Questioning business English teaching during the pandemic era: Challenges and prospects in E-learning

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the shutdown of industrial, economic, academic, and public institutions all across the world to ensure social separation among individuals. On the education ground, decision-makers called for a switch from on-the-ground to online instruction as a remedy to this challenging issue. This study, therefore, aimed to investigate the primary challenges that English for Specific Purposes teachers and learners encounter in the Higher School of Management of Tlemcen, Algeria in E-learning classes, as well as the most effective ways and skills to cater to the needs of this global age during this pandemic era. This research is a case study conducted on 5 ESP teachers and 60 first-year learners. The data collection was through a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Findings revealed that despite their recognition of the vital importance of such courses, both teachers and learners encounter a set of challenges related to organizational, technological, pedagogical, and psychological issues.

Keywords: Business English; COVID-19; E-learning; pandemic.

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1. Introduction

Starting in December 2019, the COVID-19 Pandemic was initially discovered in Wuhan, China in the sea market and quickly spread all over the globe. To manage the threat of the extremely infected societies and diminish the large number of dead individuals by this coronavirus, particularly once the vaccines have not been accessible and administered to the rest of the world, an urgent worldwide call of closing almost all private and public establishments with all their various kinds of activities have been made as a necessity by the countries' decision-makers.

On the pedagogical ground, a shift from in-class instruction to online learning was seen as an alternative way to this challenging context to ensure social distancing among students (Bianco, Giaconi, Gison, D'Angelo & Capellini, 2021). Online instruction is, thus, considered to be of great benefit to language learners, teachers, administration staff academic institutions, and universities to enhance the learners' autonomy and self-confidence in learning the language (Cantoni et al, 2004; Kelly & Bauer, 2004) and to "reduce education costs, consistency, timely content, flexible accessibility and convenience" (Alizadeh, 2012, p. 427).

Algeria, like almost all the countries around the world with all its numerous schools, faculties, and deanships, was obliged to implement E-Learning in all levels of its higher education. The Higher School of Management, Tlemcen (the former Preparatory School of Economics and Commercial Sciences) was not an exception. As part of this transition, the latter has answered the request of the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Odiana, Roemintoyo, & Rejekiningsih, 2022). At the start of this pandemic, E-learning classes were built on a synchronous model where student/ teachers interactions were primarily based on digital communication through:

- Zoom (video conferencing): is an online application that allows participants to set up both audio and video conferences, share their screens, and make group messaging.

- Moodle platform: A "Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment" is a software platform that enables teachers to create lessons, manage courses, and interact with teachers and students. It is used to check the class calendar, submit practical assignments, have an online evaluation, and engage with their classmates.

Blended learning or what is known as Hybrid learning was also introduced in this academic institution. In this regard, instruction is introduced in a system of waves when on-ground classes are supported by online sessions. However, despite all these efforts, E-Learning is still in its infancy in this Higher School as it is usually used in a way that teachers send assignments to the students via the Moodle platform or use videoconferences without paying more attention to what motivates and demotivates their learners to be active participants and what challenges may hinder the teaching/ learning process.

1.1. Theoretical Framework

1.1.1. Business English

English for Business and Economics (EBE) is also referred to as Business English (BE) it is considered one of the most important and widely instructed specialized courses everywhere in the globe. The driving forces for such a priority in this kind, of course, are closely associated with the globalization process, technological development as well as the liberalization of trade. Hence, English has evolved into a worldwide language of commerce to better handle the challenge of this global age. Estaban and Pérez Cañado, (2004, p. 137) argue that"…English has become the primary language for doing international business"

For successful business interaction among mother, multinational corporations, and even sister companies on the international scale, the use of English becomes a mass demand to achieve their

various economic activities like production, import, and export of merchandise and services within the international trade, advertising for goods, writing emails for customers, complaint or application letters, and so on. In this line of thought, Gore (2007, p. 1) writes "In today's business world, anyone working in marketing or advertising needs English to do their job. Whether you are talking to clients, discussing a new advertising campaign for your company, establishing a new marketing plan, or writing a press release – you will be using English more and more".

1.1.2.   E-learning in Language Classroom

The use of E-learning is not a recent activity; it started in the nineteenth century as a result of numerous factors including the advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), rapid technological development, as well as the enhancement of the learning methods, techniques, and strategies (Ghounane, 2021). Several terms, as a result, have been used for that purpose and applied in different perspectives such as online learning, virtual learning, distance learning, blended learning, E-classroom, web-based instruction, and technology-based learning (Maltz & Deblois, 2005). However, they are all used to refer to "…teaching and planned learning in which teaching normally occurs in a different place from learning, requiring communication through technologies as well as a special institutional organization"(Moore & Kearsley, 1996, p.2).

