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Foreign Languages Department of English**



**The Use of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) in Distance Learning
During Covid-19 Period
The Case of Second Year Students at the Department of English, Laghouat
University**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents.

*My father who never left me to struggle, and my mother whom I would have not
been here if it was not for her.*

*I then grant the fruit of my hard work to my wonderful deeply missed mom whom I
have lost, wishing she is proud of me and happy in the greatest heaven*

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ALHAMDULILLAH

Abstract

The Covid 19 pandemic has dramatically affected all aspects of society and made a huge change in the teaching-learning process. To suppress the spread of this contagious disease, restricted laws have been issued such as social distancing, and home quarantine. As a consequence, the ministry of higher education has not only decided to shut down the educational institutions, but also ensuring that education will continue by using an alternative to the traditional method of learning which is virtual education. This change, however, required the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) such as Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) to maintain the social interaction between teachers and their students. It was hoped that the use of CMC in distance learning would be efficient to carry out the learning process. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to investigate learners' attitudes towards the use of CMC during distance learning in the university of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat. To achieve our goal, Master Two learners from the English department of the university of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat participated in this study. The research used a descriptive research method to achieve its purpose using a student questionnaire. The results obtained indicate that learners seemed to have negative experiences towards utilizing CMC in remote learning. Yet, they believed that the effective use of CMC and the integration of its tools would facilitate and improve remote learning in our department. Based on the findings, some suggestions were offered to the university, teachers, and further research in order to treat and ameliorate the current state of distance learning.

Key words: Covid-19, Distance learning, Computer-Mediated Communication.

الملخص

وباء كوفيد-19 المتفشي كان له اثر كبير على العالم اجمع في كل نواحي الحياة الاجتماعية خصوصا منها التعليمية وأحدث تغييراً كبيراً في عملية التدريس والتعلم في محاولة لقمع انتشار الوباء المعدي تم سن قوانين الزامية كالتباعد الاجتماعي و الحجر المنزلي و كنتيجة لذلك قررت وزارة التعليم العالي ليس فقط إغلاق المؤسسات ولكن أيضاً اكدت ضمان استمرار التعليم باستخدام طرق بديلة عن التعليم العادي وهي التعليم الافتراضي ومع ذلك ، فإن هذا التغيير يتطلب استخدام تكنولوجيا المعلومات و الاتصالات مثل وسائط اتصال عبر الكمبيوتر (و. إ. ك) من اجل المحافظة على التفاعل والتواصل بين الاساتذة والطلاب، كان يرجى ان يكون استخدام (و.إ. ك) في التعلم عن بعد فعالا للحفاظ ومواصلة التعليم وعليه فإن الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التحقيق من موقف الطلاب نحو استخدام (و.إ. ك) اثناء التعلم عن بعد في جامعة عمار ثلجي الاغواط. ولتحقيق هدفنا شارك في هذه الدراسة طلاب سنة ثانية ماجستير من قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة عمار ثلجي هذه الدراسة اعتمدت أسلوب الشرح الوصفي لتحقيق أهدافها تم استخدام استبيان وزع على الطلبة أظهرت النتائج المتحصل عليها ان الطلبة لهم تجربة سيئة لاستخدام وسائط اتصال الكمبيوتر في التعليم عن بعد ومع هذا يؤمنون بان الاستغلال الفعال ل(و.إ. ك) وادماج برامجه سيقوم بمساهمة تسهيل وأيضاً تحسين التعليم عن بعد في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بناءاً على النتائج، تم تقديم بعض الاقتراحات للجامعة، الأساتذة وأيضاً أبحاث مستقبلية من اجل معالجة وتحسين الوضع الحالي للتعليم عن بعد.

كلمات مفتاحية: وسائط اتصال الكمبيوتر – التعليم عن بعد – كوفيد 19.

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General Introduction

Many studies have been conducted about the usage of CMC in distance education. For instance, an article was written by “Ika Novitaria Marani”, “Ari subarka” and “Adi Wijayanto” entitled “The Use of CMC in Distance Learning During Covid-19 Pandemic: Pros and Cons” aimed to find out how the use of CMC is in the implementation of distance learning, and how the pros and cons are of the use of CMC in remote education. The results obtained indicated that the implementation of CMC in universities was still considered ineffective to carry out distance learning properly.

