online proofreading software and tools in 2022 according to many experts and users (Agarwal, 2022; Antosz, 2022; Babcock, 2022; Dinita, 2021; Joannah, 2022; Menon, 2021; Tucker, 2021). According to these experts,*Grammarly, ProWritingAid*, and *Ginger*have gained their top spot due to easy accessibility, cost, smartness, uniqueness, capability, and precision. We will first know more about them before testing their effectiveness.

One of the most noticeable proofreading and grammar software solutions is *Grammarly*. Formed in 2009, this application hosts 20 million-plus active users every day. With its two free and premium options, Grammarly offers a wide range of free online proofreading features: it checks your documents for spelling, structure, grammar mistakes and plagiarism. Furthermore, its AI-powered writing assistant and intuitive interface makes it easy to use as an add-on to Google Chrome, Gmail, Microsoft Word, Outlook, Firefox, Safari, Edge, Facebook, Twitter, Slack, Salesforce and many other popular applications. Its premium version also offers further perks such as: advanced suggestions, plus fluency, word choice, readability scores, formality level and inclusive language. Grammarly is considered best for entry to advanced level writers (Pathak, 2022).

The second proofreading software we will test in the present study is *ProWriting Aid*. Best for fiction/nonfiction authors, bloggers and content writers, students, and business writers, ProWritingAid is an all-in-one solution that includes a grammar checker, style editor,

and writing mentor.It supports MS Outlook, MSWord, Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox, Edge, OpenOffice, Scrivener, and Google Docs. In addition to correcting grammar and spelling errors, this software identifies clichés, redundancies, overused words that make sentence construction awkward and provides summary reports which gives you statistics of your writing (Software Testing Help, 2022).

The third and last online software we will test is *Ginger*. Formed in 2007, Ginger has been using its technology to rectify false words, errors, typos accurately. Being precise, it keeps a detailed look on your paragraph layout, verbs used, phrasing your texts, punctuation, and spellings. Ginger's intelligent grammar and spell checker is used by more than 10 million people worldwide daily (Antosz, 2022). However, unlike Grammarly, this software does not modify your mistakes nor give you explanations. Rather it opts to help you polish your language skills by customized training practices that testified your weaknesses. Another feature of Ginger is the scalable "Ginger Business" plan, which lets you add more members to your account as needed. This is helpful if a blog has multiple authors who could use a self-service proofreading tool (Singla, 2022).Ginger can also translate text in 40 different languages.

In the following sections, we will present details about the experimental examination of the three proofreading software programmes, and the results we gained from comparing these tools to pen and paper proofreading.

3. Research Method

This study is based on an experimental examination of three digital proofreading applications: *Grammarly, ProWritingAid* and *Ginger*. The experiment has been organized in two steps: the first was selecting the appropriate text in English that contained specific mistakes. We preferred that the type of text should be an authentic one, written by a first year EFL student at Batna 2 university. The text received a classical (pen and paper) proofreading (by the author); the number and types of mistakes in the text were defined. The second step was proofreading the same text with the help of the three previous tools. The results obtained from the classical proofreading were compared to those gained via the three software programmes. The purpose of this test was to assess the effectiveness of these online writing assistants. The examination text is given in following paragraph:

"Writing for someone may be seen as a very good thing for expressing their filings, thoughts, ideas, etc. For this kind of people writting process can not be hard, they just can wrote in a words all their ideas about whatever they need to writte. This depends how much we are spent to write something. There are also that type of people that does not like writing they can introduce their feeling while they are tolking on it. Writing can be seen different from each persson. I am using the writing communication process almost every day, specialy when I am doing my homeworks. But as we are in this department I think we should have both writing and verbal comunications. Becaouse places where we can work is to introduced our work to public. Also even if there is any topic that is not related to me I can write for it something after searching it a while." (EFL students, 2021)

It is also important to note that we only tested the **free** versions of the three proofreading tools; the paid versions would certainly propose more advanced features and offers. Furthermore, the tested mistakes were characterized in three types: spelling, grammar and sentence construction (punctuation, missing words and logical understanding of the sentence).

4. Results and Discussion

The students' text was first checked by the author. As it was mentioned earlier, the determined mistakes were characterized in three types: spelling, grammar and sentence construction. The comparison of the first classical proofreading and the automated ones were made according to the number of mistakes identified in the text. The author proofreading is illustrated below.

"Writing for someone may be seen as a very good thing for expressing their filings, thoughts, ideas, etc. For this kind of peoplewritting process can not be hard, they just can wrote in a words all their ideas about whatever they need to writte. This depends how much we are spent to write something. There are also that type of people that does not like writingthey can introduce their feeling while they are tolkingon it. Writing can be seen different from each persson. I am using the writing communication process almost every day, specialy when I am doing my homeworks. But as we are in this department I think we should have both writing and verbal comunications. Becaouse places where we can work is to introduced our work topublic. Alsoeven if there is any topic that is not related to meI can write for it something after searching it a while."

🟡 Spelling mistakes

⬤ Grammatical mistakes

⬤ Sentence construction (punctuation, missing words logical understanding of the sentence)

It can be seen from the text above that in terms of spelling, we found 8 mistakes (*filings, writting, writte, tolking, persson, communications* and *becaouse*). The correct orthography for these words is respectively: feelings, writing, write, talking, person, communications and because.

In the same text, we identified 11 grammatical mistakes. The mistakes were in verb form, agreement or tense; and adverb, article or preposition use. They were: *wrote, a words, are spent, are, that does not, on, different, homeworks, writing, is, to introduced* and *for*. The corresponding correct words are: write, words/ a word, spend, is, who do not, about, differently, homework, written, are, to introduce, about.

The last mistakes found in the same text werethose in sentence construction. We found 12 mistakes, which were: 1 fragment, 5 fused sentences, 2 comma splices, 3 missing words and 1 weak sentence structure.

The mistakes found by the three automated tools, Grammarly, ProWritingAid and Ginger are shown on Figure1, Figure2 and figure3 respectively.

Figure 1. Screenshot of the Mistakes Found by Grammarly Proofreading Software
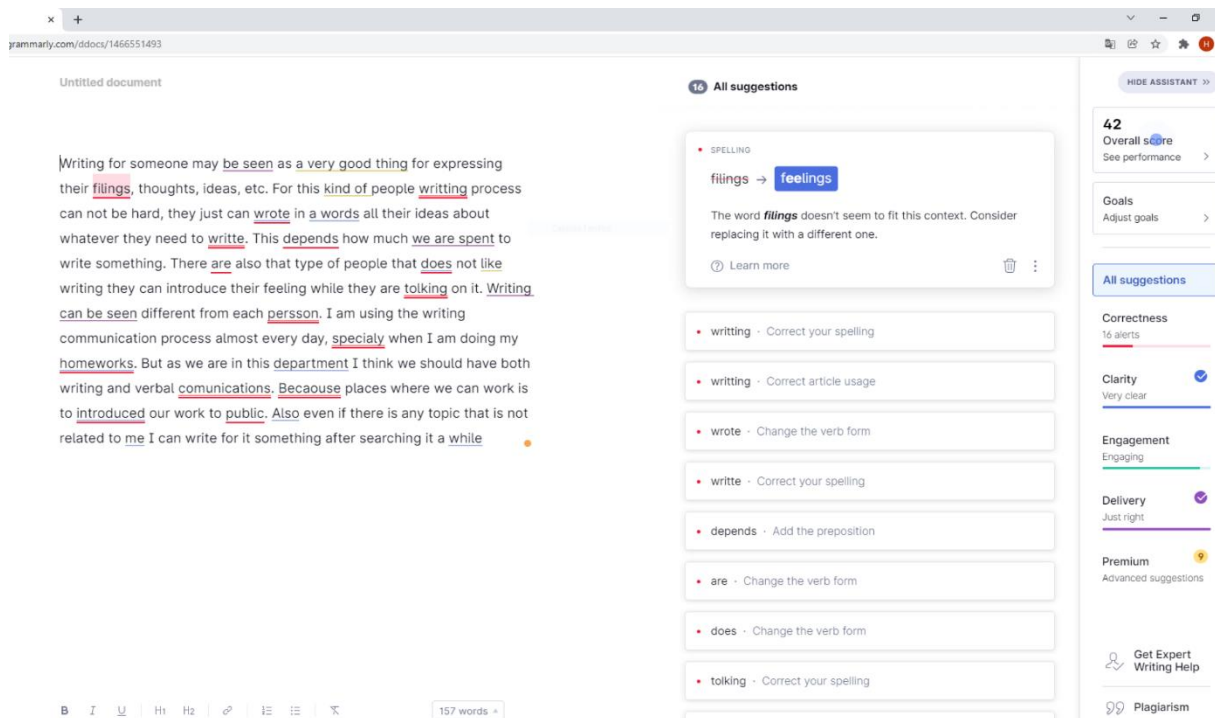
Figure 2. Screenshot of the Mistakes Found by *ProWritingAid Proofreading Software*
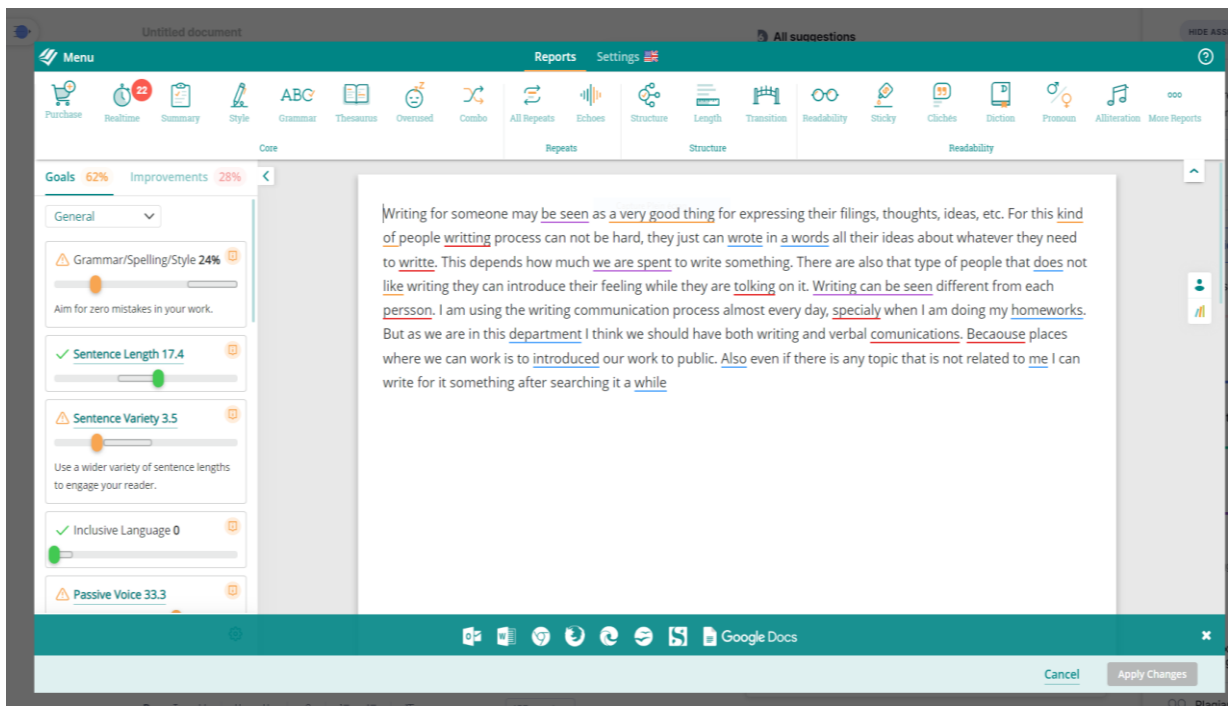
Figure 3. Screenshot of the Mistakes Found **by** *Ginger Proofreading Software*
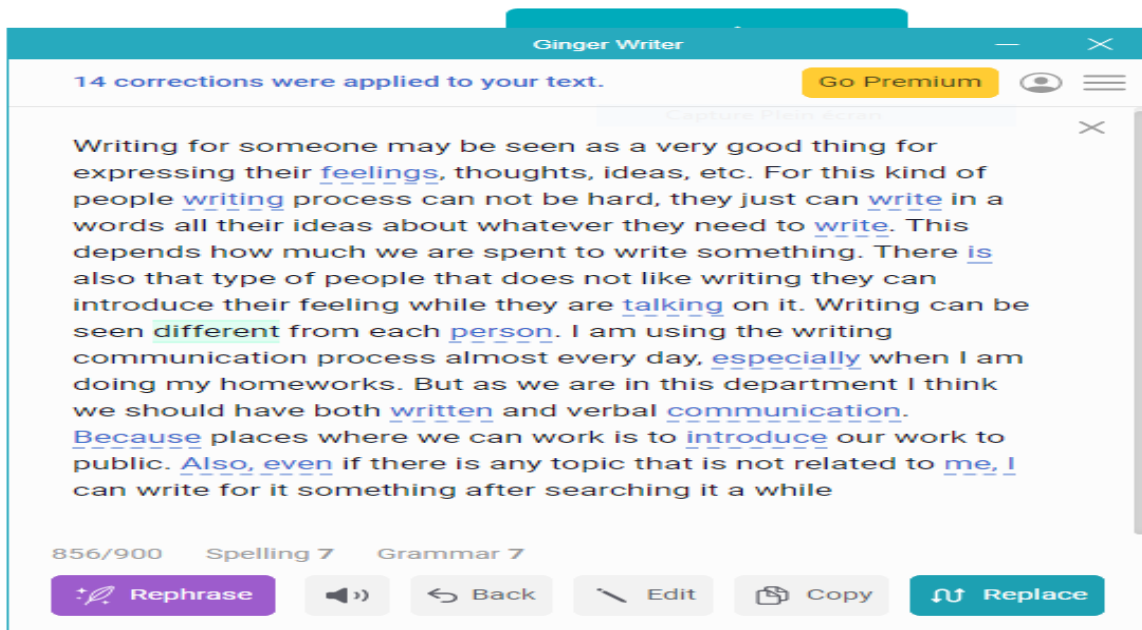
The three figures above demonstrate the different mistakes identified by the three tools in the previous text. Unlike Ginger, which has automatically corrected the mistakes, the other two tools, Grammarly and ProWritingAid, have underlined the mistakes and once you click on the wrong word, they give you suggestions to improve it. The table below compares the number

of mistakes found in the author classical proofreading to those gained via the three applications.

Table 1
A Comparison between Classical Proofreading Results and Those Gained Via the Three Applications

Classical	Grammarly	ProWritingAid	Ginger
SPELLING			
8	8	7	8
GRAMMAR			
11	7	6	5
SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION			
12	7	3	2

Results in the table above show that there are differences in the number of mistakes identified by the four different proofreading tools. The first difference appears in the number of spelling mistakes: the number of spelling mistakes identified in the text is 8 in all the three tools (classical, Grammarly and Ginger); however, the Prowritingaid software failed to identify one mistake which was "filing", maybe because the word exists in English but with other meaning.

Another difference found in the results obtained from the four proofreading tools is the number of grammatical mistakes. Although the previous text contains 11 grammatical mistakes, already mentioned above, Grammarly could only identify 7, whereas ProWritingAid and Ginger could detect 6 and 5 mistakes respectively.

Lastly, it is clear from the table above that the three applications failed to recognize all the mistakes in sentence construction and which are 12. Grammarly could identify only 7, while ProWritingAid and Ginger recognized only 3 and 2mistakes respectively.

This important difference in the number of grammatical and sentence construction mistakes between the classical proofreading and the automated one could be due to the nature of the errors. The three applications could be designed to detect only the most common errors; however, when more complex errors appear, they are unable to detect them. In addition, it is found that the time needed for classical proofreading (5minutes) is higher than the time needed for the software (few seconds).

5. Conclusion

The present study should help in future development and future implementation of proofreading software programmes in EFL education at Batna 2 University. It tests the effectiveness of using proofreading software programmes through comparing three tools to classical proofreading (pen and paper). The examination of the gained results showed that proofreading programmes are set to detect the most common errors: those easy errors, that an advanced speaker of the language would not make. They provide you with suggested alternative words or phrases that you can use to widen your vocabulary and improve your writing. Another advantage of using proofreading programmes is that they are both time and

cost efficient. It takes a maximum of 5 minutes to proofread a long text, which is almost impossible for a human to beat that timing. Also, most of these programmes are free, or come with a small fee, so you do not require to hire a specialist to proofread your work. However, it is found that the problem with these (three) proofreading programmes is the fact that they can detect only the most common errors, but when more complex errors appear, they are unable to detect them. Moreover, the previous programmes may offer some suggested alternative words or phrases that are not applicable to use or out of context, which you may end up to opt for an inappropriate synonym from the list provided by the software. In conclusion, although the objective of the present study is not to select the most efficient software, we believe, according to the results obtained, that no proofreading software is 100% accurate, but Grammarly offers the most features, especially when it comes to accuracy and the ability to detect and correct mistakes. Hence, it could be an effective tool to include as a step in the writing process.