It gains much more popular nowadays since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic E-learning is not only used as a substitution for traditional classrooms in education but also in a variety of fields such as business, science, medicine, and agriculture where people from all around the globe need to keep working and share their information, this can be accomplished through using various platforms such as Moodle, Zoom, Teams, Google Classroom, Google Meet and … so on.

As for education, several investigations have been conducted on the use of E-learning to promote language learning. Scholars have reported different advantages of being considered a flexible approach that centers on the learners, allows for a more collaborative environment, facilitates communication between the teacher and the students, develops relationships, and sustains learning (Pascu, Simo & Vernica, 2019). The teacher is seen to be a medium enabling them to use different kinds of computer operating systems for the sake of learning and developing their autonomous ability (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2014; Liaw & Hung, 2003; Twigg, 2002). In this respect, Arkorful and Abaidoo (2014) argue that e-learning can be used as a powerful tool for students at higher educational levels to acquire their education, peruse their objectives, and maintain their careers

In experimental research conducted by Alizadeh (2012), 30 language learners from Iran at a private language institute were randomly assigned into control and experimental groups to identify the challenges of online language courses and check their productive and receptive skills (Gipal, Carrillo & Mallonga, 2022). Results from the control group revealed that online courses do not improve their listening and speaking skills because of the practical and pedagogical problems they faced. Learners, however, only developed their autonomy while doing their tasks.

Extensive research has also shown that E-learning during the CORONA virus was not always effective as it was subject to a set of challenges such as psychological issues. Mahyoob (2020), for instance, in his research work conducted on 184 EFL learners in Science and Arts College, Alula, Taibah University, Saudi Arabia (Sharifzadeh, Rahimi & Siahpour, 2022). Results revealed a negative association between online learning and students' satisfaction during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Technical, academic, and communication challenges were also seen to be the main factors influencing language classrooms.

For a similar purpose, Kerkeb (2021) has undertaken her research on both EFL teachers and learners from Ain Temouchent University with the main aim of investigating their attitudes, challenges, and opportunities of using online learning the Higher Education. Results unveiled both students and teachers' positive attitudes toward technology-based education (Alharbi, 2021). As for their readiness to adopt such a model, findings revealed teachers were not ready as they lacked technological-based skills.

A strong relationship between E-Learning and students' lack of motivation and interest in those courses has been reported in the literature (Coman et al., 2020; Maltby & Whittle, 2000; Yusuf & Al-Banawi, 2013). Coman et al. (2020, p. 20), in this respect, state that "when using E-learning platforms there are also some elements that might be considered obstacles in students' process of learning, such as decreased motivation in students, delayed feedback or help". The driving forces of these issues, according to them, may be related to the unavailability of the teachers and the feeling of isolation of the learners.

As E-learning is governed by technology, other studies relate the issues of E-learning to the low access to the internet, the lack of technological tools, and the literary skills to use new devices such as computers, laptops, cameras, printers, and scanners. In this vein, Coman et al. (2020) report to Sadeghi, (2019), it is, therefore, of paramount importance to be prepared to use those new technologies and to be trained in terms of didactics and psycho-pedagogical learning (Kerkeb, 2021).

1.2. Purpose of study

This current paper, therefore, endeavors: to identify the challenges confronted by both ESP teachers and learners in the Higher School of Management, Tlemcen in E-learning classrooms during COVID-19; explore the effectiveness of e-learning in Business English classrooms; look out for sensible solutions to overcome these obstacles and make the language course more motivating and enjoyable. This study aims, therefore, to contribute to this growing area of research by exploring the ESP teaching situation in the School of Management and bridging the existing gap between the students' educational requirements and the needs of the current situation. It is hoped that this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the main obstacles, challenges, and issues affecting the teaching/ learning process during the period under investigation. Moreover, it is a significant endeavor to suggest several implications to make those sessions more interesting and motivating for both ESP teachers and learners by providing some important insights into online ESP course design, materials selection, and developing teaching quality.

The following research questions were addressed to attain these objectives:

Q 1: What are the primary challenges that ESP practitioners and learners in the Higher School of Management of Tlemcen encounter during the COVID-19 Pandemic era?

Q 2: Is the e-learning model beneficial for ESP learners?

Q 3: What are the key recommendations for overcoming distance learning barriers and making e-learning sessions more motivating and enjoyable?