Another article written by “France Henri” entitled “Distance Learning and Computer-Mediated Communication: Interactive, Quasi-Interactive or Monologue?” explains how CMC contributes in reducing many problems imposed by distance education: isolation, lack of interaction, and social exchange. As it also sheds light on the interactive component that allows learners to participate collaboratively.

Other studies were conducted to investigate the impact of CMC on a specific language skill; for example, an article written by “Dr. Sabrina BAGHZOU” entitled “Computer-Mediated Communication Impact on EFL” investigated the impact of CMC on Learners’ oral fluency. This study aimed to shed light on the benefits of using computer technology in order to improve EFL learners’ fluency. To reach its purpose, the research opted for an ex-post facto research design. The results revealed that 40% gap of fluency between CMC users and non-users. This proves that CMC's impact on EFL students’ oral fluency is of a positive effect.

Another article was written by “Laura L. Bierema” and “Sharan B. Merriam” entitled “E-mentoring: Using Computer-Mediated Communication to Enhance the Mentoring Process” explores how various forms of CMC might be employed in the process of mentoring. It also highlights how e-mentoring offers a contemporary method of facilitating learning and mentoring in this technological age, and how CMC offers the potential for enhancing the mentoring process.

With the challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, traditional learning could no longer be carried out. hence, education in our department has gone virtual and used technological tools during the process. The objective of this dissertation will be to investigate the use of CMC during distance learning in our department.

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate learners' experience towards the use of CMC, highlight the problems faced by learners as well as offering a number of suggestions that would help ameliorate the current situation of distance learning.

1. Statement of the Problem:

The COVID-19 epidemic has forced the closure of schools all around the world, and the teaching-learning process has shifted to other new methods that required the use of technology such as Information Communication Technologies (ICTs). Due to COVID-19 pandemic, education could no longer be carried out and there had to be a substitute to the traditional method of learning. Thus, to ensure the continuity of the learning process, e-learning happened to be the only possible alternative to such situation. In the Algerian case, especially in the university of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat, distance education was not as effective as the traditional method of learning. The department did not fully take advantage of the technological devices represented in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC). However, the effective use of CMC could be very useful for distance education. It can be a useful tool that allows students to exchange their ideas and thoughts with each other and with their educators. Moreover, with the use of CMC tools and mediums, CMC provides students with more time to analyze and reflect on the content and to compose thoughtful responses (Althaus, 1996), as it is a place and time-independent (Harasim, 1990). In addition, CMC appears to enable and allow interaction between instructors and students which makes it a perfect alternative to the face-to-face interaction that happens between students and teachers in the traditional classroom. Furthermore, internet technology and the effective use of CMC tools creates and offers opportunities for distance learning to be at least the same as the traditional method of learning or maybe even better. Hence, it would be interesting to investigate learners' experience towards using CMC in remote learning since CMC can be very advantageous.

2. Significance of the Study:

This research aims to investigate learners' experience towards the use of CMC in virtual

learning. The long-term goal of this study is to show that CMC can improve distance learning in Algeria in general, and the University of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat in particular. However, the current study's goal is to determine if learners have a favorable or bad experience using CMC, as well as what challenges they encountered during the process. The research will present some recommendations for a good learning environment as a result of this examination.

Because of the extraordinary movement from traditional to electronic education, doing such a study is helpful and worthwhile. Furthermore, educational institutions have made extensive use of the internet and ICT resources to ensure the continuation of teaching and learning. The findings of this study will be beneficial to Algerian education during the Covid-19 period.

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses:

This study will try to answer the following questions regarding the use of CMC in distance learning.

1) Can the successful use of CMC in distant education replace conventional methods of learning in the long run?

2) What CMC settings can be utilized for language teaching and learning?

3) Do English students at Ammar Thelidji University have favorable or negative experiences with CMC during virtual learning?

The hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 01: The effective use of CMC can improve the traditional face-to-face method of learning in many ways, but it cannot completely replace it.

Hypothesis 02: The CMC environments that can be utilized for language teaching and learning are CMC apps represented in Skype, Email, Blogs ...etc.

Hypothesis 03: Learners have negative experiences towards the use of CMC in e-learning because they have faced a lot of difficulties while using the platform “Moodle”.

4. Research Techniques and Methodology:

This study will be mostly descriptive in nature, describing the current state of the Covid-19 pandemic's influence on the area of education as well as the obstacles that remote education faces. It will also use a quantitative approach to gather, verify, and evaluate data. The data will be collected from Master Two English as Foreign Language learners of the university of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat.