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The Personalizing Impact of Google's Algorithmically-Based "Filter Bubbles" and Their Implications on Academic Research: The Case of "Confirmation Bias"

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Abstarct

The article seeks to appraise the quality of search results obtained by Google users mainly in academic research. It purports to demonstrate how Google, which processes data by dint of computer programs called algorithms, curates data for its users in ways that exclusively mesh with their own convictions, beliefs and perspectives. In other words, instead of being exposed to a diversified miscellany of ideas that may enable the searcher to accounts for all possible perspectives related to the topic of research, Google tends to seclude and insulate its users into isolated subsets of like-minded searchers, a phenomenon that internet activist Eli Pariser labeled "filter bubbles." Based on empirical cases of researchers in civilization, the research, thus, shines light on the ways Google greatly contributes personalizing and customizing results and in reinforcing antecedent knowledge and confirming biases cultivated by its users. The method of the study consists in examining the search engine results pages (SERPs) obtained by 20 students making research on two search queries. The results are scrutinized to determine the origins and the implications of confirmation bias. A special focus is placed on explaining and interpreting the origins and the implications of factors that result in both convergence and divergence in SERPs obtained by the 20 searchers on research quality. On this basis, the research concludes by arguing that Google curates contents for searchers in ways that confirm their own hypotheses, beliefs and perspectives about their search queries. The entire process culminates in polarizing society and isolating every searcher within his own personal and unique universe of information and hence endows him with a skewed picture of the world.

Keywords : reading; academic research; ICTs, Google; filter bubbles; confirmation bias

1. Introduction

The unprecedented growth in technological innovations in the last couple of decades was accompanied by the inescapable, undeniable and multi-faceted impact of this technologization on all walks of life. Indeed, the ubiquity of technological devices and the digitalization of every nook and cranny of our life. This sweeping wave of sophisticated technology greatly facilitated, sophisticated and revolutionized all fields of life and all spheres of study and research. One salient aspect of this technological revolution was the catapulting of Informational and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into the center of educational spheres. Moreover, this remarkable sophistication in technological development has a seamy side and involves serious threats for academic researchers who have insufficient knowledge about the hidden maneuverings underlying the functioning of search engines, such as Google.

The rising importance of these information dissemination platforms like Google in all walks of life has catapulted their discussion to the heart of public debates that engulfed the political elites of leading European powers, such as the US and the UK. These last expressed their apprehensions about the unwieldy method of functioning of these platforms. The issue was first tackled by the Obama administration, which, through its "Big Data" Report (2016), decried the manipulative and devious maneuverings exercised Google through its algorithms that "narrow" instead of expanding user options when designing personalized services (Pariser, 2011).

The research at hand seeks to reveal how Google curates search results by personalizing them on basis of data that the search engine collects about the user. By the end of this article, readers will be provided with insightful explications and interpretations to sources and implications about the use of Google in academic research mainly by making its users drift to confirmation bias all in inducing them to believe in the objectivity and the validity of their search results. The idea that users of Google, due to certain factors, are liable to confirm their antecedent knowledge instead of getting exposed to diversified perspectives that may ultimately furnish them with an encompassing and objective perception to the issue begs a number of questions.

Q1. How factors like a common geo-location, browsing history, homophily in social networks ..etc increase the likelihood that Google provides users with identical search engine results pages (SERPs)?

Q2. How this likelihood of convergence in SERPs tends to disappear in the absence of the afore-mentioned factors?

Q3. What are the implications of the personalizing and the customizing maneuvers of Google on the quality of academic research?

1.1. Literature Review

In the same vein, highly convinced of the need to keep this technology in check, a group of US Senators proposed the "Algorithmic Accountability Act" (AAA) in April 2019, in which they expressed concern that "automated decision-making systems" could exhibit bias and discrimination, especially when it comes to issues such as privacy and security (Booker 2019). Conspicuously, the act required companies to regularly evaluate their tools for

"accuracy," "fairness," "bias" and "discrimination" (Booker, 2019). With the dust of the turmoil that the AAA caused hardly settled, the US Congress further reinforced the US official firm stance against bias in corporate algorithms by laying out the "Filter Bubble Transparency Act" (FTBA) in November 2019 to plead for Americana' right to "engage with a [media] platform without being manipulated by algorithms driven by user-specific data" (US Senate, 2019). Likewise, UK's communications regulator OFCOM underscored the gravity involved in the stifling and confining recommendation infused within algorithms that hinder Google users' "exposure to different points of view, by reinforcing their past habits or those of their friends" (Ofcom, 2012, p. 25).

Owing to the huge dependence of internet users on the results proffered by search engines such as Google, the personalizing and customizing maneuvers exercised by this last largely contribute in consolidating and solidifying searchers' cognitive bias (i.e. confirmation bias). After introducing any search terms (i.e. search query), a compilation of algorithms underlying the functioning of Google provides searchers with SERPs that dovetail and conform with their own viewpoints and that fortify their own hypotheses and beliefs. The driving principle behind this way of functioning for Google consists in generating an atmosphere of hospitality for searchers as they are never exposed to diverging or dissimilar opinions (Conover et al., 2011).

Figure 1. The Figure represents the smooth and hidden inducement of searchers by algorithms into cozy filter bubbles. Retrieved from Tim Schneegans.

In so doing, Google shields its users from a huge repository of ideas that differ from those of any individual or/and group of users on basis of their own geo-location, age, gender, browsing history and their general search preferences. Google rather provides its users with results that largely confirm their "preexisting beliefs or hypotheses" which, in turn, explains why these users accept these information unquestioningly (Fletcher, 2020).
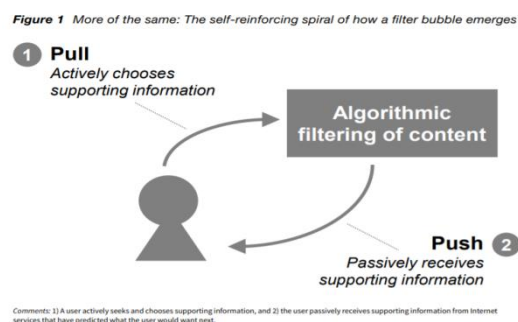
A plenty of research was conducted previously to assess the of interaction between people (i.e. searchers) and search engines mainly in terms of how these last are responsible for the confirmation bias cultivated by users. Ryan White (2013) conducted and investigative

study about biases in web search engines (WSE). The study placed a premium on the probing the possible impact of search engines on users' beliefs as well as the extent to which WSE are biased by giving precedence to certain outcomes to the detriment of others. Most importantly, White's study pointed out that people tended to opt for search links that squared with their perceived notion of the subject regardless of its possible erroneousness.

In a similar vein, Schweiger, Oeberst & Cress (2014) devoted a study to the investigation of the interaction between searchers and WSE. Schweiger et al. specifically focused on examining the nexus between search online and confirmation bias. The study established that searchers rarely came up to ideas and perspectives that diverged from their antecedent knowledge and perceptions about the subject. Along similar lines, Hart et al. (2009) came up to not too different results. According to them, searchers with prior knowledge about topic under research have too little, if any, chance of clicking on links that do not bear any relationship with their own antecedent knowledge.

In the light of these evolutions and taking into consideration the tangled network enmeshing the most recent sophistications in the field of ICTs and the field of academic research, the current study purports to investigate the nature and the origins and filter bubbles and the miscellaneous ways they compromise the quality of academic research. More specifically, the study scrutinizes and brings to the fore the hidden maneuverings exercised by Google mainly in terms of personalization and customization of search results which fuels biases and antecedent knowledge cultivated by researchers. The operation, as the chart in Figure 1 shows, is akin to the boomerang effect in that the ideas exteriorized by searchers in the form search items (search queries) are confirmed and reinforced by Google that provides searchers only with information (i.e. SERPs) that fit squarely with the antecedent knowledge and pre-existing beliefs and perspectives of searchers even if they are wrong.

Figure 2. More of the same: The self-reinforcing spiral of how a filter bubble emerges. Taken from P. M. Dahlgren (2021).

Figure 1 More of the same: The self-reinforcing spiral of how a filter bubble emerges

1 **Pull**
Actively chooses
supporting information

Algorithmic filtering of content

Push 2
Passively receives
supporting information

Comments: 1) A user actively seeks and chooses supporting information, and 2) the user passively receives supporting information from Internet services that have predicted what the user would want next.

While doing so, Google goes to great lengths in inducing its users to the conviction that they are examining every nook and cranny of the topic under research. In actual fact, the policy of Google centers on erecting an echo chamber for every user that isolates him from those who cultivate different ideas from his own due to what Eli Pariser (2011) called "filter bubbles."

Figure 3. The results of algorithmic systems can be attributed to their underlying data, the mathematical logic of the algorithms, and the way people interact with these factors.

2. Methodology

For the sake of ascertaining and substantiating the core claim of this study, which is the extent to which Google personalizes and customizes results proffered to researchers, the study conducted an empirical experience. This last consisted in providing 20 students working on research in civilization with two search items ("*Saddam Hussein*" and "*Iraqi regime*"). Searchers on Google were chosen on basis of their fulfillment of certain criteria, such as their different geo-locations, absence of any contact between them either through emails or social media. Screenshots for the first page of the results that Google provided each of them are collected, examined and compared. A special focus is placed on stark differences given to them despite their use of exactly similar wording in the formulation of their search items. Three samples of results obtained are reported in this study and are discussed as being prototypical and emblematic of how Google never provides standard results and how it rather tailors them on basis of the searcher's geographical location, browsing history, homophily in social networks…etc.

Controlled by computer programs, called algorithms, Google's customizing maneuverings ultimately insulates every user within a specific "personal ecosystem" or "unique universe" of information that makes him ruminate similar ideas produced by him and his like-minded searchers. This state of complacent confinement was described by Eli Pariser (2011) as "filter bubbles." On this backdrop, despite their being equipped with some research and digital skills, academic researchers remain unprepared to deal with the bias of WSE. This is, at least partly, due to the fact that Google users know too little about search, WSE and their impact. Moreover, Google users know far less about the implications of the impact of algorithms that control WSE as information-retrieval systems (RS) and are unaware of how they work.

Similarly, most researchers using WSE assume that search results from search engines are unbiased and neutral. Furthermore, most academic researchers even at very advanced stages have the tendency to use short search terms and seldom click beyond the first page of results. In fact, most people believe that the best results appear at the top of the results even when results are intentionally scrambled.

To substantiate the claim that Google personalizes search results, 20 participants were tasked with researching two search items ("Saddam Hussein" and "Iraqi regime"). Some of the participants shared parameters like geographical location, browsing history, gender, age…etc (Dahlgren, 2021). The other group of searchers is made up of members who are completely detached from each other in that they did not share any of the afore-mentioned parameters.

For the sake of demonstrating the link between the above-mentioned parameters, the creation of filter bubbles and the personalization of search results proffered by Google, the study placed a premium on the examination of two samples from each category (Sunstein, 2018). The first category of searchers (Table 1) was examined to display how divergence in geo-location, browsing history, age and gender generated different search results. The second category (Table 2) was examined to show how commonality in these same parameters is conducive to similarity in terms of the results obtained.

3. Results:

Table 1: Samples of Search results obtained by searching the First "search item"

1st Search item : « Saddam Hussein »	
Sample 1 **(first IP)**	-Saddam Hussein-Wikipedia. Vidéos: -Il y dix ans, était pendu Saddam Hussein. Youtube-euronews (en français) 30 Dec. 2016 -Irak 12 ans après sa mort, ou est Saddam Hussein ? Youtube- -Les derniers instants de Saddam Hussein. -Irak : l'héritage de Saddam Hussein a été liquidé après sa. 30 dec. 2021. -Qui était Saddam Hussein ? –JDD. 30 dec. 2021 -Saddam Hussein, le voyou de Baghdad | cairn.info 19 oct. 2020 -Saddam Hussein : une Dictature a l'Irakienne-- Irénée. -Il y dix ans, la mort sans gloire de Saddam Hussein—le Figaro—30 dec. 2014. -Il y 15 ans, Saddam Hussein est mort : l'Irak a-t-il survécu ? -- 30 dec. 2021. -Saddam Hussein-- Encyclopédie Universalis. -Saddam Hussein : comment l'ancien président irakien a—

	BBC.

Sample 2
 	
(Second IP)
	-Saddam Hussein-Wikipedia`
	
	Videos:
	
	-The capture of Saddam Hussein in 2003.
	
	-Il y a dix ans, était pendu Saddam Hussein. (youtube,
	
	    euronews en français)
	
	    Dec. 30, 2016
	
	-I knew Saddam—featured documentaries.
	
	    Youtube-Al Jazeera English.
	
	    Jan. 1, 2017
	
	-Saddam Hussein I Biography, History, Death, Sons & Facts
	
	-Saddam Hussein captured –History.

Table 2: Samples of Search results obtained by searching the Second "search item"

2nd Search item : «Iraqi regime »	

Sample 1
 	
 (First IP)
	-Iraq under Saddam Hussein | Britannica.
	
	-Ba'athist Iraq—Wikipedia
	
	-Politics of Iraq—Wikipedia
	
	-Sixteen years after regime change, Iraq needs to double down
	
	-The securitization of Iraqi regime Using the Three Levels
	
	    By D. Shamlaowi
	
	-Iraq: US Regime Change Efforts and Post-Saddam…DTIC
	
	    By K. Katzman--2004
	
	-Operation "Termination of Traitors
	
	    By RG Rabil—2002.

	-Regime Change in Iraq and Challenges of Political… By PS Pattanyak.
Sample 2 (Second IP)	-Republique d'Irak (1968-2003)- Wikipedia -Ba'athist Iraq—Wikipedia. -Sixteen years after regime change, Iraq needs to double down… -Iraq under Saddam Hussein | Britannica. -Iraq: U.S. Regime Change Efforts and post-Saddam –DTIC K. Katzman, 2014 -Definition: former Iraqi regime from 31 CFR § 576.305--Legal

4. Discussion:

Algorithms that underpin the functioning of Google largely govern the selection, sorting, and presentation of information on the Internet. Most importantly, algorithms tailor, customize and curate content to the interests and preferences of each user (i.e. personalization). Based on a study of individuals entering identical search terms (i.e. the user inputs in the search box or the search query) at the same time, the study has shown that most participants came up to results unique to them. In other words, Google often provided information and sources (i.e. Search Engine Results Pages --SERPs) for some searchers but not for others and vice versa. However, for the sake of substantiating the central thrust of the study, the research at hand reported results of only three prototypical samples to demonstrate empirically differences in results obtained.

First, the claims of the study about the personalization and the customization strategies of Google hinge on the scrutiny of results (i.e. SERPs) obtained by 20 searchers conducting their search from specific geographical locations and entertaining specific browsing histories and having their own online affinities, friendship and official connections (i.e. the homophily of networks factor). The study is confined to the probing of screenshots of the first page obtained by each searcher.

As shown in Table 1, the SERPs obtained by the two searchers (i.e. samples 1 and 2) are almost totally different despite their departure from the same point which is the common search item (i.e. "Saddam Hussein"). Differences in SERPs were by and large the result of differences between the two searchers in terms of geographical location, browsing history,

age, gender…etc, making each of the two cloistered within his/her unique universe of information or "personal ecosystem" (Pariser, 2011, p. 14;   p.2). The result was that many of the key data and sources required for the investigation of this search item were served in a selective way, which implies that each of the two would end up by having just one side of the issue which is necessarily the incomplete version of facts. Both searchers could not access information that Google hid for them because this last utilizes computer programs that locate searchers geographically and tracks their browsing history and gathers the maximum of data about their general tendencies and connections from social media and beyond to ultimately select for them only information that is in consonance with their antecedent knowledge.

In table 2, however, there is a noticeable similarity between the results obtained by the two searchers investigating the second search item (i.e. "Iraqi regime") as it is shown in samples 1 and 2. This similarity in SERPs is largely attributable to the existence of commonality between searchers in terms of the above-mentioned parameters (i.e. geo-location, browsing history, age, gender…etc) in addition to the tendency by filter bubbles to "take for granted that users like what their friends like—based on the homophily of networks, i.e., the human tendency to enter into social relationships with people, with whom they have much in common" (McPherson et al., 2001).