To tackle these issues, three research assumptions have been reformulated:

H1: ESP teachers and learners in the Higher School of Management, Tlemcen may face a variety of challenges during the COVID-19 Pandemic era while adopting an E-learning model for teaching Business English courses. These may be related to several factors such as Organizational, technological, pedagogical, and psychological issues.

H2: E-learning may not be beneficial for ESP learners as it may not cater to the needs of the current situation our world is facing, and may not fit the students' real academic and professional requirements.

H3: To overcome distance learning barriers and make E-Learning sessions more motivating and interesting, teachers, as well as students, may acquire and update their literary digital skills through attending extensive and intensive training; they may use also alternative software platforms such as Teams and Google classroom.

2. Materials and Method

The case study research was carried out in the Higher School of Management, Tlemcen at the end of the first semester of the academic year 2020-2021. This type of research design is commonly

approved in education for its ability to retain global characteristics and their significance to the real-life events of the entire population (Yin, 2009). Moreover, it is based on a triangulation design where both quantitative and qualitative methods are used "to study the same phenomenon to determine if the two converge upon a single understanding of the research problem being investigated." (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003, p. 561). In this respect, the data collection process was conducted employing learners' questionnaires and teachers' semi-structured interviews to unveil data about the status of online teaching and learning in Business English classrooms and cross-check the results obtained from both research instruments (Benharrats, 2021).

2.1. The Participants

This research work was based on the probability technique. Thus, 60 first-year learners in the Higher School of Management of Tlemcen, Algeria were randomly selected from an entire population made of 100 participants. This group consists of both males and females who came from different learning environments such as scientific, technical, and management streams. This simple random sampling technique is based on the idea that "…every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the study" (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p.348).

Similarly, all 6 available ESP teachers were initially invited to take part in this investigation. In this respect, it is to be stated that this school of Management is experiencing a shortage of ESP practitioners compared with the number of teachers of the other subjects. However, only 5 of them respond positively to being involved in this present study.

2.2. Data Collection Instruments

This present research is based on two data collection tools namely learners' questionnaire and teachers' semi-structured interview. The former was administered to 60 first-year learners in the Higher School of Management of Tlemcen using a *'group-administered method'* so that the sample population could be easily reached at one time (Aljarrah, Ababneh & Cavus, 2020). This data collection method is acknowledged in educational research to provide the investigator with an opportunity "… to explain the study and answer any questions that the respondents may have before they complete the questionnaire" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003, p. 396).

Moreover, a semi-structured interview was used to gather data from five ESP practitioners. This research tool is also popular for its possibility of using ready-made questions and, at the same time, providing the interviewees with more freedom to express their perceptions, ideas, feelings, and attitudes about the benefits of E-learning in English language classroom;

As for the procedures of the data collection process, it is worth noting that both data collection tools were first piloted through a think-aloud technique with a small number of research participants (Alonzo, Popescu & Ioannides-Zublaroglu, 2022). They were, thus, encouraged to provide feedback about the length of the questionnaire, its language, and the choice of items. This pilot test was used to check their validity and reliability or in Johnson and Christensen's words (2008, p.299) "it helps the researcher "to determine whether the items measure what they are intended to measure". Thus, based on the feedback of this phase, the learners' questionnaire was translated into Arabic; several open items were rephrased and replaced by closed-ended items, which seemed to be confusing and irrelevant to the purpose of the study (Caligaris, Rodraguez & Laugero, 2020). Moreover, during the administration stage, they were informed about the title and the purpose of these research tools and were provided with deep instruction on each part. Finally, they were encouraged to provide truthful answers for the success of the study.

As far as the layout of the questionnaire, it comprises three rubrics. The first one is about the learners' perceptions of the benefit of E-learning in business English classes. The second and the third are respectively concerned with the psychological and technological challenges the ESP learners may encounter in online sessions (See appendix A) This present elicitation technique is made up of a variety of question items, namely: Closed-ended items; Multiple-choice items; open-ended items. The first

category is about those items where the respondents are required to choose among the available answers. An example of this type is: Do you need a certain degree of technological proficiency for online courses?

- Yes

- No

The second category consists of the type of items where a variety of possible answers is pre-determined by the researcher, for example: Which pedagogical tools do you find beneficial to upload/ download online lectures?

- Moodle platform

- Zoom

- Collective Email

- teams

As for the third element, i.e., open questions do not offer any pre-determined reply. The respondents, therefore, are required to provide their answers. As an example of this type, does E-learning guarantee a direct interaction between teachers and students in Zoom videoconferencing, Moodle, and so on? And why?