To accomplish our aim, a questionnaire has been prepared for learners to fill out in order to learn about their opinions and attitudes regarding the use of CMC technologies in distant learning. This will eventually assist us in collecting accurate data that will be statistically examined. That concludes the quantitative method section. Following that, the research will explain and debate the data acquired from the questionnaire distributed to students, as well as giving potential solutions to the problem.

5. Thesis Structure:

The research will first start with a general introduction that will include the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, research questions and hypotheses, and the organization of the study. This study is divided into two chapters. The first chapter will be a review of the literature. It will be mainly about Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) and its importance in Language Teaching and Learning (LTL). The second chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section will be dedicated to the methodology and the presentation of the findings. It will cover the research design which aims at explaining the methods and procedures used in the collection and the analysis of data such as; research method, setting of the study, a description of the participants, and the sample of the study. In short, a description of everything done and anything involved in the study. The second section will cover the discussion and the analysis of data gathered from the learners' questionnaire. Also, the section will try to answer the research problem by providing solutions, and provide suggestions for further research. Afterward, we conclude the research with a general conclusion.

Chapter One:

The Importance of CMC in Distance Learning

Introduction

With the abrupt move away from the classroom in many areas of the world, some countries are worrying whether or not the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the e-learning can be effective to ensure the continuity of the learning process. Most educational institutions in the developed countries were able to cope with the situation, and take advantage of ICTs; because even before the pandemic, there has been a significant surge in usage of educational technologies. However, third world countries are still struggling to find a suitable learning environment.

The present chapter will open with a definition of Covid-19 pandemic, explore its impact on the traditional learning; then, it provides an overview about distance learning. After that, it introduces the importance of ICT in language teaching and learning which will include a detailed discussion around CMC and its use in remote learning.

1.1 Covid-19 Pandemic:

COVID-19 is a contagious disease caused by acute coronavirus 2 or SARS-CoV-2) respiratory syndrome (Law et al., 2020). The virus was first identified in Asia; specifically, in Wuhan, China in December 2019, and was officially declared as a global pandemic on 11 Mars 2020. It is an infectious disease that infects human beings and might infect animals too. People who are affected with Coronavirus disease will most likely experience respiratory illness, fever, dry cough, tiredness, and other symptoms based on each individual. Generally, older persons and those suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory disease are more prone to acquire a severe illness. In the worst scenario, it would lead to human death. In this regard, almost all countries reported millions of cases and deaths caused by this pandemic in 2020. Therefore, to suppress the transmission of this disease, preventive measures have been issued such as social distancing, face masks in public places, avoiding crowded

places, and quarantine.

1.2 The Impact of Covid- 19 Pandemic on Traditional Learning:

One of the main areas that the covid-19 pandemic has dramatically affected is the world of Education at all levels. Due to this pandemic, most governments issued a rigid policy that is shutting down all educational institutions to suppress the spread of this disease. Hence, schools, colleges, and universities closure have not only interrupted the teaching for students around the world, the closure also coincides with a key assessment period where exams had to be postponed or even canceled. Overall, the influence has been made on schools, Families are vital to education and are widely acknowledged to contribute significantly to a child's development., assessments, and graduates (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2021). Therefore, the traditional method of learning could no longer be carried out and there had to be an alternative to the face-to-face method of learning. As a result, online education took place, and a new strategy had to be conducted; as long as there is no actual insurance of how long this situation will last.

1.3 Distance Learning:

Distance learning also called, distance education, e-learning, and online learning, it is a form of education in which the main elements of learning (teachers and students) are separated and not required to be physically present in the classroom. However, they are required to attend classes virtually with the use of various technologies that facilitates communication during the process. Traditionally, this usually involved correspondence courses where courses and materials are shared to students via mail. It has taken various shapes and utilized a wide variety of technologies since its advent in the 19th century as a correspondence. Today, it usually involves online education. There are several types of distance learning: correspondence courses, e-learning and open learning (allisonacademy, 2021).

1.4 Types of Distance Learning:

1.4.1 Correspondence Courses:

It is a home study course offered by a university, with the university providing teaching materials (books). Even tests and examinations are conducted digitally, with documents filled out online or mailed in. Even though it appears to be out of date, this approach is still extensively utilized to supplement other types of learning. It has also acquired traction in the corporate world, where it may be found in the form of staff training and testing. (allisonacademy, 2021).