In this venue, the computer programs (i.e. algorithms) underpinning the functioning of Google operate by displaying to users a "mix of contents" that largely conform with the proclivities and tendencies of users (Rocca, 2019). By so doing, algorithms heighten the likelihood that users feel satisfied with SERPs and thus click on. These "recommendation algorithms" (or user-user algorithms) function through the principle of "collaborative filtering" which consists in collecting data from a miscellany of sources. Therefore, this "recommender system" underlying the operation of Google hinges on the principle of "estimated proximities" in that it recommends to users SERPs that other users with similar profiles have accessed before (Rocca, 2019; Werbach, 2020).

On this basis, it has to be made clear that Google is a business enterprise. Its search results are its product. It makes money by selling ads, which users see on the search results page and on the websites they visit. Therefore, Google is really good at serving users search results that they are likely to click on. In other words, instead of serving users with data that may open new horizons for them, it merely confirms and reinforces their pre-existing knowledge, perceptions and beliefs. Encapsulating the gist of process, the European High-Level Expert Group on Media diversity warned that the "increasing filtering mechanisms make it more likely for people to only get news on subjects they are interested in, and with the perspective, they identify with. ... It will also tend to create more insulated communities as isolated subsets within the overall public sphere. … Such developments undoubtedly have a potentially negative impact on democracy" (qtd. in Moeller & N., 2018, p. 18).

Consequently, being a self-serving and money-making enterprise, Google provide too little benefit for researchers. On the contrary, in the light of its modus operandi, it can be argued that Google has a detrimental impact mainly on researchers in academia. Google's manipulative and restrictive processing of data tends to decrease researchers' creativity, ability to innovate, ability to explore, diversity of ideas and people and understanding of the

world. It, above all, endows its users with a warped view of the world in general. Encapsulating this compromising aspect about filter bubbles, Pariser (2011) pointed out that they "will often block out the things in our society that are important but complex or unpleasant. It renders them invisible. And it's not just the issues that disappear. Increasingly, it's the whole political process" (14).

Moreover, the study established that most users saw roughly similar results whether they were logged in to Google, logged out, or searching in private browsing, also known as *in cognito* mode. Therefore, private browsing mode and being logged out of Google offered very little filter bubble protection. These tactics simply do not provide the anonymity most people expect.

5. Recommendations

As filter bubbles are ineluctable and that bias could not be uprooted, researchers in the field of academia are strongly recommended to appeal to a series of guidelines and directions that can at least defuse their insulating and cloistering effects. Generally, filter bubbles thrive in intellectual still waters. Therefore, in order for researchers to balance out the inherent bias pertaining to Google's "*modus operandi*" by reconsidering their poor information-seeking behaviors and their ineffectual research habits. These last are held to be least partly attributable to the idea that researchers are comfortably ensconced in front of search engines that cram their minds with one-sided thinking. One major implication of this line of reasoning is that researchers have to know definitely that limiting their investigation to the views that dovetail with their own views constitutes just half the picture of the issue under scrutiny.

In the same vein, researchers could take recourse to "*in-cognito*" mode to wipe out their browsing history that web browsers capitalize on to personalize and customize research results. Researchers are equally recommended to avoid relying exclusively on Google in the conduct of their researches in that they have to utilize privacy-respecting metasearch engines that ensure neutrality, protect privacy and that do not generate user profiles or collect/share user information, such as DuckDuckGo, Qwant, Startpage, Swisscows, Mojeek, MetaGer and SearX.

The bursting of filter bubbles and the manipulation of the personalizing power of Google requires more than the mere honing of digital and research skills. Governments, too, have a central role to play in pressuring companies to inform their users about algorithms used to personalize browsing experiences and to provide them with possibilities of disabling content curation. Moreover, researchers are exhorted to update their knowledge as to the systems utilized in conducting research. Indeed, serendipitous recommendation systems have been developed to enable users to make surprising and pleasant discoveries outside of their typical online content sphere and to help them keep an open window to other worlds and to new discoveries. Similarly, a more or less ethical information-seeking behavior and sound research practices require researchers to investigate topics of their research by scrutinizing the miscellany of sides and the multiple perspectives of the existing argument on various search engines before elaborating their final arguments about it.

From a similar perspective, Perkins and Salomon, recognize the limits of research results obtained through the use of Google, but they point to a possible means to draw dividend from this search engine. For them, starting research from Google is not totally bad. They opine that staring research from Google helps in forging connections and sparking new questions (Diamond and Brady, 2018). The bottom line of their reasoning is that researchers go in their research process by a number of experiences that contribute in their intellectual maturation (Perkins & Salomon, 1992, p. 8). This last manifests itself in their acquisition of *"threshold concepts"* that enable researchers to participate in a particular discipline (Land et al, 2008). Going beyond this threshold implies that researchers have reached the intellectual stage that allows them to question their antecedent knowledge and their former ways of understanding. This will, eventually, prompt them to develop new ways of perceiving and handling these issues.

Conclusion

The study has come up to a number of core findings related to academic research. Students conducting academic research through Google are trebly tried in that in addition to their being in need of research skills, digital literacy, they are equally in need of being equipped with skills and strategies that may enable to shake off the shackles of filter bubbles. Understanding how Google functions and how it feeds its users with personalized and customized information greatly and decisively impacts who we are as researchers and how we conduct our research (information–seeking behaviors and our research habits) and even the quality of results realized. More specifically, researchers' awareness about the hidden algorithm-based maneuverings of Google renders research methods more ethical and less biased.

Most importantly, the study has drawn attention to the deleterious effects of the personalizing and customizing strategies applied by search engines like Google. One direct result of this is that public debates often become polarized as people quickly become insulated from or impervious to opposing arguments. This is often fueled by the fact that interactions almost always take place online, which implies that people find information that confirms their existing beliefs, making them less willing to listen to alternatives. This process culminated at the polarization and the fragmentation of society into smaller sub-units that no longer form a homogenous and cohesive whole with the possibility of a further escalation into endless conflicts.

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Students' Preference for the Online Writing Formative Assessment Methods: Boosting the Power of Online Feedback

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Abstarct

Writing has always been a difficult task for students. Yet, with the adoption of online education, the task has become more challenging. As distant learning has received and is still receiving a lot of attention, teaching writing via online means has its share of this attention. Assessment of the writing skill, as an integral part of the writing instruction, has made its way through online teaching/learning investigation. The aim of this study is to investigate EFL students' preferred type of online formative feedback they receive according to its efficacy in improving their writing skills. The participants of this study are 60 third-year EFL students and four teachers of the writing and grammar course from the Teacher Training School 'Assia Djebar' Constantine. Data were gathered via two questionnaires: one was administered to the teachers to investigate the current online formative assessment they carried out, and the other was given to the students in order to examine their preferred method of formative feedback delivery. The findings reveal that teachers use different methods of formative assessment, yet with a non-interactive nature. Interestingly, despite students' satisfaction with the efficacy of the formative feedback they receive online and the similarity of the nature of this feedback with what they used to have in the classroom, they exhibited a clear preference for interactive feedback. This research, consequently, recommends conducting an interactive course of assessment to achieve opportunistic clarification of feedback via video conferencing platforms.

Keywords : Formative feedback, online assessment, writing skill

Introduction

Covid-19 emergency has drastically changed the world and brought about unprecedented fame for online distance learning. This latter has no longer become a privilege of the 21st century, but a resort in the time of the world crisis in many countries, including Algeria. The Ministry of Higher Education in Algeria ordered universities, colleges, and schools to convert to online education by using online platforms owing to the coronavirus outbreak. Since then, the Algerian universities have been using the open-source code electronic system MOODLE and multiple web-based platforms to support online cooperation between teachers and students and ensure the continuity of students' studies. Universities, colleges, and schools afterwards resorted to blended learning, which blends in-person teaching with online courses. The latter is exclusively used when coronavirus cases increase in the country. The recurrent emergence of more dangerous and threatening variants of the virus has necessitated the establishment of a solid basis for the integration of e-learning by concentrating on all the components of learning and teaching.

It must be first clearly stated that not only learning that has been affected by the new mode of teaching, but also assessment. In essence, assessment is one of the important practices in teaching and has lately become an essential activity in online teaching. This practice plays a crucial role in effective learning as it shapes the learning opportunities by tracing learners' academic development. The tremendous impact of assessment appears in one of the basic language skills that encompasses a complex process, the writing skill (Harmer, 2003; Nunan, 2003). Admittedly, the complexity of the writing process poses challenges not only for students but also for teachers when assessing writing. Teachers, throughout this process, give different forms of formative feedback while revising and editing students' writing. Teacher feedback, as a result, forms an integral part of the formative writing assessment, which entails continuing feedback on students' learning given in the classroom (Hargreaves, 2008). On the basis of these facts, there has always been an ongoing exploration of teacher feedback in the foreign language classroom to support the formative assessment of writing. Nonetheless, the electronic computer-mediated feedback, which emerged adjacent to the implementation of distance learning, did not give advance to the investigation of teachers' e-feedback nature and function as it has not been widely explored in comparison to its counterpart, peer e-feedback.

Therein, then, lies the essence of this research, which focuses on the teacher's feedback on students' writing as a part of the formative assessment, and aspires particularly to contribute to the research on the nature of teacher e-feedback so that it can constructively support students' writing. It takes into consideration students' preferences for the online methods of formative assessment that teachers use to deliver feedback on their students' writing. Therefrom two research questions are put forward for investigation in this research:

1. What are the formative assessment methods teachers use in order to provide feedback to third-year students on their essays?
2. What are third-year students' preferences for the delivery methods of the teacher's online feedback?

2. Assessment for Learning

Assessment first came to education as the "very foundation of general educational reform" (Cizek, 1997, p.8), and it is one of the most influential parts of learning (Black and William, 1998; Baleni, 2015). Baleni even said: "assessment, and not the curriculum defines how and what students learn" (p. 228).It inspires different educational goals as it assesses for learning (formative assessment) and assesses learning (summative assessment). The distinction between both types of assessment is much more about "How are we doing?" and "How did we do?" (Pilliner, 1982).

With the growing interest in assessment, assessment for learning (formative assessment) effect becomes more noticeable than the assessment of learning (summative assessment) (Chen and Zhang, 2017). Formative assessment, which is neatly defined as "All those activities undertaken by teachers and by their students in assessing themselves, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged" (Black &Wiliam, 1998, p. 23), is encouraged to be used more often by teachers (Baleni, 2015; Graham, et al., 2015). This type of assessment (FA) is seen as a source of "up-to-date information or feedback about students' progress, allowing teachers, students, or both to adjust what they are doing" (Graham, 2011, p. 12). It usually takes place in the classroom as a basis of continuing evaluation (Hargreaves, 2008), and it was even considered when it was first used as a boost to classroom culture (Airasian, 1994).

Formative assessment is learner-centred as it places the learner at the centre of the assessment process. It is also process-oriented since it provides learners with continuing, genuine information about their progress (Chen and Zhang, 2017). This genuine information is referred to as feedback, which is proved to be important in the process of formative assessment (Black & William, 1998; Brown, 2001; Bergstorm & Gramberg, 2007). Black and William's definition of formative assessment has clearly identified the source of feedback as coming from teachers or students themselves. Graham et al. (2015) add that feedback can also come from a computer.

3. Writing Formative Assessment

The amalgamation of the necessity and the complexity of writing in L1 and L2 exhibits non-stop efforts to find and refine the techniques and methods of its teaching. "Good writing is not just an option for young people; it is essential" (Graham, 2011, p.10), so motivating writing should be infused with each teaching tool to achieve the goal of teaching writing. Formative assessment goes cohesively with the writing instruction as it constitutes "iterative processes of establishing what, how much and how well students are learning in relation to the learning goals and expected outcomes" (Gikandi et al. 2011, p. 2337). In other words, it forms a close-knit ground for what students write about and what strategies they use to write, how they plan to write, and how well they revise and edit the different versions of their writing. It has consequently been considered a tool that encourages the productive skill - writing- in the classroom, for it gives the teacher the chance to monitor and improve the instructional process as well as to guide learners' writing (Graham, et al., 2011).

Formative writing assessment can take many forms: self, peer, and teacher assessment (Graham, et al., 2011); however, "teacher assessment, also referred to as teacher feedback, has

played the central role in EFL writing" (Chen & Zhang, 2017, p.48).Feedback needs to be given promptly to help the students improve their writing asthrough feedback, the writer learns where he or she has misled or confused the reader by not supplying enough information, illogical organization, lack of development of ideas, or something like inappropriate word-choice or tense" (Keh, 1990, p.295). As for the written feedback on writing, six categories were suggested to be included in its assessment rubric: content, which concerns the thesis statement, complete analysis of the topic with well-developed ideas through narration, illustration, facts, and opinion, description, comparison/contrast, and cause-effect; organization, which includes appropriate introduction development and conclusion, and the mastery of organisational sequence of ideas; discourse, which deals with topic sentences, the logical link between sentences and paragraphs, the use rhetorical conventions, transitions, discourse markers, cohesion, and references; syntax, which focuses on a variety of grammatical structures, grammar aspects such as verb tense, form, voice, and mood; vocabulary, which covers word choice and use; and mechanics, which involves spelling, punctuation, consistent references, and legibility (Brown, 2001).

Defining the attributes of quality writing remarkably depends on formative assessment (Graham, et al., 2015) because this type of assessment was taken seriously by students, as found in Chen and Zhang's study (2017). The significance of formative assessment was also proven in Lee's research (2011) that investigated the impact of formative assessment on teacher's practice and learners' attitudes towards writing. She found that formative assessment motivates teachers' multiplicity of writing teaching practices and motivates learners' learning. Feedback in the form of grammar and suggestions is even seen as more important in developing students' writing ability in Tom et al. (2013) study. From another sphere of research, Burner's study (2015) proclaims the need to establish student-teacher mutual understanding of formative assessment to tailor the classroom writing assessment.

4. Online Writing Formative Assessment: Teacher Online Feedback

Non-traditional teaching and learning environments facilitated a process of rethinking teaching and assessment. Educators and researchers dive particularly into re-defining assessment in an attempt to create a cogent understanding of how assessment operates in such environments, especially that what is feasible in traditional face-to-face settings is not necessarily achievable in online environments (Goldstein &Behuniak, 2012). Formative assessment has long been seen as a part of everyday classroom teaching and learning, but with the merging of technology and the inclusive use of online learning in the time of the Covid-19 crisis, this type of assessment has become part of the digital course of teaching and learning. The term formative e-assessment emerges to mean "the use of ICT to support the iterative process of gathering and analysing information about student learning by teachers as well as learners and of evaluating it in relation to prior achievement and attainment of intended, as well as unintended learning outcomes" (Pachler et al., 2010, p. 716).E-assessment is now generated and mediated in online and blended learning environments with the same old-fashioned objectives. Bennett (2002) contends that technology not only facilitates testing but also supports authentic assessment; therefore, it cogently supports formative assessment,

which "reflects a much more natural learning state and can provide teachers with more timely and first-hand information about learners' achievements and deficiencies" (Chen & Zhang, 2017, p.48).

In the 21st century, 'there have been numerous calls for reforming or improving how writing is taught to children and adolescents' (Graham et al., 2015, p. 523). Therein lies the essence of the rapidly growing research on online assessment to investigate the most efficient strategy for delivering online formative assessment on writing. The delivery method in online learning environments has brought new assessment opportunities, particularly in the synchronous and asynchronous online learning environments. Synchronous environments, characterized by live real-time interaction between teachers and learners, provide ample opportunity for immediate feedback, whereas asynchronous environments, with their feasibility and availability of content at any time, do not allow for instant feedback or feedback discussion (Dhawan, 2020). The trustworthiness of a synchronous online environment can be seen when the asynchronous environment becomes no longer sufficient. As a case of illustration, in an asynchronous online setting, if students receive feedback on their writing in the form of questions or one-word comments, which are known as the least preferable type of feedback for students because it "confused them and hinders them from making appropriate revision as they do not know what the teacher expects them to do" (Tom et al., 2013, p.79), they will not have the opportunity to immediately clarify the vagueness of this type of feedback. It is worth mentioning that only when students understand and use feedback does their learning get affected (Havnes et al., 2012).