As far as the layout of the teachers' semi-structured interview, it is composed of nine items; questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 are about their perceptions of the benefits of the online courses. Question 5 is about the organizational challenges, while questions 6 and 7 tackle the issue of pedagogical challenges, and finally, in questions 8 and 9, they are required to provide recommendations and suggestions to enhance the teaching and learning process. As for the procedure of this data collection tool, it should be stated that it was first sent to teachers through their emails while they were informed about its purpose and had an idea about the research items.

Regarding its administration, it is worth noting that it took approximately one week to meet and interview all the research participants. Thus, the investigator used two methods to record data namely a digital audio recorder and note-taking tools to avoid any possible shortcomings of the technological device. Thus, writing down some facts enabled the interrogator to provide probes, and ask for additional information and clarifications.

3. Results

Depending on the aim of the present study, the choice of data collection instruments, and the type of research items, quantitative and quantitative data analysis were based on scrutinizing the questionnaire and interview.

Quantitative data analysis is used, in this present investigation, to summarize and present the information into a statistical structure by sorting out the frequency and percentage of the research participants' answers in closed-ended and multiple-choice research items. Results were, sometimes displayed in a table, bar graph, or pie chart. The examples below are used as illustrations of this type of analysis:

- How often do you attend online courses?

- Which pedagogical tools do you find beneficial in online lectures?

Additionally, qualitative data analysis is used in a way to reduce and retrieve a set of information through coding data from the two submitted research tools. In this respect, thematic analysis and categorization were used to summarize findings, especially from open items to provide a thorough understanding of a particular event e.g., techniques for enhancing the teaching quality and providing more suggestions for enhancing online teaching and learning.

3.1. Students' Questionnaire Findings

3.1.1. Part one: students' perceptions towards the benefits of E-learning in ESP Classroom

Q1: How often do you attend online courses?

As for this first research item which aims to identify if ESP learners attend online sessions of Business English, results revealed that more than half (68, 33%) of the students attended sometimes those e-learning classes while only seven (07) participants reported that they rarely attend. Figure 1 provides further illustrations of the findings:

**Figure 1**

Students' Attendance in Online Classes
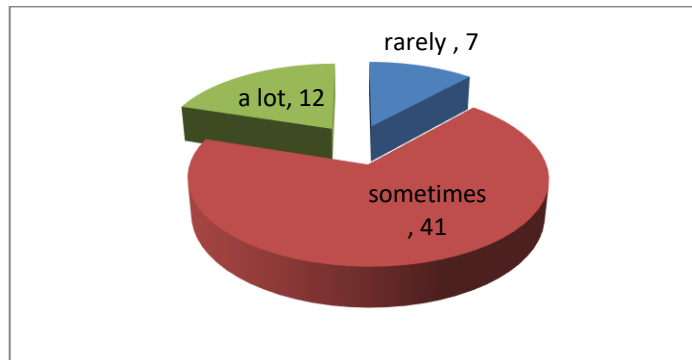
Q2: How often do you interact with your teacher?

Concerning the second research item, which aims at investigating the students/ teacher interaction in online courses, results unveiled that 14 students (23, 33%) always interact with their teachers. However, seven (7) of them do not. Figure 2 below provides more illustrations of the results:

Figure 2

Students/Teachers' Interaction in Online Courses
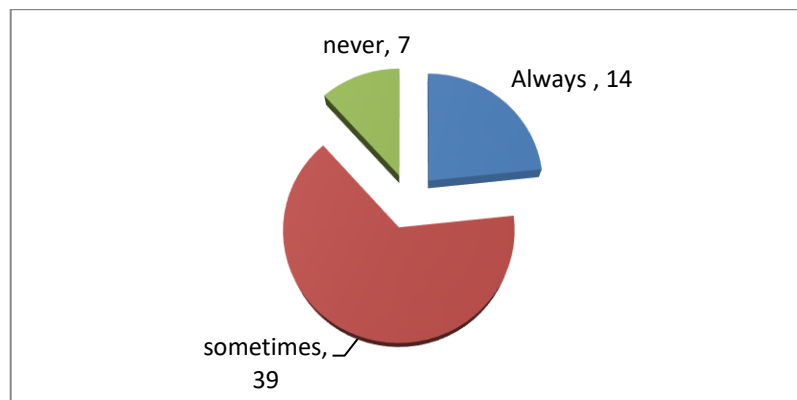
As far as the third question is concerned, its main purpose is to check the type of learning model the ESP learners prefer, 41,66% of the responses stand for the traditional model, while 20% report that E-learning should be used as an alternative way to support on-ground classes as seen in figure 3.