1.4.2 E-learning:

E-learning is an abbreviation for online learning; it is a learning method that is utilized in the teaching and learning process by utilizing electronic sources. The primary component of E-learning is the use of a computer and the internet. Its definition has lately expanded to include all types of e-learning, such as live lectures, pre-recorded videos of a course, and audio materials etc. (allisonacademy, 2021)

1.4.3 Open learning:

According to SpringerLink dictionary, open learning is defined as a term used to describe learning situations in which learners have the flexibility to choose from a variety of options in relation to the time, place, instructional methods, mode of access and other factors related to their learning process. In other words, it is the learning principle where students learn the way that suits them, considering that distance education is based on students own desire for learning. (allisonacademy, 2021)

1.5 Characteristics of Distance Learning:

The phenomena of remote learning have been described using a variety of names. Regardless of the discrepancies in these definitions, the qualities of remote education remain consistent and unchanging. Distance education is distinguished by four features. For starters, remote learning is not a self-tutoring or unacademic learning environment; it is, by definition,

developed by educational institutions. The second distinguishing feature of remote learning is the separation of students and teachers. Third, interactive telecommunications use electronic communications such as e-mail to connect learning groups with teachers. Finally, distant learning promotes learning. Third, interactive telecommunications use electronic communications such as e-mail to connect learning groups with teachers. Finally, remote learning creates a learning community, which is a small group of students who share shared academic goals and collaborate on projects. It is made up of teachers, students, and instructional materials such as audio, recorded videos, and books. (Berg, Simonson, 2016)

1.6 ICT in Language Teaching and Learning:

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is a broader term for Information Technologies (IT). It is a term that refers to all communication technology including the internet, smartphones, computers, tablets, video-conferencing, and media applications and services that enable users to access, communicate, manipulate information in a digital form (aims.fao.org, n.d).

There is no doubt that the role of ICT has become inevitable in the 21st century. It has become an essential component in everyday classroom. In the field of education, ICT tools and features are used in language teaching and learning because it eases the learning process for both educators and students. Its interactive and dynamic nature enables it to meet the needs of the individual student making it easier for them to pursue information and gain knowledge. In addition to that, it gives a chance to teachers as well as learners to increase the quality of education and meet the requirements set by the coeval knowledge society. Moreover, ICT provides more opportunities for language learners to communicate with each other. With the usage of ICT, a two-way exchange of knowledge occurs between home and college/school. (Ammanni, Aparanjani, 2016).

In recent years, the usage of ICT in language education has increased rapidly to give learners access to information, promote interaction and communication, and enhance digital

literacy skills. For instance, in the last year, there was an urgent need for educators to provide online tuition as a result of the pandemic. Thus, even teachers who were not in favor of the integration of educational technology in learning, the situation required them to utilize ICT tools to deliver lessons and materials to their students. Accordingly, the ICT tool that has been used last year during remote learning up to now is Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC).

In short, ICT is very important in language teaching and learning, it gives new opportunities for interaction between learners and teachers/knowledge, and it increases the scope of teaching as well as providing quality learning materials and creating autonomy of learning.

1.6.1 The use of CMC in Language Teaching and Learning:

The importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the classroom is now evident more than ever. In the field of education, technology has always been pushing educational capabilities to other new, innovative levels. It has always been offering new methods and tools for education to prosper such as Computer Mediated-Communication tools and mediums. This computer-based technology is one of the tools used in distance learning to support learning activities that it is considered as an effective electronic means of connecting learners without time and location constraints using computers. (Machtmes, Asher, 2000).

Lots of studies have been conducted on the impact of CMC on language teaching and learning. The majority of these studies revealed that the integration of CMC in language education can increase both input (exposure) and output (use) of the target language. (Abderrahmane B, 2019).

1.6.1.1 Overview about CMC:

The rapid development of information and communication technologies in recent years is associated with a corresponding growth in interest in computer-mediated communication (CMC).

The history of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) can be traced back some time

to World War 2 when the first electronic device was invented. Or since the first recorded exchange of prototype emails in the early 1960s. From these moments on, people have been communicating by the means of computer technology. Later on, with the usage of computer technology, computers have become an integral part of our lives, and it shifted from being highly technological and specialist to being personal and popular.