Therefore, synchronous milieu of learning is needed to provide immediate formative feedback on writing with merit of teacher-leaner instant interaction for "interactive formative feedbacks were identified as significant features that will deal with intimidations to rationality and trustworthiness within the milieu of online formative assessment" (Baleni, 2015, p. 228). In line with this assertion, positive inclination towards the online assessment of writing and the preference for timely teacher feedback in the online discussion board were marked as significant findings in Horstmansof and Brownie (2013) and Baleni (2015) studies. In the online assessment, the teacher's formative feedback could be delivered via video conference platforms that were used in the transition movement that touches teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Teacher-student conferencing is declared to be needed for achieving instant feedback (Basilaia, et al., 2020), and it is even "categorised as teacher feedback" (Wihastyanang, et al., 2020, p.179).

Research by Black and Wiliam (1998) has shown substantial gains in learners' learning as a result of the active involvement of students and effective feedback from teachers. Alvarez et al. (2012) have asserted that the improvement of students' writing depends on the exploration of the nature and function of online teacher feedback. The nature of computer-mediated and online delivered feedback can be similar to the traditional written teacher's corrective feedback in the asynchronous setting. Therefore, it can take one or multiple forms of the seven types of corrective feedback (Lyster&Ranta, 1997, p. 46): explicit error correction, clarification requests, recast, metalinguistic feedback, repetition, elicitation, and translation. Yet, when teacher's feedback is to be given synchronously, focused and clear comments are

generated (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996, as cited in Wihastyanang, et al., 2020, p.180). Nevertheless, due to the unavailability of constant real-time feedback in online assessment, teachers need to make sure that their written online feedback is effective (Wolsey, 2008).

5. Methodology
5.1 Participants

The research subjects include four female teachers who teach third-year Writing and Grammar Course at the Department of English Language in the Training School of Teachers 'Assia Djebar' (ENSC). Noteworthy, the English Academic Writing and Grammar Course is a blended course that is delivered both in the classroom and via the web-based learning platform "Moodle".Therefore, all teachers who are involved in this study conduct online formative assessment. The sample for this study is also made up of sixty third-year students who were randomly selected. It must be clearly stated that the students were taught by the same teachers who received the study's questionnaire. The reason behind selecting this sample relies on the educational objective of the third-year Writing and Grammar Course that is developing students' composition skills via intensive regular essay writing.

5.2 Instrument

This research is a qualitative study, which aims at collecting data about students' preferred delivery method of online teacher feedback during formative assessment. Therefore, the research relied on two questionnaires. The obtained data was used for detailed analysis. As for the teachers' questionnaire, it comprises four questions that investigate the method and content of the online formative feedback, problems encountered during online formative assessment, and the suggested solutions. The students' questionnaire gauges students' perceptions of the feedback they receive online and their preferences for the types of formative online feedback. It is made up of six questions. The first two questions seek students' opinions about the usefulness of the teachers' online formative assessment for improving their writing. Question 3 investigates the most effective method of online feedback. Question 4 is a question about students' opinions of the effectiveness of the online formative comments. The two questions delve into the preferred type of comments with specifications of the types that need a discussion with the teacher. The questions take the form of Likert scale, multiple-choice, and Yes/No formats.

6. Findings of the Questionnaires
6.1 Teachers' Questionnaire
Table 1: Teachers' online formative assessment methods

How do you do the online formative assessment?	Percentage %
Insert written feedback to each student's electronic essay.	100
Correct one (or some) essay(s) and record a video explaining the feedback you added to them.	25
Organise video conferencing with students to	00

discuss their individual/all students' essays.	
Use audio recording to explainthe feedback of a sample essay.	25

The common way used by all the teachers to provide formative writing online assessment is by inserting written feedback in the margin of the e-essays. Video and audio recordings of the teacher's feedback on students' essays are used only by one teacher (25%), whereas no teacher communicates her feedback with students on the video conferencing platforms.

Table 2: Type of online formative assessment comments

What aspects do you focus on when assessing students' essays online?	Percentage %
Grammar/language use	100
Vocabulary	100
Content/ideas	100
Pattern of organisation	100
Mechanics	100
Discourse	100

All the six categories that cover the micro and macro aspects of writing are present in the teachers' online feedback.

Table 3: Problems of online formative assessment

What are the obstacles you faced when assessing students' essays online?	Answers
Teacher 1	too much time demanding in addition to poor connection
Teacher 2	Sometimes their writing problems need a face-to-face interaction to make them fully understand the issue.
Teacher 3	The document format is one of the problems I face while correcting students' essays; some students send their essays as a screenshot image that makes the online correction impossible. Another problem is the receipt of the feedback; some students could not open the corrected documents for a myriad of technical reasons.
Teacher 4	Connectivity problems, especially when I apply timely based writing. So, some students delay the submission of their essays; therefore, I couldn't confirm whether they wrote it in the same time frame as others. Content and ideas also need to be sometimes discussed and

clarified by students.

Table 6: Solutions for improving online formative assessment

What are the solutions you found or suggest to overcome these obstacles?	Answers
Teacher 1	A good internet connection of course And fewer compositions to correct which means a small number of students per group because you cannot correct some papers and neglect the others. All students should receive adequate feedback to improve their writing abilities.
Teacher 2	I use the classroom sessions to deal again with the most recurrent problems. I re-write some examples of their common mistakes on the board, and we discuss together their sentence and language problems, and they suggest ways to improve them. This technique can also be used through video/conferences, but I think it's much more efficient to take advantage of the face-to-face classroom time to address such issues.
Teacher 3	Generally, I ask the student to provide me with a hard copy of the essay to be corrected. I also send a message with the feedback insisting on students to inform me if they receive their feedback.
Teacher 4	I organise a session of feedback discussion in the classroom; I write some malformed sentences or structures I found in their essays and we discuss them. I also ask students to rewrite them correctly.

6.2 Students' Questionnaire

Figure 1: Students' writing improvement in accordance with the online formative assessment

1. How do you assess your writing improvement in accordance with the online feedback?
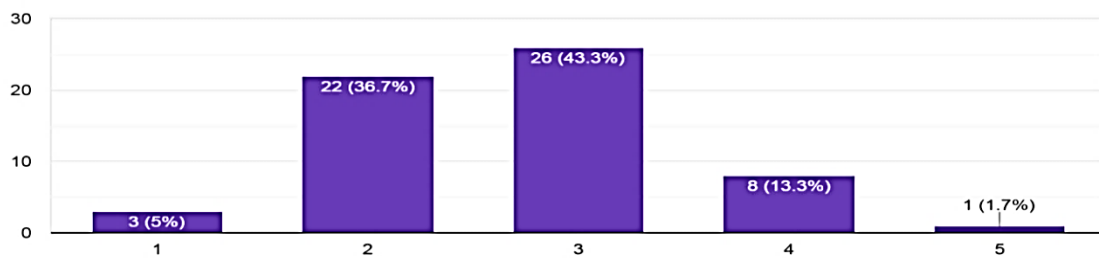1=Excellent 2=good 3=average 4=weak 5= there is no improvement
60 responses

Figure 1 shows that 43.3% of students perceive their improvement in writing in relation to the online feedback they received as only overage. A slightly decreased percentage (36.7%) represents students who avowed their writing improvement as "good". Nonetheless, 13.3% claim their improvement in writing is weak. Avery small proportion of the sample (5%) sees that their progress in writing is excellent, and only one student (1.7%) admitted no writing improvement.

Figure 2: Students' perceptions of the usefulness of the teachers' online formative feedback

2. Do you feel the way the teacher uses to provide you with the online feedback is: 1= extremely helpful2= very helpful3= moderately helpful4= slightly helpful5= not at all helpful
60 responses
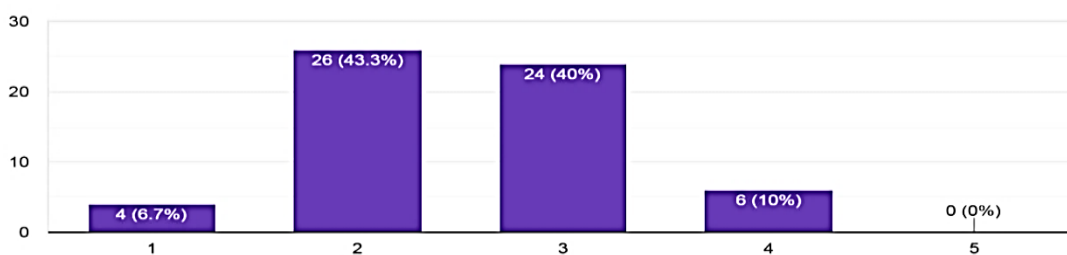
The results of this figure revealed that half of the sample deemed the teachers' e-feedback a useful tool, as 43.3% consider it very helpful, and 6.7% regard it as extremely helpful. Moderately helpful is the perception of 40% of students of the online feedback they received on their writing, and slightly helpful was perceived by 10% of the students.

Figure 3: Students' opinion of the effectiveness of online feedback delivery method in understanding and improving essay writing

3. Which method of online feedback delivery is most effective in helping you understand the feedback and improve your essay writing?
60 responses

- Written feedback inserted to each student's electronic essay — 35 (58.3%)
- Correction of one (or some) essay(s) and recording a video explaining the feedback the tea... — 22 (36.7%)
- Discussion of individual/all students' essays feedback via video conferencing platforms li... — 27 (45%)
- Explanation of the feedback of a sample essay via audio recording — 17 (28.3%)

There was an apparent inclination of the effectiveness of the teachers' written e-feedback on students' writing by 58% of students. Discussing the e-feedback via video conference platforms was also seen as effective by almost half of the sample (45%). The explanation of e-feedback via video and audio recordings was ranked third (36.7%) and fourth (28.3%), respectively, as the most effective online feedbackdelivery method.

Figure 4: The efficacy of the teacher's online comments and correction of students' writing

4. Do you Think that your teacher's online comments and corrections are effective in helping you improve your writing skill?
60 responses

- Yes
- No

80%
20%
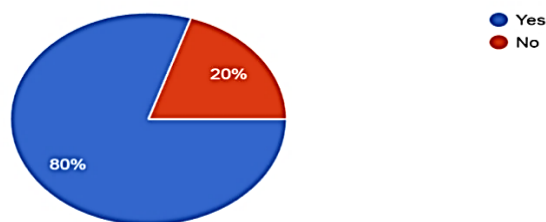
A high percentage of students (80%) have a partiality for the efficacy of the teachers' online comments and corrections in developing students' composition writing skills. It is worthy to note that a minority (20%) of students do not approve the efficacy of teachers' online comments and corrections in helping improve their writing skills.

Figure 5: Students' preference of teachers' online comments and corrections

5. What types of online comments and corrections do you prefer to improve your essay writing?
60 responses
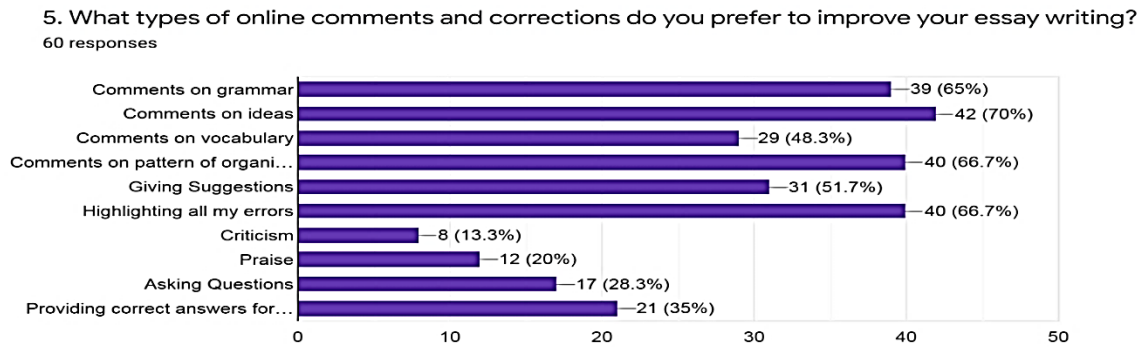
A significant number of students exhibited a clear preference for comments on ideas (70%) and patterns of organisation (66.7%), error identification, and comments on grammar (65%), with a moderate preference for suggestions (51.7%) and vocabulary comments (48.3%). Correcting mistakes (35%), asking questions (28.3%), praise (20%), and criticism (13.3%) were the least preferred types of comments.

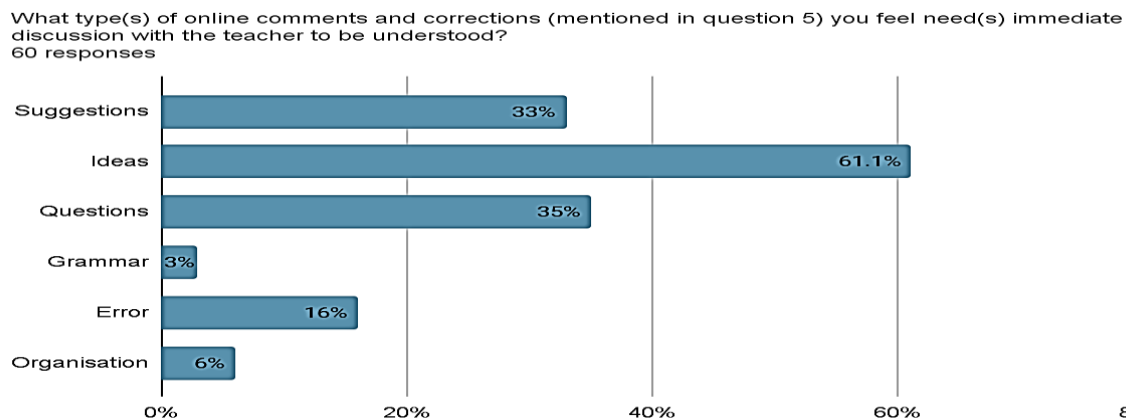**Figure 6: Students' preferred types of comments in interactive formative assessment**

What type(s) of online comments and corrections (mentioned in question 5) you feel need(s) immediate discussion with the teacher to be understood?
60 responses

A high percentage of students (61.1%) want to discuss comments on ideas, 35% desirecomments in the form of questions, and 33% select suggestion comments during online teacher-student discussion. The least preferred types of comments are comments on errors (16%), organisation (6%), and grammar (3%).

7. Discussion of Findings

In order to achieve the research's aim, the data obtained from both the teachers' and students' questionnaires are cohesively discussed and not necessarily orderly analysed. The findings from this study clearly indicated the invariability of the teachers' writing online formative feedback. In other words, classroom methods were correspondingly transmitted to the digital world with the only difference; the pen and paper were replaced with a keyboard and e-paper. Apparently, the physical face-to-face interaction between teachers and students is absent in this manner and when teachers try to use other methods out of the ordinary, like the video/audio recording of the formative e-feedback. Nonetheless, when reviewing students' answers, they show that 58.3% of students mostly appreciated

the effect of the asynchronous written feedback on improving their essay writing for various potential reasons: they could be the habitual effect that this manner has on students because "writing improves when students are assessed in the format with which they are most experienced—pencil and paper, or word processing"(Graham, 2011, p.10), the well- explanatory feedback teachers write, or the satisfactory result this method yields. The second-mentioned reason is valid due to the exhaustive nature of the teachers' online feedback, which covers both micro (grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics) and macro (content, organisation, and discourse) aspects of writing, as reported by all teachers, while the latter reason is supported by a significant proportion of students (43.3%) who reported that the teachers' written feedback is very helpful.

Teachers' written feedback was overwhelmingly appreciated by the majority of students, in contrast to screen-cast asynchronous feedback, despite the fact that about half of the sample claimed that the formative online feedback they received only averagely improved their writing. Although a positive correlation has been found between student writing performance and their perception of the feedback (Ebyary&Windeatt, 2010), this study proves the opposite. The mismatching of students' perceptions of the efficacy of the feedback and their level of writing signals an important caveat that students either lack understanding of the comments, do not trust their judgement of what is expected by their teachers, or do not

follow-up on teacher feedback, as admitted by the subjects of Lee's (2011) study.
In line with Lee's study, this study found that students may ignore comments that do not match the type of comments and corrections they focus on or prefer. To clarify, students may mostly focus on comments on ideas, organisation, errors, and grammar, which are students' referable types of comments to improve writing rather than other comments. As a point of implication, students' preference for specific types of comments highlights the importance of selective feedback, which is considered, according to Lee (2011), as the preferred method of feedback to avoid providing students with feedback that is difficult to understand by students.
Nevertheless, a different list of comment types was given by students when they were asked about the most problematic types of comments that necessitate immediate discussion and explanation by the teacher; ideas, questions, and suggestions are ranked at the top of this list. The possibility of various interpretations, alternatives, and understandings of these comments makes students unable to decide on the best correction; therefore, they need clarification from the teacher. The nature of questions, for example, requires iteration of an adjacency pair of question-answer; consequently, this type of comment remains incomplete in the absence of teacher-student interaction. Therein lies the justification of the students' selection of the discussion of the teachers' e-feedback via video conferencing as the second most effective method of feedback delivery.