Figure 3

Students' Preferred Learning Models
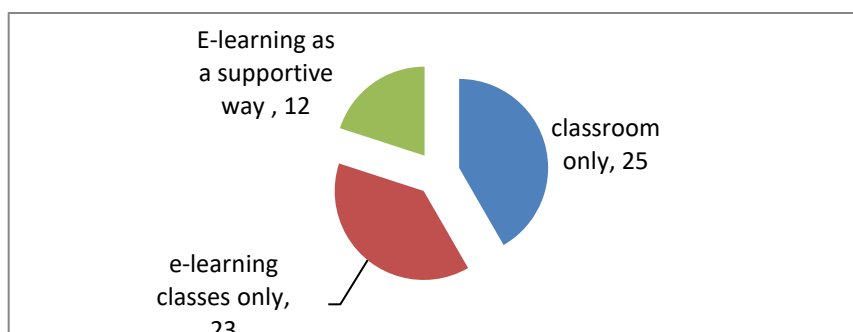
Q4: Do you agree or disagree with these statements; e-learning is beneficial for the students as:

Table 1

Students' Perceptions towards the Benefits of E-learning

		Agree	Disagree	Neutral
1.	It allows for more interaction between students and teachers	23=38,33%	37=61,66%	0=0%
2.	It is suitable for the learners' needs	14=23,33%	45=58,33%	11=18,33%
3.	It allows easy access to the content	35=58,33%	20=33,33%	05=08,33%
4.	It helps to develop the learners' competence	16=26,66%	37=61,66%	07=11,66%
5.	Using different types of resources with various formats	47=78,33%	16,66%	3=5%
6.	It enhances the students' autonomous learning	35=58,33%	13=05%	12=20%

As exemplified in table 1, results revealed different students' perceptions of the effectiveness of online courses. Almost two-thirds of the participants (61,66%) disagreed that E-learning allows for more interaction between students and teachers, while just over 38, 33% of the respondents disagreed. 23,33% reported that it is suitable to the learners' needs whereas 18,33% disagreed with this idea. 35 participants agreed that it allows easy access to the content. Another significant trend shows a considerable rate of about 78, 33% of the answers, which stand for using different types of resources with various formats. Just over half of those learners reported (58, 33%) that it enhances the students' autonomous learning, the lowest rate 05% expressed their disagreement however 20% remained neutral.

3.2. Part two: Psychological Challenges of E-Learning in ESP classroom

In this section of the questionnaire, respondents were required to report on the psychological challenges students face in online courses. From the table below, it is apparent that almost the minority of them (18, 33%) seemed to be motivated in these courses, just over half expressed their demotivation, while approximately 21, 66% remained neutral. Almost two-thirds of the participants (60%) believed that web-based learning is more interesting than a regular schedule; a few learners (13, 33%) were against this idea. 22 participants rating 36, 66% were in favor of the change to the online environment, less than half of them (46,66%) resist, and 16,66% did not provide any answer.

Concerning the psychological aspect, indeed the highest percentage stand for accepting the view that switching to an online environment causes teachers and learners to be stressed, followed by around 31, 66% of those who did not accept this statement, and 23, 33% of those who were neutral. As for the final item, 16 students (26, 66%) established a positive correlation between anxiety and the possible danger of death and contamination, the minority of them (33, 33%) reported negative results and more than half (55%) remained neutral as seen in table 2.

Table 2

The Students' Psychological Challenges in Online ESP Classroom

Statement	YES	NO	Neutral
1. Are you motivated to attend online classes?	11=18,33%	36=60%	13=21,66%

|			
2. Do you find web-based learning more interesting than a regular schedule?	36=60%	08= 13,33%	16=26,66%
3. Do you accept or resist change in the online environment?	22= 36, 66%	28=46,66%	10=16,66%
4. Does switching to an online environment cause teachers and learners to be stressed?	27=45%	19=31,66%	14=23,33%
5. Does a shift to online learning due to the possible danger of death and contamination cause a certain level of anxiety?	16=26,66%	20=33,33%	33=55%

3.3. Part 3. Technological Challenges of E-Learning in ESP classroom

Q1: As a student, which technological tool (s) do you use to attend online courses?

Concerning the technological tools, personal computers reached the highest score (60%) followed by the smartphone (55%) whereas only 4 participants reported having used both tools as seen in figure 4.