By the 1990s, personal computers had grown popular and spread to be affordable and available on the desks of office managers, schoolteachers, college students...etc. And it is not until the mid-1990s that CMC had become a center of attention to scholars (Thurlow et al., 2004).

1.6.1.2 Definition of CMC:

So many definitions were given to CMC by different scholars. It can be defined as: “an umbrella term that encompasses various forms of human communication through networked computers, which can be synchronous or asynchronous and involve one-to-one, one-to-many, or many-to-many exchanges of text, audio, and/or video messages.” (Computer-mediated communication, n.d). Another definition by John December in which he describes CMC as “the process by which people create, exchange, and perceive information using networked telecommunications systems that facilitate encoding, transmitting, and recording messages.” (December, 1996). It is simply any human communication that occurs with the use of two different devices. This communication can be synchronous (instant) i.e., communication that occurs and happens in real-time; for example, video calls, or it can be asynchronous (not instantly) i.e., communication that occurs at different times; for instance, text-based emails.

1.6.1.3 Characteristics of CMC:

Romiszowski and Mason defined CMC as a “communication between different parties separated in space and/or time, mediated by interconnected computers.” (Romiszowski, 1996). This definition shows how a computer network acts as a communication medium. This communication medium eventually brings certain characteristics to communication which other

medias did not offer:

1. Highly Interactive Communication:

This aspect of the communication process supports and facilitates complex process of interaction between two or more people. During the process, the computer combines both the written communication with the speed and the dynamisms of spoken communication. This characteristic of interaction that CMC offers can be almost limitless; unlike, other forms of computer-based learning such as computer-assisted instruction (CAI includes guided drill, practice exercise and computer visualization of complex object). (Romiszowski, 1996)

What is difference about this interactive communicative model is the way that the message is approached. Unlike, computer-assisted instruction, the feedback messages do not have to be prepared and stored (the participant is both the sender and the receiver). The sender gives off messages, interpret it and then, the feedback received determine how the sender gives the next piece of information in a simultaneous manner. Accordingly, the interaction in a CMC system flexible and potentially richer than other forms of computer-based learning.

2. Multi-Way Communication:

The second characteristic of CMC is that communication is essentially multiway communication (two-way communication) between all the participants of the group; receivers and respondents' participants. In other words, it is the same case of two people exchanging messages via an email; but multi-way communication usually includes a group of participants. (Romiszowski, 1996)

This characteristic of unlimited multi-way communication is in fact was not always desirable within an educational institution. Participants in computer conferencing faced a lot of difficulties during the process. For example: participants had faced a difficulty in arranging, organizing, and sorting out relevant from irrelevant information shared because of the great number of participants that contributes in sharing information on different topics. However, with

the development of CMC, these issues no longer exist. CMC offers many applications that facilitates communication; for instance, Skype, Discord, and Zoom where a multi-way communication can be easily engaged and unlimited number of participants could join.

3. Synchronous or Asynchronous Communication:

The third characteristic of CMC is that CMC goes along with its two mediums. In other words, communication may possess both synchronous and asynchronous characteristics:

a. Synchronous: it is a CMC medium that is defined as a dialogic communication that proceeds under condition of simultaneous which is a communication that happens in real-time (O'Rourke, Stickler, U, 2017). This means that both parties are engaged in communication together simultaneously. A few examples would be a phone call, video and audio conferencing as well as face-to-face-talk. This medium is expected to developed learners' speaking skills in communication.

b. Asynchronous: it is a CMC medium that is defined as the communication that arises when interlocutors do not simultaneously share the communicative space, as in email or postal correspondence (O'Rourke, Stickler, U, 2017). In other words, it is a communication that does not happen in real time; for instance, when a user sends a privet message on Facebook to another user, the sender does not expect to immediately receive a reply from the receiver. The receiver can read the message at any time; that is to say, there are no time constraints in the asynchronous communication.

1.7 Advantages of CMC:

Communication in CMC can happen anytime and anywhere. In other words, CMC has no time and location constraints compared to face-to-face communication. It facilitates for

individual to communicate with others regardless of place, time and other constraints to communication. This means that, two communicating users do not need to be available at the same time or at the same place to communicate. A simple example would be the communication that happens between students and teachers during semester breaks; in which learners are still able to reach their teachers through emails. They can easily contact their lecturers if anything needed. On the other hand, lecturers can also share and spread any instructions or information such as announcements via email with no restriction.