Regardless of what teachers achieved and students received in the online formative assessment, problems like poor internet connection and technical reasons such as the incompatibility of the digital format of the essays, big classes, and the long writing assessment turnaround have been majorly stated by teachers as the real obstacles to the online feedback delivery. According to teachers, solutions to these limitations are basically two options: teachers either use virtual video conferencing in which the internet problem should be solved, or discuss the e-feedback in the old-fashioned way, which depends on a hard copy of students' essays and subsequent teacher-student interaction in the classroom. However, the success of the first remedy does not only depend on the internet but also on students'

preparedness to use the online formative feedback. In order to ensure students' readiness, "formative assessment needs to be done early in an online or blended course to makesure that technological obstacles are not preventing students from succeeding in this environment"(Baleni, 2015, p.230). Similarly, the effectiveness of the second solution can be compromised due to the alteration of the course span. In either solution, teachers call for reducing the number of students to help manage the workload of each student's writing assessment.

Conclusion

The findings of this study clearly show students' preference for interactive online feedback on their writing because the current asynchronous written feedback teachers use could only averagely improve their writing. Teachers as well as students exhibited a willingness to engage in synchronous collaborative meetings via video-conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet, the widely used platforms in Algeria, where reflective formative assessment takes place in the form of selective feedback discussion. Nevertheless, any teachers' and students' initiatives are hindered by the slow internet connection and the long time needed to correct students' essays. While the problem of the internet needs a governmental effort, assessment turnaround requires the application of alternative assessment tools. This study suggests the use of web-based assessment, which has been proven to be significantly effective in shortening the assessment time (Togatorop, 2021; Graham et al., 2015). Besides, it was found effective in providing feedback on grammar, usage, mechanics, and style, and it gives more time for teachers to focus on other aspects of writing (Shim, 2013). In a nutshell, the blended approach, teachers need to vary their online writing feedback methods, taking into consideration students' preference for interactive feedback. As importantly, a good application of the various types of e-feedback depends on how well students are prepared for how to use the e-feedback.

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Towards a Fruitful Use of ICT to Improve the Writing Skills: Priority of Language Acquisition Planning

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Abstarct

It is becoming increasingly salient that the world has evolved tremendously during the last few decades, and with this persistent change, technology has been adapting as well. Hence, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) becomes the bedrock of nowadays interactions, and its tools are omnipresent in almost all life-spheres. Education, as a remarkable zone, has witnessed a considerable use of ICT tools that provide the pedagogical actors; that is, teachers and learners with an array of opportunities for a variety of tasks, options and platforms at an astonishing rate. However, the basic skills for language communication, such as writing, are still passing through a tenuous avenue. Accordingly, the present study aims to scrutinize both teachers and learners' perceptions towards the use of ICT to improve the writing skill.The study follows a mixed method approach that embraces a questionnaire administered to students, and interviews addressed to teachers. The obtained results show that the participants demonstrate positive as well as negative attitudes. Therefore, the development of rational and agile ICT skills and its introduction within a strategic language acquisition planning will be one of the most critical parameters of a successful teaching/learning experience.

Keywords : ICT, learning experience, language acquisition planning, writing skills

1. Introduction

Today, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become a viral driver of everyday life and economic activity. Correspondingly, ICT help teachers and learners to better learn foreign languages. According to Hubbad& Loannou (2017), the term "better" has expanded across dimensions other than effectiveness and research to encompass the following areas: learners pick up language knowledge or skills faster or with less effort (learning efficiency), learners can get materials or experience interactions that would otherwise be difficult or impossible (access).They can also learn with more or less equal effectiveness across a wider range of times/places (convenience), They enjoy the language learning process more or are willing to engage in it more (motivation), and finally the learning process require less space, less teacher time, or less expensive materials (institutional efficiency).

Indeed, 'Information and Communication Technologies (henceforth ICTs) contribute greatly to today's education settings. Such technologies enhance teaching methods by providing students with an intellectually sound environment that promotes creativity and that caters to students' need '(Prihatiningsih, 2011, p 34). English is considered as a window to the world, and its importance necessitates using modern and innovative techniques and materials of teaching to face the challenges encountered by the students. Educational bodies and specialists in pedagogy of EFL teaching and learning claim that it is not enough to have knowledge, students must know how to use knowledge in real-life situations.

Therefore, the last two decades have witnessed more focus on learning how to write, since the writing skill is considered as a tool for effective communication of ideas, and in research work(Dar and Khan,2015). As well as the other developing countries, Algeria has confessed the importance of e-learning and emphasized the urgent need for the integration of the most recent facilities and methodologies of teaching/learning. Teachers receive training on the use of ICTs in order to promote students skills notably in teaching the writing skill. However, Students and teachers in the Algerian universities, notably in Saida university express reluctance and hesitation towards the use of ICTs(though acknowledging its necessity).

These problems will be explored through mixed method approach attemting to answer to the following research questions :
- 1-What are the teachers' and learners' perceptions towards the use of ICT in teachnig /learning the writing skill?
- 2-How can ICT successfully help to boost up students' opportunities in the writing process?
- 3-How can the integration of ICT- based methodological teaching learning strategies in language acquisition planning optimize the writing process wheel.

2-Definition of Language Planning and Language Policy

2-1Definition of Language Planning

Generally speaking, language planning (LP) is the deliberate intervention on the form or the use of language.It seeks to find suitable solutions for the problems that face the language;

it indicates the plans that are done by the government for the purpose of selecting a unified administrative language for any society. According to (Grin.F, 2003)language planning 'is A systematic, rational, theory-based effort at the societal level to modify the linguistic environment with a view to increasing aggregate welfare. It is typically conducted by official bodies or their surrogates and aimed at part or all of the population living under their jurisdiction (P.27-29). Grin's definition(2003) represents key concepts that may summarize the meaning of language planning as follows:

- ✓ Systemic: This means that it is an organized task that follows a given method and has either overt or covert goals undertaken gradually or according a well planned schedule.
- ✓ Rational: LP is a rational activity that is based on logical reasoning. It has some steps to follow without the neglect of any step for any reason. Rationality means also that policy maker notably linguists must be aware of the sociolinguistic realities existing in the society.
- ✓ Theory-based effort: LP is based on theory, theory about language on the one hand and planning on the other hand. Knowledge of the system of language, the characteristics governing its structure and the functions it fulfills.
- ✓ Linguistic environment: It may be understood as the object of language policy. This means whether it aims to increase the visibility of a minority language in cultural life, or to develop foreign language skills or even to suppress the use of certain languages.
- ✓ Welfare: this may have different meanings in different contexts. Here it means that individuals may feel welfare when they have a stable cultural heritage and identity that unify their nation.
- ✓ State: it means that language planning is manipulated by the state, it is a deliberate intervention conducted by political leaders to ensure the implementation of the plans through the formalization of policies in legislation.
- ✓ Solving language problems: LP attempts to find suitable solutions to language problems in many fields, especially in education.

To sum up, the aspects set by Grin (2003) are believed to be the fields and goals of language planning. They effectively cover the elements that are included to plan for a language change.

2.2. Language Acquisition Planning (or Language –in- Education Planning)

Prator's definition (Language policy-making involves decision concerning teaching and use of language, and their careful formulation empowered to do so, for the guidance of other's). (Prator cited in Markee 1986:8 in cooper; 1989) of language planning considers language teaching as an object of policy making,and suggests a third focus of LP, namely acquisition planning. When planning is directed towards increasing a language's uses, it falls within the rubric of status planning. But when it is directed toward increasing the number of users, speakers, writers, listeners, or readers, another category of LP is discussed. Consequently, acquisition planning is related to language distribution, which can involve providing opportunities to use a particular language to promote the number of users.Moreover,Djité (1994) pointed out that "whenever the government of any nation-state makes a decision vis à vis the language of its educational system,this decision may be classified within the realm of language-in-education planning at the societal level" (77).He claimed that the educational system contributes to the maintenance and spread of the language of instruction selected by the government and of the languages that should be studied in schools.

In order to introduce a linguistic reform, educationalists and policy makers should answer a set of questions that determine whether this or that project could be successfully implemented.Language –in – education planning and according to (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997) has six primary requirements.

2.2.1 Target Population Identification

First it must determine who in the school population will receive language education in which language(s). There is a need here to identify a target population of students/ pupils who will receive language education. Which children? Where are they physically located in the country? Are they in urban countries or in great towns? Are they ready to adopt this reform? How many will they be? Over what duration? How would these children who participate be selected? Who will make the selection? on what basis will the selection be made: on attitude? On aptitude? Or on motivation? For how many years could this language curriculum last? Or will new languages be introduced periodically to respond to popular demand as that demand changes in response to real – world political and economic situations. How do parents feel about language education? Will they be for or against their Children learning a given language? The questions posed are related to the identification of a target population, all of them would be answered in order to ensure the applicability of the project(Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997).

2.2.2 Teacher Supply

Teacher supply is an issue of paramount importance before implementing a language reform in general and foreign language projects particularly. Questions that could be asked are from what sector of the total pool of potential teachers will language teachers be drawn? What sort of education will they be provided to prepare them to teach? How is that training different from the training of any other teacher? How long will it take? Who will be the teacher trainers? What could the teacher know? These issues are not only pre-service training issues but also ones of in-service training, taking in consideration that languages change rapidly. Thus, arrangements could be made to provide viable in-service education at sufficiently frequent intervals so that language facility is not lost (Ibid, 1997).

2.2.3 Syllabus

Once the student pool and the teacher pool have been identified, it is necessary to be concerned about the syllabus. The syllabus question implicates the issue of on-set and duration of training. It answers questions such as: When should language education begin? at what grade- level? If the individual wishes to undertake a second educational language, when should that probably begin? What is the probable duration of that education? Is the time normally allocated to language study sufficient? Should all students be required to achieve the same proficiency? Is there any possibility of variable entry and exit? (Ibid, 1997).

2.2.4 Methods and Materials

One cannot discuss the question of syllabus without dealing with the issue of methods and materials: What methodology (is/ will be used to teach language?); how and when will teachers be trained in the recommended methodology? and who to compensate the differences between teachers during the training? (Taking into account that teachers do not belong to the same generation).Who will prepare the materials? How long will it take to do so? What density of materials per pupil is necessary to maintain a viable program? (Ibid, 1997).

2.2.5 Resources Identification

A fifth major area of concern in language –in- education planning that would be identified is the definition of available resources to support a language education programme, and where these resources come from? What will it cost per pupil per year to provide the necessary classrooms, teachers, and materials (including supplementary materials) to operate a viable programme? It will be necessary to put in place some sort of cost benefit analysis to determine the answers to this set of questions (Ibid, 1997).

2.2.6 Evaluation

Evaluation is an important issue that affects directly all the other areas. Questions to be addressed here are: what level of proficiency is a student expected to achieve at the end of each study? How will it be determined whether the student has in fact achieved that level of proficiency? Who will prepare the assessment instrument? How long will it take to prepare such instrument to be administered? How often? What will be done with the results obtained? Will the assessment results become criteria for the evaluation of teachers? At the same time, it is necessary to evaluate the whole system. How effective is the methodology? How useful are the materials? Therefore, is the educational program effective? Is it meeting the societal needs and objectives designed at policy making level?

Consequently, planning projects in general and especially in educational issues are ongoing processes that would not only follow a clear and continuous policy, but respond to the inevitable changes that could be flexible because the potential problems are unlimited. In addition, discussing and evaluating what is going wrong prove to the useful not only for the success of this project, but any future ones. Unfortunately, this has never been the case of projects and innovations within the Algerian educational system where the strategies of evaluation and reorientation seem to be absent. Thus, the educational institution must assume its responsibility in the planning, implementation and evaluation of their programmes and reforms:

> Plan of any kind usually looks grand on paper, and a readable, apparently feasible,
> clear plan can help to wrinkle funds from the tightest of purses and co-operation
> from the strictest of sources, but the proof of the plan lies in the implementation.

(Hayes, 1983, p.25)

The social and cultural settings where any reform is to be implemented must be well-considered. Unfortunately, decision- makers in Algeria who are supposed to create and develop such educational reforms seem not to be aware of the remote areas (villages and small towns) and their special characteristics and conditions, and of the population for whom their projects are made. In other words, they expect equal successful learning from a student

who lives in a rural spot some hundred kilometers far from the town and a student from the town, ignoring the two different social realities, the different social expectations, the different forms of knowledge and education and mainly the different local constraints. In addition, one cannot expect from a student to learn a foreign language efficiently with shortcomings that already exist in the system, like the total absence of libraries or any extra reading or listening materials in the foreign language.

3. ICT in Education

The use of computers began to spread in schools and universities in the more developed countries around the 1980's. However, investments in ICT is more limited in developing countries. Today, students' and teachers are surrounded by information and technologies. Indeed, ICTs have become in a short time, one of the building blocks of contemporary society. Developed countries have invested enormous budgets for the use of technology in schools. For example, The United States of America has invested up to US$ 1 billion in the use of technology in public education (Cairncross, n.d). Global investments differ from one country to another; for instance, in the United Kingdom, the government spent £ 2.5 billion on educational ICT in 2008-09 (Nut, 2010). In Newzealand, $ 140 million is spent every year on schools' ICT infrastructure (Johnson and Roggers, 2009). The integration of ICT hence involves enormous efforts and a wide variation on the levels of ICT starting from computers to telecommunication technologies to the use of internet. These are generally determined by social and economic conditions of each country and each region.

4. Methodology

In order to address the practical issues mentioned above, the present study depends on a research methodology that stresses the deployment of a questionnaire andan interview as main data collection instruments. In this respect, research methodology is defined as "a way of thinking about and studying social reality" (Strauss,1998,p.3).It is used to seek answers to the research questions, and it encompasses a method that is a set of procedures and techniques for gathering and analysing data.

Within the course of the investigation process, the researcher uses an explanatory sequential mixed method design which denotes collecting, scrutinizing and integrating both quantitative and qualitative paradigms in a single study to comprehend a particular problem (Creswell, 2012). Also mixed method research consists of merging, integrating, linking or embedding the two research strands. Within this framework, the researcher begins with the quant data, and then collects the qual data for the sake of explanation.

In order to understand perceptions of ICT, it has been necessary to talk and listen to people who are involved in and affected by the process. Hence, the researcher has conducted a series of interviews and semi-standardized questionnaires to explore the respondents' views on ICT. The interview protocol includes a number of questions. These questions are generally open-ended. It serves to evince opinions about the availability of ICT facilities,

students'performance in writing tasks, the challenges that encounter both actors, teachers and students, in using ICT. Teachers are key informants of interviews; they are agents that perform the pedagogical acts.

At the other end of the spectrum, a semi-standardized questionnaire contains structured questions such as closed questions and open-ended questions. The former is popular with researchers, the respondents have to check the appropriate box, and the data are automatically recorded and easy to administer. The latter permit more flexible answers to convey ideas and comments in an open ended manner. A questionnaire is said to be standardized when each respondent is to be exposed to the same questions and to the same system of coding responses. The aim here is to ensure that differences in responses to questions can be interpreted, and its mixed format makes it suitable in a diverse range of situations. In addition, the questionnaire is divided into three main parts: the efficiency of ICT, merits and demerits of ICT. The other questions were specified for background information on students 'assessment level in writing and the frequency of ICT use. The questionnaire was administered to third year students at the University of TaharMoulay in Saida. The approach to sampling was non-probability purposive sampling.

5. Findings and Discussions

5.1Questionnaire

5.1.1Background Data

As far as the first statement is concerned, the majority of students assessed their level in writing as good (49%) and very good (31%). This may be due to the continuous use of ICT tools. (46%= always and often) on regular basis.

5.1.2: Attitudes Towards ICT Effectiveness: Results obtaines are illusrtrated in the following table:

Table1.Attitudes towards ICT Efectiveness.

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
1-Lessons explanation, exercises, and other online tasks given by our teachers(in Moodle for example or in Facebook) help me to improve my comprehension about the writing course.	22	56	22	6	2
2-Materials from the internet used as references such as videos, pictures, articles posted by teachers are very useful in understanding the lessons.	54	38	12	4	0
3-ICT tools are innovative and creative supplementary methods that can be used by teachers to support face to face classroom interaction.	22	58	20	8	0
4-Direct feedback from either the teachers or classmates at social media or Moodle can improve the quality of my writing.	22	28	34	22	4
5-ICT tools help me to communicate using English outside class.	44	40	18	6	

Answers given in the table above show that a significant proportion of respondents agree (51,85%-35, 18%-53,70%) with the usefulness of digital media such as pedagogical platforms (Moodle) and you tube and face book as engaging peripheries. They are essential and substantial to strengthen comprehension of the writing course. Creative and innovative to boost up face to face class interaction. Vital and pivotal to enhance communication .in both formal and informal settings. (31,48%) were undecided about the utility of online feedback.