Figure 4
*Technological Tools Used by Learners to Attend Online Courses*
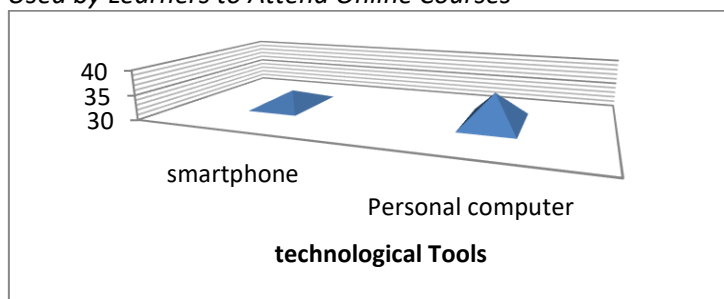
Q2: Which pedagogical tools do you find beneficial in online lectures?

Respondents were asked to indicate which pedagogical tools are more beneficial; results revealed that Moodle platform is placed at the highest rate (56, 66%), followed by collective emails (33, 33 %) and finally zoom (28, 33%). When asking them about the reasons, for several participants zoom allowed for more teacher/students interaction, Moodle platform enabled them to download documents, and collective emails were used to exchange information between all of them. There were some suggestions that Teams, Google Classroom, and Google Meet were more beneficial. The graph below (Figure 5) shows the results obtained from this research item:

Figure 5
*Students' Perceptions towards the most Beneficial Pedagogical Tools*
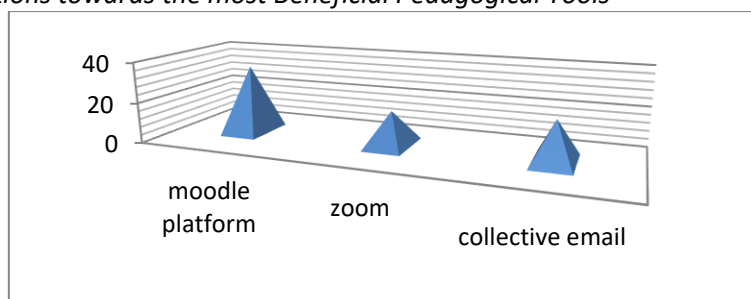
Q 3: Do you need a certain degree of technological proficiency for online courses?

The results of this item, as shown in figure 6, indicate that the majority of the students (71, 66%) believe that they need a certain degree of technological proficiency for online courses while the others did not see it important.

Figure 6
The Need for a Certain Degree of Technological Proficiency for Online Courses
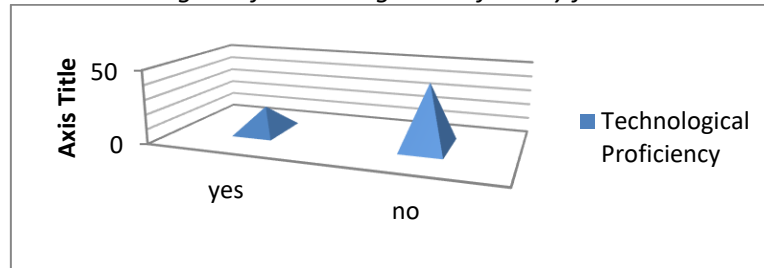
Q4: Does your internet connection/speed have a negative effect on online learning?

When the participants were asked if the Internet connection/ speed has a negative effect on their online learning, the majority (95%) commented that yes it has, whereas 3 students did not establish any relationship between these two aspects.

Q5: Which E-Learning tools do you find useful for the facilitation of the teaching and learning process?

As presented in the graph below, the most facilitating E-Learning tool is ZOOM with a rate of over 60 %, followed by PowerPoint presentation (38, 33%), whereas Audio recording (13,33%), photo editing(11,66%), Prezy/skype (8,33%) were selected by only the minority of the students.

Figure 7
Students' Opinions about the E-Learning Tools that Facilitate the Teaching and Learning Process
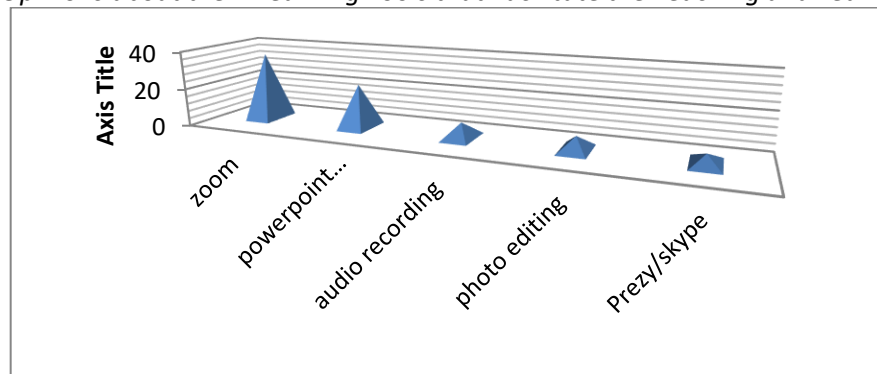
3.4. Teachers' Interview Findings

Q1: How often do your students attend ESP online sessions?