Another advantage of CMC is that it eases the archive of information; in which, conversations between individuals or group of people can be stored to stand as future references. For instance, when a teacher distributes instructions to his students, students can always refer back to the instruction whenever needed. Students usually use a CMC application like WhatsApp as the main medium for assignment discussion.

Compared to the face-to-face communication, CMC allow users to reach out to a huge number of receivers at the same time. The teachers are able to use Facebook app to inform group of learners about deliberations, due dates or sudden cancellation of class. It could be useful to use Facebook where a message can reach a large number of students at the same time, as it can be more reliable unlike the word of mouth. A simple example would be the case of our department, Facebook is used to update learners with any news like, exams dates, make up sessions, assignments...etc.

Another benefit of CMC is that CMC can break down the barriers of communication. It helps individual to overcome social barriers represented in shyness, appearance, and physical limitations. It also allows individuals who might be intimidated due to factors like character and disabilities to engage in communication with minimal stress. (dcac.du.ac.in, n.d)

Finally, CMC can be very useful tool in the world of education. Compared to face-to-face communication, CMC disregards time and location constraints and offer different ways of communication that are meant to ease the learning process for both teachers and students.

1.8 Disadvantages of CMC:

Although CMC offers different features that can be useful and beneficial in the teaching learning environment, it still has its own share of disadvantageous.

One of the main disadvantageous of CMC is the limitations in technology. The teacher or the student might not have a CMC device at home such as computers, or someone's CMC device might get damaged, or a specific website might be down for maintenance or someone might have network issue... etc. given that Algeria is part of the third world countries, the possibilities that may prevent carrying out education virtually are endless.

Another Disadvantage is that CMC limits the richness of communication. In other words, CMC lacks socio-emotional and non-verbal cues. That is to say, there might occur a misunderstanding due to wrong interpretations of the meaning of words and tone. For example, someone might say a joke but the other person takes it personal due to the wrong interpretation of tone. Another example is when a student asks his classmate for help, but the other person keeps sending short messages. The sender might interpret it as he is bothering his classmate, while the other might not have that feeling or might be just busy with something else.

The issue of confidentiality is also one of the cons of CMC. Phone and video calls can be recorded and conversations can be screenshotted. When a user engages in communication with another person, the user can never know what the other party is thinking or what the person would do with the information shared. It might seem to be not a big deal, but it could ruin someone's social life. (dcac.du.ac.in, n.d)

CMC is a double-edged sword, even though it can be a beneficial tool that facilitates communication between teachers and students, and offers new ways of teaching and learning, it still can inhibit the learning process in many ways.

1.9 Some CMC Environments That Can Be Applied in Language Teaching and Learning:

Many CMC environments have been introduced in recent years. People nowadays can communicate with different computers via CMC applications such as Skype, Twitter, Facebook,

and Mails. This communication can be audio, written, or even a video call. The field of education can apply these environments for language learning and teaching. It might be hard to shift from the traditional way of learning to the electronic one; but, the integration of these environments would certainly create new opportunities for lecturers and learners to keep in touch and stay up to date. Each environment has its unique feature which can create different opportunities from other resources.

1) Blogs:

Nowadays, blogs have a huge important presence on the internet but it is less appreciated by teachers to stand as an educational tool. There are many types of blogs, such as LibLogs (library blogs) and Edu Blogs (education Blogs). A blog is a short-term of “web log”, it is an online journal or information website displaying information in chronological order. It is a platform where people can exchange their knowledge and point of view on a specific topic with each other. (Minaev, A, 2021)

The process of designing a blog is not hard. It might seem complicated, but it gets a lot easier once we have an account. We can post, add texts, images and save the posts. The content is available online and users have access to that information at any time. In addition, those who have subscribed to the blog will be notified for any new posts. Visitors can read the posts, share their views and submit their comments. One thing to consider is that most blogs are primarily textual but there are also audio blogs, video blogs, and photo blogs (Hong,2008).

Blogs have some benefits to language teaching and learning. For instance, through the use of audio blogs, educators will be able to evaluate their students’ oral performance effectively on one hand. On the other hand, English as Foreign Language learners will improve their oral fluency in learning English because it assists their language-learning experience. Blogs are “a great investment of technology and time to engage with our customers directly” as well as “an opportunity to test out how to augment employee communications” (Hong, 2008).