5.1.3 Attitudes towards ICT Merits: Students attitudes towards ICT merits are summarized table 2.

Table.2 Attitudes towards ICT Merits

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
1-ICT allows me to easily interact with my classmates and teachers about the lessons via online.	38	50	14	6	0
2-Acceeding to platforms (such as Moodle and Facebook) is easy to use because we can take assignments, tasks, online.	22	46	26	12	2
3- ICT allows me to get access to references and receive explanations about the lectures rapidly and easily.	26	56	20	6	
4-Online activities and discussions motivate me to learn more about English writing.	40	34	22	12	

As far as ICT merits are concerned, the majority of students agree (51,85%- 46,29%-42,59%) that it enables them to get cushy interaction, full access to a myriad of resources (references, videos, pictures......etc) smoothly and rapidly, and to be zealous to learn regularly about language. One student affirms "I usually surf the websites like essay.pro and free essay.com. I dive in and watch YouTube. I also get in touch with Moodle platform. I discover that these electronic arenas are so useful"

5.1.4 Attitudes towards ICT Demerits

Table.3 Attitudes towards ICT Demerits

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
1-Students who have no access on the internet or who don't have personal computers could face problems with this type of learning.	66	28	10	4	0
2-The procedure of access to the platforms is difficult to understand and to follow for the students.	6	36	30	28	8
3-Online learning especially writing assignments and discussions are time consuming.	6	22	22	40	18

As regards ICT demerits, students exhibit negative stance (**61,61%-33,33%)** towards a cluster of drawbacks as: the lack of net access, students nonpossession of personal computers(i.e; laptops)   intricacies to use platforms and complexities to apply teachers' online

instructions. A student further contends "ICT is of paramount importance but it is a double edged sword. We must consciously and cautiously use it"

5.2.Interviews: Teachers Perceptions on the Use of ICT to Enhance Students Writing Abilities

The participants are virtually unanimous on the importance of ICT facilities in today's universities. Though they claim that they are useful and beneficial, the fact we are living in show that students lack access to support services and electronic equipment as laptops, , smart phones, YouTube channels, social media and so forth. Their responses clearly show that the inclusion of these catchy tools are neither easy nor efficient since actors like teachers and students encounter countless obstacles to enter platforms to post up lectures, provide feedback, and the way to synergize these platforms to the syllabus on the part of teachers and to revise and receive evaluation on the part of students. One teacher further contends, "The availability of ICT facilities is essential and substantial. However, there are several deficiencies as regards students'lack of access toproper laptops and internet connection. The university does not provide any alternatives"

The second part of the interview uncovers the role of ICT to boost up students'writing performance. The majority of teachers make a special reference to the key function of ICT to foster the writing instruction especially in the presence of software MS word, and tools as grammar checkers. Again, it triggers students'know how capacities by correcting their own grammar and spelling mistakes, rehearsing language material, and improving syntactic and morphological patterns.

From another parameter, all informants acknowledge that ICT tools raise students'interests and awareness in the FL allowing them more interaction and collaboration, sharing and generating insights. Not only but they are also considered as bridging tools that relate both contexts formal and informal. However, one teacher claims that, "Improving writing needs face to face interaction, that is, students write and the teacher guides, corrects and evaluates mainly with first year students"

As far as the challenges that face the principal actors in using ICT are concerned, the participant emphasize on the required ICT skills as teachers and students are clueless on how and what technologies to use.Added to that, time constraints to master these skills. Along with this, the respondents ensured the lack of worthy training on how to use the new platforms namely Moodle (the case of Saida university). According to teachers, students show carelessness and lack of commitment.

6. Outcomes and Outlooks

It becomes crystal clear that ICT has occupied the educational and environmental landscape in a broader sense. The present study tries to question the notion of ICT in relation to the writing operation with the scope of investigating the attitudes of teachers and students towards the use of ICT to enhance the writing wheel. In addition, and in front of the recurrent

educational shortages, the introduction of a strategic ICT frame aligned with an effective writing skill seems to be quite advantageous. The exploration of the main data obtained through a mixed method approach used in this study has permitted to portray some relevant conclusions as to the effectiveness of ICT that positively affects students' commitment and involvement in the written tasks, and empowers collaborative and skilled learning. This study has then ascertained that these participatory digital resources have merits and demerits. Despite the presence of difficulties and contradictions, this study reveals key priorities:

Boosting the use of ICT and fostering students 'writing capacities will require efforts on many fronts, this, can be categorized as follows:

AXIS 1: Educational Language Policy

The use of ICT should be increasingly promoted and encouraged in language acquisition planning to meet the needs of the 21st century skills through a rethinking of areas such as to designate the sort of language proficiency; in other words, to focus on formal accuracy and communicative fluency in specific languages. Also, it seems quite beneficial to take into account who will teach the languages included in the curriculum. To put it bluntly, appointing competent teachers and empowering them by intensive pre-service and in-service training. Interestingly enough, actors as students are believed in educational planning to be a prerequisite element and their language exposure is not additional but meaningful. Furthermore, educationalists should take into consideration the community's support; thus, language planners are to conduct a detailed language needs analysis. A balance, then, between the government policies and the environment consent need to be carefully established. What follows, then, is to determine the appropriate methodology; in other words, what to teach and how to teach, and the suitable materials to support those methodologies. And, to work out a mode of evaluation for the agents of the pedagogical act: learners, teachers and the system as a whole.

AXIS 2: Teachers as Catalysts of Change and Prompters of Success

Teachers are considered as key actors and central in the pedagogical endeavour; thus, it is quite important to repeatedly update their ICT knowledge. Teachers reckon that it may be a good practice to create groups and accounts for students where the information can be accessed, and the fruit of learners' labour can be communicated. Also, teachers should ensure accountability and liability to improve good writing skills as they are a passport to academic achievement and personal fulfillment.

AXIS3: Learners

It is worth noting that learners should have full access and interplay with digital media as websites, blogs, and social networking sites. It is clear, therefore, that students should maximize exposure to the writing activities to enliven their confidence and self-independence to become quicker and flexible writers. This can be explained when the internet permits communication by providing varied and desperate peripheries for them to share, interact, and

voice out their concerns without hesitation or boredom. Jafre (2010) argues that "using social media can influence learners' motivation, and build up their social networking practices".

AXIS 4: The Learning Context

It is also worth pointing out that equal priority can be given to the learning context. In this respect, it is highly recommended to appropriate digital technology to the learning setting by building solid, reliable and impartial ICT infrastructure.

Conclusion

The use of ICT tools becomes a necessity in all the domains of life. It is also clear that education is irrevocably the weaving machine within which the fabric of individuals could be realized. It can serve as a toolkit for producing a myriad of values, skills and behaviours. However, ICTis a double edged sword as it has merits and demerits. Teachers and students should be conscious and cautious when using it since it is the throbbing heart of today's knowledge without which we can't row against the current of the world's technological progress

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Integrating ICTs in Teaching English as a Foreign Language: Challenges and Issues

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Abstarct

One of the ensuing vicissitudes of the global pandemic Covid 19 is the necessity of implementing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Algerian higher education. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) makes no exception. Indeed, ICTs have become indispensable for both EFL teachers and learners to deliver and retrieve lectures and information effectively. Thus, the pedagogical adoption of some ICTs is highly required to adapt to the newly set measurements of the global situation and guarantee the efficiency of the education process. Unfortunately, however, some teachers and students still tend to be uninformed and unknowledgeable about the appropriate utilization of ICTs, which might hamper the proper functioning of the whole process of education. In this respect, this paper attempts to examine teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of ICTs in teaching. Also, it inquires into the extent to which teachers at the department of English at Batna 2 University find themselvesskilful in using some ICTs. Besides, it explores the main challenges and issues that obstruct the effective implementation of ICTS. A questionnaire was designed and administered to 67 EFL teachers to collect the needed data. Descriptive statistics and interpretive analysis will be used to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data, respectively. Results denote that teachers' attitudes toward ICTs implementation are positive. However, some multidimensional factors relevant to teachers, learners and administration are likely to impede the process. These factors could be encapsulated in deficiencies in ICTs devices, digital ineptitude, and connectivity issues.

Keywords : Challenges, English as a foreign language, ICT, learning, teaching

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the world is hurrying due to the recent technological inventions and the introduction of new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). These new ICTs proved to have the power to change the world and facilitate the natural flow of different life domains. The acronym of ICT refers to the rising of the various telephone and audiovisual networks through a 'computer unified system of cabling' (fedena.com, 2020). So ICTs include communication devices such as televisions, radios, cellphones, computers, etc. for the time being, ICTs have become common sense. They have penetrated and affected different aspects of life, which is evidence that the world is moving towards total adoption of these technologies. In education, digital technologies and ICTs have become crucial, and the ministry of education and higher education in Algeria is working to develop this sector by introducing new technological devices and enhancing the country's internet infrastructure. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, the unexpected circumstances obliged the Algerian government to shift into using online platforms such as the ministry's official website, Zoom and Google Meet to continue teaching and learning; henceforth, adopting digital outlets that can facilitate this process. These global conditions brought by the pandemic prove that ICTs are more than necessary in educational settings and that traditional teaching and learning better transit into E-learning. ICTs currently used in Algerian education institutions include intelligent devices, projectors, online classrooms, video conferencing, microphones and digital recorders. Education is one of the most critical sectors that leads to the nation's prosperity, whether in politics or economic matters. For this particular reason, this exact sector must be developed and acquainted with the right technologies to help evolve the nation's labour market.

One of the significant issues when integrating ICTs in education is that choices are learning objectives based on the availability of specific ICTs rather than educational needs. The effectiveness of using ICTs depends on their different forms of use and the purpose of their service. Another issue of integrating ICTs in Algeria is that they do not function similarly for everybody and every location. Subsequently, the use of ICTs in Algeria depends on availability, affordability, and internet the power/ speed of internet feed. Much research has been conducted on the issue of integrating ICTs in higher education, and researchers believe and urge policymakers to invest in the domain of technologies and the use of ICTs (Vagargah and Jahani, 2010, ERknut, 2010). These researchers assert that policymakers and teachers should understand that education and ICTs cannot be separated because exciting opportunities can be presented and appropriately created using digital technologies. The integration of ICTs can indeed face different challenges. Still, the timely implementation of these tools, adequate digital training for teachers, legitimate planning, reformulation of the curriculum, and reconstruction of the teaching techniques can aid this process. As we have illustrated above, education is the engine of society, not only in developing knowledge and skills but also in creating human capital that can be responsible for more digital growth and prosperity (Mbodila, Kikunga, 2012). However, we shall not forget that it is not the ICTs that

develop the educational system but rather teachers who use ICTs properly to flourish and create attractive opportunities for learners (Kirkup, 2005; Wagner, 2005; Cited in cited in Mbodila, Jones, Muhandji, 2013). In this vein, this research attempts to respond to the following question:

2.The Role of ICTs

Decades ago, learning was based mainly on the classroom content through textbooks and a teacher-cantered approach. However, with the introduction of ICTs, education has drastically changed, and teachers become mentors rather than content experts. The introduction of ICT tools to the classroom helped learners develop their digital skills by accessing unlimited information sources like videos, podcasts, documentaries, and even learning from experts online. ICTs are changing and affecting the content of learning and affecting and changing the way students learn and gain information.

Educators in higher education are calling for a renovation in the curriculum and changing it from content-centered to competency-based. On the other side, teachers have also benefited from the use of ICTs in facilitating the teaching process through the use of data-show in the classroom, online classes presented by different digital platforms and delivering exams through digital websites. The implementation of ICTs in the school helped evolve the higher education sector as teachers and learners can currently maintain contact even outside the walls of education institutes.

Since teachers and learners can now keep in touch through digital tools and platforms, the trend of students' driven learning will continue to grow. It will prosper thanks to the recent technological inventions. The field of education seems unlikely to escape the influence of ICTs as the access to these outlets is growing; researchers like Kumar Sharma(2021) claim that "… this is leading to the ascendance of web-based learning as a popular mode of education being adopted by distance teaching as well as conventional institutes, we can say that adoption of ICT has opened up new and fundamentally different options in education" (p.2).

The use of online resources empowered learning and made it an activity that is no longer formed within programmed agenda. The use of ICTs can provide learners with asynchronous support to no longer be obliged to attend onsite classes and continue learning and advancing within digital ones. Due to globalization and the apparatus of the World Wide Web, the type of communication changed, and the world shrunk. Exchange of information, knowledge and expertise is currently and mainly done within digital sites and using different ICTs. Globalization changed the world's core, and those unable to keep pace with technological developments are left behind. ICTs are replacing traditional information tools, and they are presently covering most of the mass media like newspapers, radios, televisions and computers. Thus there is an ocean of knowledge to be discovered with a single fingertip. Modern technology and ICTs have also provided people living in rural areas with an opportunity to learn, advance and keep up with the rest of the world. Hence, governments have to make sure that these nation parts must be upgraded with the right technological tools.

3. Research Objectives and Questions

This paper endeavours to achieve the following objectives:

- Identifying EFL teachers' attitudes towards using ICTs in instructional settings.
- Highlighting the main ICTs tools deployed by EFL teachers.
- Pondering how teachers evaluate their skills in using ICTs tools.
- Scrutinizing the issues and challenges faced by EFL teachers when using ICTs tools.

Thoroughly, the finding of this paper will respond to these research questions:

1-What are the main challenges and issues that teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) might face when implementing and integrating ICTs in their Classes?

2-To what extent are these teachers skilful in manipulating ICTs devices?

3-How do these teachers perceive the integration of ICTs in the EFL class, and

4- To what extent are these teachers ready to implement them?

4. Methodology Design

4.1. Method:

This study deploys a non-experimental survey method, one of the primarily used methods in educational research. Indeed, the survey method proved effective and practical in the systematic collection of large sets of quantitative and qualitative data. It is considered an excellent measure of multidimensional and unobservable data relevant to attitudes, traits, skills and preferences (Bhattacherjee, 2012). In this vein, this study used the survey method to examine teachers' attitudes towards integrating ICTs in their classes. Also, this method was put into action to inquire into the extent to which these teachers master the use of ICTs. Besides, it highlights the main challenges that obstruct the efficient implementation of ICTs among these teachers.

4.2 Participants:

The target population of this study is teachers of English at the department of English language and Literature at Batna 2 University. The department has sixty-seven full-time teachers (permanent) of different ranks, ages and from different cultural backgrounds. Additionally, fifteen doctoral students are recruited at the department as part-time teachers.

This study's primary data gathering tool was sent to all teachers at the department via e-mail. Only sixty-seven teachers responded. Consequently, a sample of sixty-seven teachers was formed on a voluntary basis.

4.3 **Data Collection Instrument**

The authors of this article designed an online questionnaire to collect the needed data. The questionnaire involves five major sections organized as follows (See Appnedix A):

- The first section inquires into participants' background information like gender, age and years of experience.

- The second section uses a 3 point Likert scale to scrutinize teachers' attitudes towards ICTs. It comprises sixteen items factorized as two dimensions: Readiness to adopt ICTs and Reluctancy to use ICTs (See Appendix A). The scale's dimensions' psychometric quality were tested by calculating the Cronbach alpha coefficient (See Appendix B). The results reveal that the Cronbach alpha for the Readiness to adopt ICTs' scale and Reluctancy scale are .94 and .85, respectively. The latter would guarantee the internal consistency of the scales. This signifies that the scales meant to measure the two dimensions of attitudes would yield reliable results.
- The third section comprises two multiple-choice questions which aim to accentuate the ICTs and LMSs used by teachers to deliver their lectures.
- The fourth section examines the extent to which teachers master the use of ICTs.
- Finally, the fifth section involves open-ended questions to highlight the main difficulties encountered by teachers whilst using ICTs.

4.4**. Data Analysis Tools:**

The quantitative data gathered areanalysed through the use of descriptive statistics, namely the mean to find out the representative or typical responses. On the other hand, content analysis was employed to systematically analyze the qualitative data obtained from the fifth section of the questionnaire.