What is surprising in the analysis of this item is that just fewer than 20% of those who were interviewed mentioned the fact that their students attended a lot of the online ESP courses, however, a high rate (80%) of the answers stand for those who reported a lot

Q2: Do your students interact with you in online courses?

There is a general agreement among the interviewees that only a minority of their students interact with them in online ESP courses; these are respectively examples of the teachers' responses:

Teacher 1: "for the minority of students only, the others are online but they do not provide any feedback"

Teacher 2: "Unlike the traditional classroom, which enables us to interact face-to-face with our learners, E-Learning and teaching do not permit a full interaction with them"

Teacher 3: "The students do not really interact as in e-Learning sessions due to many reasons such as the lack of motivation and interest in those courses, the lack of technological tools… etc."

Q3: As a teacher, what do you prefer?

As far as the teachers' preferences of the teaching model, an equal rate of 40 % is attributed to those who either preferred traditional classes only or E-Learning is used as an alternative way to support on-ground classes whereas only 20% were in favor of online-based teaching.

As an example, one of the interviewees argues, "…Personally, I do prefer on-ground teaching as we are not really trained and we do not possess the tools for E-Learning..."

Another teacher mentions, "E-Learning works as a temporary alternative. It could not substitute face-to-face learning. Teachers recommend that blended learning (i.e. electronic and online media as well as traditional face-to-face teaching.) would help in providing a rigorous learning environment."

Q4: Do you agree or disagree with these statements; e-Learning is beneficial for the students as:
Concerning the benefits of E-Learning, the interviewees' answers fell under the same answers, they expressed a total agreement that it allows easy access to the content; uses resources with various formats, and it enhances the students' autonomous learning.

Q5: Does your establishment provide any mental and physical support to adopt E-Learning? If yes, what are they?

As far as the mental and physical support provided to the teachers in the Higher School of Management of Tlemcen, all interviewees expressed both positive and negative feedback at different levels. They argued that the establishment did not train them to use ELearning pedagogical tools for teaching, evaluating, downloading, and uploading documents. Thus, they were obliged to adopt this teaching model with no prior knowledge, especially at the beginning of COVID-19 when there was a call to use Moodle and zoom for the first time. However, this academic institution provided Free Wi-Fi, Language laboratories, and audiovisual materials.

Q6: In online courses, do you use e-content, or do you rely on your already designed pedagogical support materials? And why?

The majority of the teachers expressed a consensus that they relied on the already designed pedagogical support materials in an online course for some reasons, such as time limitations and the lack of ready-made teaching materials that are more suitable to the requirements of the language learners.

In this respect, one teacher says, "E- content is possible to be used if the teacher selects it in advance according to the student's needs and after grasping the necessary vocabulary".

Another teacher states, "I use an already designed support material for an acquisition of the course content and achievement of the course objectives"

Q7: Which among these do you find more challenging in ESP Online courses and why?

Results revealed that the most challenging tasks according to the teachers are the Assessment of learners' language competencies and skills development (80%), followed by Evaluation of the course objectives (50%), and finally adapting content to E-Course (30%). Teachers' reasons are articulated around two facts which are:

- They need more effort and time;
- Teachers should master both technological and pedagogical skills.

Q8: As an ESP Teacher, how can you better develop your teaching quality to deliver suitable online courses?

The analysis of this research item revealed that teachers, in general, develop their quality teaching to deliver suitable online courses through:

- Attending extensive and intensive training in ESP;
- Attending seminars and workshops on ICT;
- Listening to the student's problems and feedback;
- Revising the teaching methods, strategies, and techniques to make them more practical, suitable, and closer to real-life situations of the students

Q9: Would you provide more suggestions for enhancing online teaching and learning?

As for their suggestions for enhancing online teaching and learning, interviewees' responses can be classified in the following headings:

- Creating a motivational context for successful teaching and learning
- A shift from a teacher-centered approach to learners centered approach
- Creating a relaxed atmosphere for more meaningful interaction
- Increasing students'/ teachers' awareness about the significance of technology in education.
- Creating effective e-content that better targets situations and the learners' needs

4. Discussion

The first research question in this present investigation sought to determine the primary challenges ESP practitioners and learners in the School of Management encountered during the COVID-19 Pandemic era. The most obvious findings to emerge from this study are that informants were not highly motivated to those online classes for the various obstacles they faced. These may be related to the number of psychological challenges which may have negative impacts on the teaching and learning process, such as the lack of motivation and interest, anxiety, feeling of isolation, and resistance to change to this digital environment.