There are also setbacks of blogs such as the inaccuracy of the information, and intellectual property issues. Since blogs are often maintained by individuals, the information

provided could be inaccurate. It is also difficult to archive and index blogs due to its transient nature. Bloggers can delete and edit posts anytime.

To conclude, blogging is not about reading and learning online only. It is about the selection of the appropriate information. Reading and exchanging knowledge with other users. Engaging with the content and develop a better understanding. That is the meaning of the blogging process.

2) Facebook:

Facebook is a social networking service that was launched in 2004. It is the largest and most recognized social media network. It allows users to connect with people online and it allows them to share music, pictures, videos, and articles as well as their thoughts and opinions with groups of people who share a similar interest (webwise.ie, n.d)

The use of Facebook as an educational tool provides potential benefits for learners and helps lecturers build a good rapport with their students. In online classes, a Facebook group is used as a discussion platform for class topics by educators. Through engaging students outside the class, teachers can develop a good rapport with their students. As for learners, this allows them to comment, discuss and share articles that will eventually; build a better understanding of the subject. These discussions might make them feel more engaged with in-class discussions as well. (businessnewsdaily, n.d)

Facebook goes along with its pros and cons. Besides the advantages mentioned above, there are also several disadvantages of using this platform. One of these cons is that Facebook is addictive, that it could bring negative effects to students' education. It can be more distracting than beneficial to students due to its features such as; stories, chatting, and newsfeeds. These features might affect and distract the focus students' have on their academics. Thus, it is important to set rules and guidelines for utilizing Facebook as a discussion platform (Roomi, 2019).

Several studies were conducted to investigate the use of Facebook. One of these studies is in the work of Norlida & Zainol (2010), the study investigates the utilization of Facebook as an

online environment for learning English. The results of this study indicated that learners believed in the use of Facebook as an educational tool because it eases their acquisition of the English language.

3) Skype:

Skype is a free multi-function, multi-platform application that provides audio and video chatting between CMC devices. Users can communicate with other people in a synchronous way (instant and occurs in real-time). It is reliable, stable and many users have been using it for free for years with success. Skype is an important tool that is used for language learning. It provides a variety of educational opportunities for classrooms. Students of this platform can connect, exchange knowledge with other learners as well as interacting with other cultures. They can also engage in conversations and communicate with different researchers for the purpose of learning and exchanging information remotely. In addition to that, a classroom call can be used between educators and their students as a substitute for the traditional face-to-face interaction.

Like any other tool of learning, Skype goes with its advantages and disadvantages. The most important advantage that Skype can bring for learning is the interaction that can occur between students and teachers and time-saving. Another benefit is “free to move without stopping your process of study”, provided that you have a CMC device. Through this, students can easily carry out their learning process with their lecturers as long as they have CMC media and a good internet connection. In addition, the use of modern technical capabilities can also be a positive side in language learning; teachers can fulfill their educational goals through the deliverance of lessons, assignments, pdfs, text documents, and a video on the topic being studied. (Melnyk, 2016).

The use of Skype also has some cons. One of the disadvantages of utilizing Skype as an educational tool is the inability to control the actions of the student by the teacher. Educators do not see what an individual student writes; thus, they cannot correct students’ mistakes and errors in time. However, with the live communication feature that Skype provides, teachers can evaluate and correct each individual mistake with further explanation of the material.

Skype can be a useful tool for learning due to the features it provides. Of course, using Skype to carry out the learning process might have its drawbacks, but with the effective use of its features, the drawbacks can almost be not seen.

4) YouTube:

YouTube is a video-sharing website, it was developed in February 2005, which can also be used for teaching-learning purposes. Through this CMC application, users can share, upload videos with anyone able to access the app. In literature, several studies were conducted to investigate the effectiveness of YouTube as a learning tool, and whether it has a positive or negative impact on teachers and learners (e.g., Pratama et al, 2018).

YouTube can have a powerful impact on teaching and learning. Studies have shown that video learning has positive outcomes on multiple levels such as, affecting students' ability to facilitate discussions and identity problems, as well as increasing motivation, and deeper learning. Video learning can also be effective on both; lecturers and students. Lecturers can create a video and upload it whenever needed creating time and space for active learning. Moreover, a YouTube video created by an educator can develop learners' critical thinking as a result of being introduced to complex content (the usage of a video in a classroom). Furthermore, YouTube videos can be accessible at any time. Learners are able to rewatch a video multiple times in order to gain and retain learning material. Another important feature YouTube offers is the caption. This allows deaf learners to read the video making it a video for all. (givingcompass.org, n.d)

Studies have shown that the utilization of YouTube as a learning tool can be very effective on both sides of the classroom, as well as it can be advantageous. Therefore, the integration of YouTube as a learning tool in the departments of English must be taken into consideration.