5. Results:

Section 1 Participants' background

The analysis of teachers' responses indicates that our sample contains 17 males and 50 females whose age ranges from 27 to 65 years old. These teachers have different ranks (Professors, senior lecturers, assistant teachers). Besides, they have various teaching experiences. Six years was the shortest experience highlighted by respondents. Therefore, the sample of this study is diversified, a fact that could entail varied approaches and attitudes.

Section 2 Teachers' Attitudes towards ICTs

Table1:
Readiness to adopt ICTs

Items	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1. There are many beneficial applications and implications of ICTS	100%	0	0
2. I am impressed when I present my lecture using ICTs	85.1%	0	14.9%
3. ICTs have a positive impact on teaching	74.5%	16.4%	9%
4. ICTs can provide new teaching opportunities	82.1%	16.4%	1.5%
5. Using ICTs is better than traditional methods	79.1%	20.9%	0
6. I am interested in using ICTs in my class	85.1%	4.5%	10.4%
7. Online learning is better than in-person learning	70.1%	23.9%	6%

Item	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
8. ICTs can help teachers teach effectively	95.5%	0	4.5%
9. For professional development, I would prefer to use ICTs	76.1%	3%	20.9%
10. I love everything about ICTs	64.2%	16.4%	19.4%

Table 1 demonstrates that all teachers agreed with the fact that ICTs have efficient and effective applications and implications. The large majority posited that they are interested in integrating ICTs in their classes. According to respondents, ICTs could positively influence their teaching. A minority of teachers were reluctant to use ICTs in their classes. They rejected the possibility of using ICTs even for professional development.

Table 2

Means of teachers

	Teachers' means
Agree	54.4
Neutral	6.8
Disagree	5.7

Numerals in table 2 denote that the great majority of teachers (54/67) agreed with the scale items. In contrast, 13 teachers are prone to yield neutral or negative responses. This implies that fifty-four teachers are inclined to use ICTs.

Table 03

Reluctancy scale results

Item	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
11. ICTs pose a threat to teacher's role	10.4%	3%	86.6%
12. ICTs are Limited	6%	0	94%
13. I feel uncomfortable when using ICTs	43.4%	0	56.7%
14. ICTs are dangerous	7.5%		92.5%
15. ICTs should be used only to teach unimportant subjects	26.9%	0	73.1%
16. I dislike ICTs	13.4%	0	86.6%

Table 3 highlights that although more than ninety per cent of teachers found that ICTs are neither dangerous nor limited, still some of them feel discomfortable when using ICTs. Additionally, the majority of respondents maintained that they do not dislike ICTs, and the latter could not threaten their role as teachers.

Table 4

Teachers means

	Teachers means
Agree	11.16
Neutral	0.8
Disagree	55

Table 4 shows that fifty-five teachers disagreed with the negative statements about ICTs. The remaining eleven teachers manifested opposite dispositions. These results confirm those of the Readiness scale. Indeed, the majority of teachers have positive attitudes towards the implementation of ICTs.

Section 03 ICT Tools

The figure below denotes that data shows and LMSs are the main ICT tools used by teachers in the department of English. Unfortunately, teachers do not utilize language laboratories to teach the content of their subjects.

Figure 01 ICTs
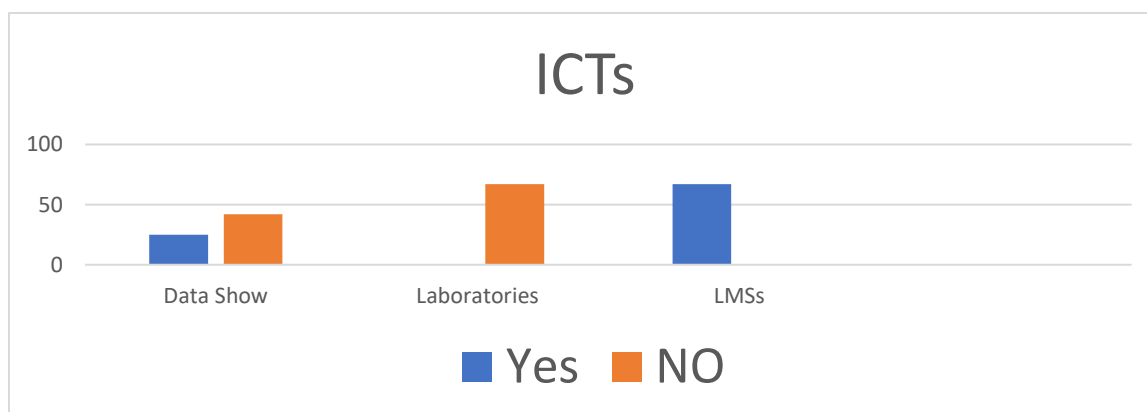
When asked about the learning management systems, respondents affirmed that google classroom, Personal website, Moodle, Zoom, and google meet are the leading platforms and applications used to deliver online lectures. As indicated by Figure 2, all

teachers upload their lessons to their websites, and only a few of them utilized the Moodle platform.

Figure 02 LMSs
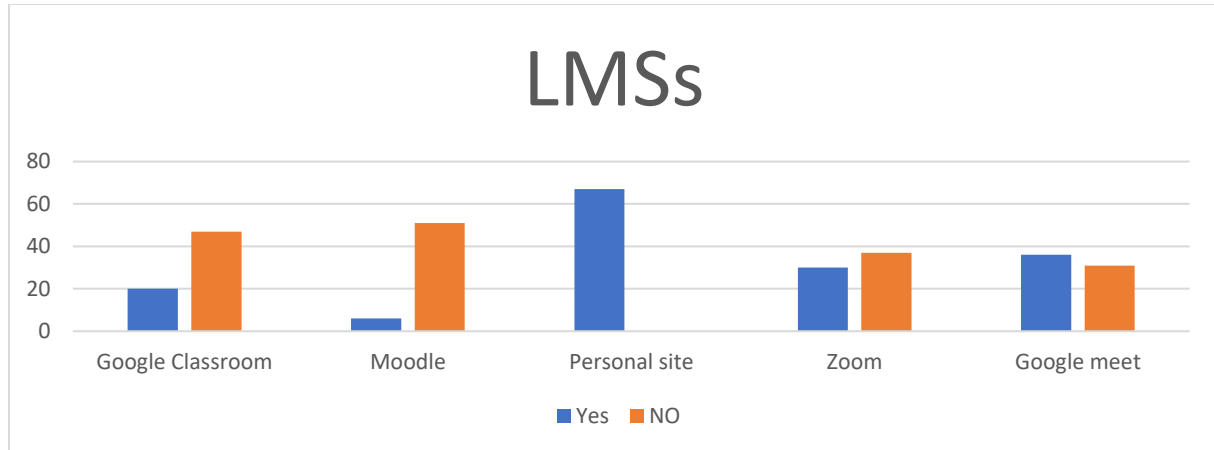
The motives behind using a specific LMS/ICT tool vary from one teacher to another. For instance, teachers do not use language laboratories, and data shows because the department of English does not provide them with favourable requirements.

All teachers deliver their online lessons on their website because it is mandatory. In other words, according to teachers' responses, administrative instructions prompted each teacher to offer classes using their websites. However, concerning the moodle platform, ZOOM, Google Classroom, and Google meet, most teachers maintained that they do not know how they function. Moreover, other teachers manifested some negative attitudes towards these tools. Indeed, they do not find them efficient at all.

Section 04 Teachers Mastery

Respondents' answers can be summarized in the following:

- All teachers know how to upload a lesson to their website.
- Forty teachers could use data shows appropriately.
- Fifty-one teachers are unable to deploy Moodle.
- Thirty teachers master the use of Google Meet and Zoom
- Twenty teachers can design lessons on Google Classroom effectively.

Section 5 Challenges and Issues

The interpretive analysis of respondents' answers to this section's items generates various challenges. These challenges are intrinsically relevant to eitherteachers, administration or learners. On the one hand, teachers posited that the shortage of training provided by Batna 2 University is one of the main issues that impede their adoption of ICTs. They highlighted that they do not use ICTs because they lack the skills that permit them to manipulate the ICT tool effectively. Furthermore, teachers acknowledged that the availability of ICT tools might be another challenge. In this respect, they put forwards that the absence of

equipped language laboratories could be a handicap and impediment to ICTs implementation in the department of English.

Also, teachers accentuated the importance of Internet connection in using some ICT devices. However, they stated that the Algerian Internet infrastructure is mediocre, the fact that would make the teacher reluctant to employ some ICT devices in their class.

On the other hand, students' readiness and affordability are other barriers mentioned by respondents. In this vein, teachers asserted that not all students are ready to use technological gadgets. Indeed, some students could not afford a PC or smartphone to access online lessons. In addition, these students might not possess the necessary skills that help them effectively participate in an online course.

Ultimately, lack of training for both teachers and students, Internet reliability, absence of equipped laboratories and ICTs devices in the department of English, affordability and the psychological readiness of students to use ICTs during the learning process are the prominent challenges foregrounded by teachers.

6. Discussion and Conclusions:

The findings reveal that the vast majority of EFL teachers (*M= 54*) at the Department of English Batna 2 University displayed positive attitudes towards implementing ICTs in their classes. Indeed, they posited that ICTs devices could help them improve the quality of their teaching and progress professionally. This implies that teachers are aware of ICTs' potential and usefulness. Besides, they are willing and ready to integrate ICTs into their teaching process. However, some factors like availability of ICTs instruments, teacher's and student's digital competency, favourable work context, and students' psychological and material readiness might highly influence the teachers' pedagogical adoption of some ICTs and LMSs. In this regard, all teachers are prone to deliver their lessons on their personal websites because they were compelled and restricted by the administrative instructions. On the other hand, some teachers tend to use other LMS s like Zoom, Moodle, Google classroom, and Google meet, for they can handle these tools properly.

A posteriori, despite the fact that teachers of English at the Department of English are not reluctant to explore and exploit the advantages of ICTs and LMSs, they are obstructed by multidimensional factors such as deficiencies in ICTs devices, digital ineptitude, and connectivity issues. In this regard, this research calls for the need for prompt equipment of language laboratories in all language departments. Similarly, it appeals for establishing a solid infrastructure to guarantee good internet connectivity. Finally, it accentuates the importance of intensive training for teachers and students to properly cultivate their digital skills.

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Appendix A:

Questionnaire

DearTeachers,

Would you please answer the questions below appropriately to help us complete our research on ICTs? Information provided will be used only for the sake of our study and will remain anonymous.

Thank you,

Section 01 Teachers' background

Age:……………………………….

Years of experience …………………

Rank …………………………………

Section 02 Teachers' Attitudes towards ICTs

Tick appropriately

Item	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1. There are many beneficial applications and implications of ICTS			
2. I am impressed when I present my lecture using ICTs			
3. ICTs have a positive impact on teaching			
4. ICTs can provide new teaching opportunities			
5. Using ICTs is better than traditional methods			
6. I am interested in using ICTs in my class			
7. Online learning is better than in-person learning			
8. ICTs can help teachers teach effectively			
9. For professional development, I would prefer to use ICTs			
10. I love everything about ICTs			
17. ICTs pose a threat to teacher's role			
18. ICTs are Limited			
19. I feel uncomfortable when using ICTs			
20. ICTs are dangerous			
21. ICTs should be used only to teach unimportant subjects			
22. I dislike ICTs			

Section 03 ICT tools

Which of the following do you use to deliver your lectures and lessons

Tool	Yes	No
Laboratories		
Data show (PC)		
Learning Management Systems		

Specify the type of LMS you use and justify your choice of LMS.

LMS	Yes	No
Personal web site		
Why?		
Google Classroom		
Why?		
Google Meet		
Why?		
Zoom		
Why?		
Moodle		
Why?		

Section 4 Teachers' mastery of ICTs

Which of tools of these do you master?

Tool	
Data Shows	
Moodle	
Website	
Google classroom	
Google meet	
Zoom	

Sections 05: Challenges and issues:

What are the main challenges and difficulties that could impede the teachers' implementation of ICTS?

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Appendix B

Reliability of Attitudes Scales

Reliability of Items (1-10)

Cronbach Alpha	Number of items
,949	10

Reliability of Items (11-16)

Cronbach Alpha	Number of items
,851	6

Some Tips Improving the Learning Process by ICTs Integration in Teaching a Foreign language

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Abstarct

The advent of the twenty first century and the use of the information and communication technologies (ICTs) have a certain impact on every aspect of our lives. From working to socializing, learning to playing, ICTs have transformed the way young people communicate and have access to information for the sake of learning. Technology becomes more and more embedded in local culture that is why the internet provided relevant and contemporary experiences that allow them to successfully engage with the world of digitalisation and prepare them for a better grasp of languages. In the context of increasing digitalisation, the rise of cultural policy was made amid claim free time, ICTs promote a new temporal organization of life: more time spent communicating, learn, to grow, to play all these activities intertwined in time spent on digital technologies to promote consumption demand (connected TV, VOD, podcasting, downloading, streaming) and the convergence of technologies, a new report appears in the time dominated by speed, simultaneity and multi-activity, but also by the continuity of connection to technical networks and social networks. This paper aims at describing the role of ICT's and seeking ways to improve the learning/teaching process by suggesting some tips to make the classroom an enjoyable place to learn. To better explore the situation, a questionnaire was administered to students to know their viewpoints concerning new technologies in learning a foreign language and the integration of ICTs in class.

Keywords : ICTs, class interaction, networks, foreign language, integration

1. Introduction

People nowadays are living in a constantly evolving digital world. ICT has an impact on every aspect of our lives, from working to socializing, learning to playing. Digitals have transformed the way young people communicate and access information and learn. Technology becomes more and more embedded in our culture that is why we must provide our learners with relevant and contemporary experiences that allow them to successfully engage with technology and prepare them for a better grasp of languages. No one denies that learners are motivated and fully engaged in the learning process when concepts and skills are underpinned with technology.

While in a context of increasing purchasing power and urbanization, the rise of cultural policy was made amid claim free time, ICTs promote a new temporal organization of life: more time spent communicating, learn, to grow, to play all these activities intertwined in time spent on the internet. enabled by digital technologies to promote consumption demand (connected TV, VOD, podcasting, downloading, streaming) and the convergence of technologies, a new report appears in the time dominated by speed, simultaneity and multi-activity, but also by the continuity of connection to technical networks and social networks. This mutation versus time is inseparable from a change in relations to cultural objects: increasing - dramatically and unprecedented - the number of accessible cultural products and multiplying the consumption patterns of the digital revolution accelerates the development of a widespread eclecticism.

For the teaching-learning process, educators always look for the ideal method to implement in their classes for effective learning. However, the use of the same traditional ways has received a harsh criticism for not creating a learning environment to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills of the students. Traditionally, the teacher was the sole source of information in the classroom, but with the shift to the learner-centered paradigm things are changed, and learners take their responsibility to enhance their own different skills with a small guidance from their teacher. Recently, the teaching-learning process has witnessed an increasing use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) which actually developed and changed throughout history and all over the world. In this regard, the blended learning has been used in the last decade. Thus, the classroom instructions changed by creating a blended method that support the effective and active learning.

Despite the fact that ICTs can make the didactic process easier and more interesting, both teachers and students faced some challenges and discover the new roles they can have as a result of ICTs integration in language teaching learning classroom. Hence, this research paper aims at explaining the importance of ICTs integration in the aforementioned process through a descriptive and analytical study that tends to analyze the different factors which make such integration more successful. Moreover, this paper discusses the different new roles that teachers could have while they train themselves to employ different ICT tools properly.

The enclosed article aims at including the role of technology and suggests some tips and strategies to improve different ways and styles to make a good use of this technology mainly in the domain of teaching to make the class more enjoyable. We will thus focus on education since we must provide our learners with relevant and contemporary experiences that allow them to successfully engage with technology and prepare them for a better grasp of languages. No one denies that learners are motivated and fully engaged in the learning process when concepts and skills are underpinned with technology. One can also suggest some tips to avoid the drawbacks of technology and how to use it promptly mainly in the domain of education to enhance learning and motivation.

2. ICTs Concept and Tools:

Information and communication technology involves the interdisciplinary process of collecting, storing, transforming, sending, receiving, analyzing and other different functions that are used through an electronic devices and tools. Similarly, Kent points out "ICT in education point of view refers to Information and Communication Technology such as computers, communications facilities and features that variously support teaching learning and a range of activities in education." (2004:223). In the light of his viewpoint, integrating ICTs in the teaching-learning process came to open new dimensions that could raise the quality of education. Such integration can also empower education since ICTs can be seen as media that help learner to have a wide range of information with a free and easy access. Thus, students are not obliged to be in the classroom to learn as learning can happen anytime and anywhere with the help of such technological tools.(Wernet, Olliges and Delicatch, 2000:120). According to Nordin et al (2010:56), ICTs can be viewed as a professional and valuable means to foster the didactic process. For teachers, it seems to be like a delivery mode and a source of authentic and valid text different types. And for learners, it is considered as valuable tool that provides them with different opportunities to develop their communicative skills and literacy skills by allowing them to search in an easy way (Nordin et al,2010:75).