The participants' lack of technological skills, the low internet connection and speed, and the lack of physical support from their academic institution were also identified to be among the technological, pedagogical, and organizational challenges they both faced in these courses. Moreover, teachers' lack of training to teach, adapt the content of the E-course, evaluate and assess the learners, and the course objectives were also found to be among the most demanding responsibilities the ESP teachers managed to adapt to the student's needs and the requirements of the global age.

Another interesting finding is that teachers and students were not ready to use digital tools as they lacked the technological skills, this resulted in their resistance to shift to an online environment; which may lead them to be more stressed and anxious. This result may confirm the views of several researchers (Hanson, 2003; Kerkeb, 2021; Rosenberg, 2001) who established a close correlation between the readiness of teachers and learners to adopt a learner-centered approach and the readiness of decision-makers to invest resources in developing a robust infrastructure to better designing and delivering of e-content.

Based on the above-stated results, this may confirm the first hypothesis stating that ESP teachers and learners in the Higher School of Management, Tlemcen may face a variety of challenges during the COVID-19 Pandemic era while adopting an E-learning model for teaching Business English courses. These might be related to several factors such as Organizational, technological, pedagogical, and psychological issues. These findings may confirm the views of several researchers (Coman et al., 2020; Hanson, 2003; Rosenberg, 2001; Kerkeb, 2021).

The second research inquiry aimed to investigate the ESP students' and teachers' perceptions towards the benefit of the E-learning model in the Higher School of Management, Tlemcen during this

pandemic era. In light of the results and conclusions drawn from the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview, findings unveiled that this teaching model under investigation was not highly effective for the majority of the participants because of the lack of interaction of students with their teachers and classmates. This may justify their preference for classroom-oriented teaching over E-Learning for being more adequate to the learners' academic and professional requirements. One unanticipated finding from both research instruments was that E-Learning is effective in two ways only which are allowing easy access to the content, using different types of resources with various formats, and enhancing the students' autonomous learning.

For the above-stated results, one can say that the second hypothesis is confirmed which states that E-learning may not be beneficial for our ESP learners in Higher Schools as it may not cater to the needs of the current situation our world is facing, and may not fit the student's academic and professional requirements. This supports evidence from a previous study conducted by Maltby and White (2000) who believe that on-the-ground classes are more beneficial to students for having better educational values.

Results on the final research question indicated that teachers called for attending extensive and intensive training on using technology in the classroom, creating a motivational environment that focuses on the learners' needs and requirements of learning the language and allows them, at the same time, to shift from a teacher-centered approach to autonomous learning. The research has also shown that teachers were aware of the importance of developing their teaching quality to deliver suitable courses. These findings may support the third hypothesis arguing that by overcoming distance learning barriers and making E-Learning sessions more motivating and interesting, teachers, as well as students, may acquire and update their literary digital skills through attending extensive and intensive training; they may also use alternative software platforms such as Teams and Google classroom.

5. Conclusion

This present investigation was based on a case study conducted on five ESP teachers and 60 first-year learners in the Higher School of Management, Tlemcen. Its main purpose was first to identify the primary challenges they encountered in the digital environment, to determine the teachers' and students' perceptions towards the benefit of e-Learning in ESP classrooms, and to provide practical recommendations to improve their target situation.

The major limitation of this study is the sample population; it is based on a restricted number of teachers and students who belong to the same academic institution. This research is also limited to the choice of research instruments; Data collection phase, in this investigation, was conducted through the use of two tools, which are the learners' questionnaire and teachers' semi-structured interview.

Therefore, further investigations may consist of a larger number of participants for more representativeness of the sampling and generalization of the results to the entire population and may focus on other data collection tools like classroom observation and learners' tests which would be also of great importance to explore the ESP students and teachers' perceptions towards the effectiveness of this teaching model. An action or/ and experimental study may serve well to develop the learners' motivation, interest, interaction, autonomy, and self-confidence in learning.

Despite the exploratory nature of this case study, research offers some insights into decision-makers, technicians, teachers, scholars, and course designers to coordinate their efforts and skills for revising the drawback of the available pedagogical digital tools and platforms to better improve the rank of English language teaching and learning, in general, and ESP in particular. It also suggests that the Algerian language policy planners should, in all probabilities, enhance and prompt the use of E-learning in its educational system to better handle the needs of current teaching practices in the present situation our world is facing.

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