In addition, it facilitates finding original sources, like articles from international journals, so students can them just by sitting in front of their computers and connecting to the internet network. By doing that, students can be autonomous learners and the learner-centered approach can be encouraged as well. All in all, Yunus and Salehi (2012:122) claimed that the use of information and communication technologies in the didactic process improves the quality of education and provide both teachers and learners with more learning and teaching supports.

2.1. ICTs Tools

Different types of multimedia technology in information and communication promote a new temporal organisation of life and these technologies often include components of transferring the target culture. Tools such as video documentaries, blogs, computer software, hypermedia, and mobile apps with the most recent version allows teachers easily create interactive teaching resources or lesson plans that are stored online.

2.1.1.Video Documentaries

They refer to those videos that can involve reading and listening and different speakers from different places over the world. Such videos can enhance students' different language skills and promote students abilities with different learning styles like visual and auditory learners. (Pusak and Otto, 1990:228).They use also language in action by creating a dynamic context of communication which help students to have cultural awareness. Thus, videos have created a paradigm shift of sorts in the world of teaching.

2.1.2.Mobile Applications

Mobile applications refer to the software applications that are developed to be used on small and wireless devices like smartphones and tablets (Pablos, Lytras, Tennyson, 2015:112). The word "app" can be used in the following collocational terms: Online app, web app and so on.

Hutchins noted: "By working with technology, using some of these apps will effectively help the teaching of culture and teachers to add new dimension to their teaching" (1991:196). In the light of his words, mobile applications can help students to study anytime, anywhere and with easy ways.

2.1.3.Blogs

Blogs can be considered as online sites where people, from different countries, can share their diaries about their experiences, habits, hobbies and so on (Campbell, 2003:289). In education, teachers can create classroom blogs in order to share different courses, questions, instructional tips, readings, assignments, or news with their students. And learners can take part in using blogs by submitting their written assignments, sharing resources related to the different courses they have. By using blogs, kind of collaborative work can be occurred and an effective learning can be achieved.

2.1.4.Hypermedia

The use of text and connecting it with audio, animation, graphics and video through hyperlinks can be defined as hypermedia. It also refers to the ability to move from one media means to another one which they are already combined in a form of video with subtitles for example (Burton, 1994:114). Providing learners with digital texts, which can be enriched with various instructional elements like: glossaries, vocabulary definitions and translations, can offer a powerful tool to enhance the students' different skills and competencies. (Boyle,1997:96).

3. The Role of ICT's

The multiple ICT tools can be used in different learning fields to offer several functions facilitating the learning-teaching processes.

3.1. Assistance

ICT is used as a tool for students to discover learning topics, solve problems, and provide solutions to the problems in the learning process according to Brush, Glazewski and Hew. It makes knowledge acquisition more accessible, and concepts in learning areas are understood while engaging students in the application of ICT.

3.2.Main Support in the Student-Centered and Self-Directed Learning

Students are now more frequently engaged in the meaningful use of computers (Castro Sánchez and Alemán, 2011:250-251). They build new knowledge through accessing, selecting, organizing, and interpreting information and data. Based on learning through ICT, students are more capable of using information and data from various sources, and critically assessing the quality of the learning materials.

3.3. Creativity in the learning environment

ICT develops students' new understanding in their areas of learning (Chai, Koh and Tsai, 2010: 117,211).It provides more creative solutions to different types of learning inquiries. Therefore, ICT involves purpose designed applications that provide innovative ways to meet a variety of learning needs.

3.4. Promoting collaborative learning in a distance-learning environment:

The use of ICT enables students to communicate, share, and work collaboratively anywhere, any time. For instance, a teleconferencing classroom could invite students around the world to gather together simultaneously for a topic discussion. They may have the opportunity to analyze problems and explore ideas as well as to develop concepts. They may further evaluate ICT learning solutions. Students not only acquire knowledge together, but also share diverse learning experiences from one another in order to express themselves and reflect on their learning.

3.5. Many opportunities to develop critical (higher-order) thinking skills

Based on a constructive learning approach, ICT helps students focus on higher-level concepts rather than less meaningful tasks. McMahon's study (2009: 301) showed that there were statistically significant correlations between studying with ICT and the acquisition of critical thinking skills. A longer exposure in the ICT environment can foster students' higher critical thinking skills. Thus, schools are strongly advised to integrate technology across all of the learning areas and among all learning levels. Where this is done, students are able to apply technology to the attainment of higher levels of cognition within specific learning contexts.

4.Challenges in the ICT'sUse

Infrastructure and facility of ICT is then needed to supply to the schools throughout the nation. A key factor in use of ICT is sufficient computer labs and ICT equipment. This is to ensure that subject teachers are easily access to ICT tools whenever needed (Hennessy, Ruthven, & Brindley, 2005:255). Lack of adequate ICT equipment and internet access is one of the key problems that schools specifically in rural areas are facing now. For example,

results of a research show that in Kenya, some schools have computer but this could be limited to one computer in the office only. Even in schools with computers, the student-computer ration is high. In addition, the report continues revealed that the schools with ICT infrastructure are supported by parents' initiative or community power (Chapelle, 2011:99).

In most schools, technical difficulties sought to become a major problem and a source of frustration for students and teachers and cause interruptions in teaching and learning process. If there is lack of technical assistance and no repair on it, teachers are not able to use the computer for temporarily (Jamieson-Proctor et al., 2013:144). The effect is that teachers will be discouraged from using computers because of fear of equipment failure since they are not given any assistance on the issue. Türel and Johnson's study revealed that technical problems become a major barrier for teachers. These problems include low connectivity, virus attack and printer not functioning. However, there are a few exceptions. Schools in the countries like Netherland, United Kingdom and Malta have recognized the importance of technical support to assist teachers to use ICT in the classroom (Yang & Wang, 2012:165-166).

In addition, teachers' readiness and skills in using ICT are playing essential role in the use of ICT in education. Teachers need sufficient ICT skills to implement the technology and to have high confident level to use it in a classroom setting. Besides, teachers require insight into the pedagogical role of ICT, in order to use it meaningfully in their instructional process. Teachers who have gone through ICT course are more effective in teaching by using technology tools as opposed to those that have no experience in such training. A school in Ireland reported that teachers who did not develop sufficient confidence avoided using ICT. Similar case happened in Canada, some teachers admitted they were reluctant ICT users because they worried they might get embarrassed that the students knew more about the technology than they did (Hennessy et al., 2005:296).

Beyond basic skill training, schools had used a variety of strategies to provide further professional development for teachers. According to Warwick and Kershner (2008:166) the significance and advantages of ICT should be known by teachers in order to conduct a meaningful lesson with the use of ICTs. Indeed, teachers should be sent to attend training courses to learn about the integration of ICTs in teaching and learning process. Nonetheless, many school schools used peer-tutoring systems. A more skillful teacher in ICT would assist and guide another teacher who has less experience with ICT along the preparation work for teaching and learning process. As what has been discussed, there are many factors to enable the use of ICT in classroom teaching and learning. Begin with policy, follows by the supplement of all the ICT hardware and software facilities, continued by readiness and skills of teacher to integrate it into pedagogical process. Besides, technical support and continuous professional development in ICT should be conducted from time to time. In short, all parties must cooperate in order to bring the nation to become a country advance in technology.

5. Study and Results

The objective of this research is to pick out some of challenges faced by teachers and learners in using ICT's. A semi- structured interview is conducted with teachers and learners of English language community at Maghnia University centre. Students are asked about their

use of technology at university and outside the classroom. They are also requested about the eventual obstacles they face.

Learners have diverse view about their use of ICT's. Most learners consent about their use of technology in learning at home and at university. They tend to use their mobiles in the classroom to follow the teacher courses while explaining. Moreover, they mention that they may consult e-learning platform Google Classroom to download the files their teachers post. They have told that use internet in order to attend different online courses. However, the minority of them respond by not using ICT's. They have opined by manifested their preference towards the traditional way of teaching. Teachers have their own position.

The majority of teachers agree about their use of ICT's in their teaching process. They haunt to the use of the projector in their classes in their courses to make their learners autonomous in their learning process. Moreover, they have expressed their use of technology in order to upload their course on e-learning university platform. In addition, some of them claim their use of internet for their online training when being recruited. The remaining disagrees of their employment of technology as they face different problems. The following graph manifests the results:
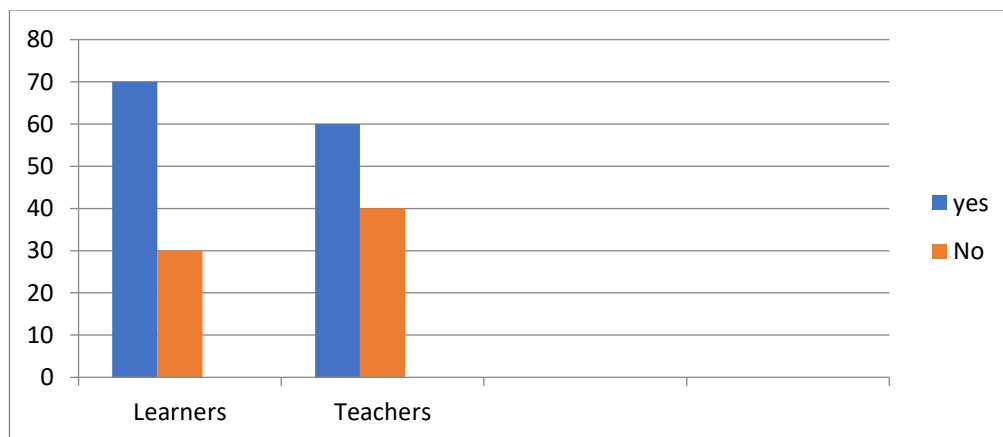
Graph One: Teachers and Learners' Use of ICT's

When asked about the obstacles that teachers and learners face, they have diverse views. Teachers claim that they encounter some technical problems in their classrooms. 40% of them assert that they do not have a special skill to employ the projectors in the classroom. 55% of them argue that learners complain about the unavailability of internet to do their online tasks. However, learners mention that they have some problems in using technological means as unavailability of internet, lacking the skill to access to different e- learning platforms. The following graph summarizes the findings.
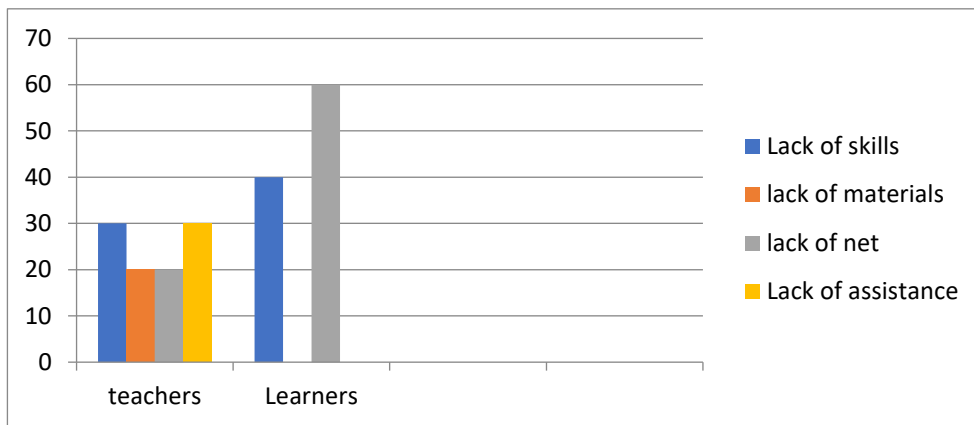
Graph Two: The Different Obstacles faced by Teachers and Learners in the Use of Ict's

   From the previous findings, the majority of teachers and learners of the English language at Tlemcen Faculty use ICTs in the teaching and learning process, respectively. Though they are resorted to as a facility in their practices, there are some barriers encountered in their use. The latter revolves around lack of skill and internet for both of them and the lack of materials and assistance for teachers.

   All findings will lead us to suggest more tips that may improve the learning process by ICTs integration in teaching English as a foreign language. As far as the teaching instructions are concerned, they can be listed as follows:

- Training is required at a basic level for both lecturers and students in order to participate fully in online learning.

- The use of authentic material and to be explicit, orderly, and well-organised as possible – particularly when students are learning new or difficult subjects.

- Online lessons must be very clear and well-structured, delivered in manageable chunks, allow good opportunity for students to practise what must be learnt, and enable opportunities for the teacher to see students' work and provide feedback on time.

However, some other tips related to the content of the lecture will actually orient and guide our learners for a better acquisition of the foreign language are noted as:

- High-quality content that is appropriate to the learner's level of knowledge and skill. It is important that educators first have to be careful in vetting and selecting online materials and programs to ensure that students are working on the best material possible.

- Poor impulse control can also be a real problem. High-quality online instruction and content that keeps the learner engaged.

- Setting some work that can be printed and completed in hard copy separately to make it easy for the learner and for more guidance.

- Encouraging students their own self-management strategy and encouraging them for the autonomous learning.

6. Conclusion

The concept of ICTs and its use has dramatically changed the whole world, and education is no exception. However, using different tools like whiteboards, computers, Internet, mobiles and so many others make the teaching learning process more motivated, interesting and active. In order to have a successful integration of the ICTs within a language classroom, some essential tips should be present like: the availability and authenticity of materials, autonomy and learner-centred design…etc. Such integration would help teachers to ameliorate their roles regularly in order to meet the requirements and the objectives that should be fulfilled in the classroomTechnology has not only motivated and engaged learners but has also made of them learner-centered. It becomes essential to teach learners how visual information works that is, how to comprehend and how to work with it; incorporating visual literacy such as maps, diagrams, tables, graphs, charts in a curriculum would be a challenge. Additionally, a student in a foreign language class acquires a lot of unfamiliar words, he or she must use creative thinking skills to put together sentences using unfamiliar vocabulary words. Foreign language students also improve their thinking skills by comparing the words they are learning with words of their native language.

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1. Learning through ICT means is challenging, and it is just in its infancy stage in the Algerian higher education sector; henceforth, it requires gradual refinement for a better efficacy for both teachers and students.
2. Students should not be discouraged to use ICT means to learn and to develop the language skills.
3. Teachers should incorporate the use of ICT means in their teachings to help students foster not only their reading and wring skills, but also other skills in their learning process.
4. ICT integration calls for the advent of learner centered pedagogy.
5. Feedback needs to be learner centered. ICT and Peer-feedback facilitate learner autonomy in writing.
6. Electronic portfolios help students store their written products and they work to develop their writing skills.
7. E-portfolios are innovative ICT teaching methods. They open avenue for new paradigms towards effective teaching and assessment.
8. E-portfolios help in assessing students' writing abilities and enhance their attitudes towards writing and assessment. They are very useful especially in enhancing the reading skill and by extension writing skills.
9. Teachers should use Audio books in their classes especially with students with visual impairments. They enriched learners' vocabulary and pronunciation.
10. A call for publishers to make shorter versions of audio books and add more content books to the list of published works. In addition, recording academic books is interesting to students with visual impairments.
11. Offer the services of recording books and make it available at all universities.
12. Further empirical studies are needed to explore the effectiveness and viability of the integration of ICT means in both teaching and assessment.
13. The use of ICT in the Algerian context undergoes many challenges especially in the absence of the provided means and resources.
14. Universities and higher education institutions should provide the teachers and students with the necessary equipments that facilitate the process of the online learning. It is crucial to provide appropriate infrastructure equipped by technological gadgets and connectivity.
15. Universities should endeavour to provide all their students with an appropriate and equitable level of experience of ICT.
16. Teachers should exploit the potential of ICT to develop a wide range of students' skills as the higher-order skills of problem-solving, synthesis, analysis, and evaluation.
17. The ministry and universities should set conventions with network providers, for affordable Internet quotas, and with international software providers, for proofreading and plagiarism checkers.
18. Teachers need to adjust their practices to the requirements of distance and online learning, not only through posting lessons, but also via holding live meetings for discussions that promote social learning.
19. Training all educational poles on how to use the technological platforms used at each university.
20. To instill a culture of inclusion among teachers, students, and administrators alike, to realize that it's high time we coped with the digital age.

Conference Recommendations