5) Discord:

Discord is not so much different than Skype, it is a CMC application used for gaming

purposes; then, later on, it started being taken advantage of as an educational tool by some teachers. Similarly, to Skype, users of this platform are able to communicate via text messages, voice calls, and video calls. The difference between Discord and Skype can be noticed in terms of features. What differentiates Discord from other communication tools is that; in Discord, the user is able to create private servers, and that allows teachers to customize the server to stand as a virtual classroom to share their materials and hold meetings. In addition, the server offers two types of channels; text, and voice channels which can be a solid option for uploading documents, pin important messages, and share course content. Moreover, since Discord is optimized for streaming contents, the channels can be utilized for PowerPoint-based. In other words, teachers can share their screen to their students to explain a certain lesson by joining the same voice channel (Côté-Massicotte, 2020).

Indeed, operating Discord as a learning tool for English as foreign language learners might seem inconsistent and may be very distracting for students, yet some teachers have shared their experience and expressed how it could be helpful and advantageous in the learning process. They even recommended using it and provided some sort of a guideline on how to operate it for learning purposes.

1.10 Conclusion:

To sum up, the chapter above has presented how the traditional learning has shifted to digital leaning, and how the use of ICTs during the process was inevitable. It also tried to answer the research question about whether or not CMC can replace traditional method of learning. Indeed, CMC brings new tools that could be useful for language teaching and learning, and many possibilities that could facilitate communication during the process of learning between lecturers and learners; but it cannot replace the traditional face-to-face learning in the long term. It still has several disadvantages that could inhibit the learning process; hence, it is better if we don't always depend on it.

Chapter Two:

Research Design and Methodology

Section 2.1 - Method & Procedures:

Introduction:

This chapter is about the methodology. It is concerned with the research design of the research problem. It describes the techniques used to investigate Learners' experience towards using CMC during distance learning. In other words, it deals with the methodology implemented to answer the research question. First, the research will describe the population and sampling of the study, tools of data collection, description of research tools, and the procedures of data collection. Afterward, this chapter will discuss and analyze in detail the findings gathered from Master Two (02) English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners of the university of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat.

2.1.1. The Population and Sampling:

2.1.1.1. The Target Population:

The target population is the population that enables the researcher to generalize the results and it is from which the researcher selects the sample of the study (Noori, 2021). In other words, they are the population upon which the research is based upon, and by which conducting the research would not be possible without them.

The population of this study consists of learners from the University of Ammar Thelidji, department of English, Laghouat. The selection of this university was simply made because of having access to the target population of that university.

This study is conducted in June 2021 the scholar year 2020, 2021. A questionnaire is delivered to Master Two (02) EFL learners of the university of Ammar Thelidji in order to examine and figure out whether learners have a positive or negative attitude towards utilizing CMC during e-learning. This study has consisted of Forty-two (42) English as Foreign Language students.

2.1.1.2 Sampling:

A sample is the selection of a specific amount of the population of interest in a research study. The participation of the entire population of interest is not possible in research, so, a smaller amount is relied upon for collecting data. (Turner, 2020).

The sample chosen from our population is Master 2 English as Foreign Language learners of the university of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat. Our choice can be justified in the sense that this sample would be good to get different feedbacks for a reliable data.

2.1.2 The Research Design (Tools of Data Collection):

2.1.2.1 Descriptive Study:

To carry out our investigation, the research have chosen one of the three basic types of research design “Descriptive Research” which is considered to be a quantitative research method. However, this thesis will make emphasize on the quantitative approach. As defined by (Oberiri, 2017. p, 41), “A quantitative research method deals with quantifying and analyzing variables in order to get results. It involves the utilization and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical techniques”. Another concise definition of quantitative research by Creswell (1994), he describes it as a type of research that enables researchers to explain a certain phenomenon through collecting numerical data to be analyzed mathematically (mathematically-based methods). (Sukamolson, n.d).

A clear definition of a descriptive study; is a research method whose purpose is to describe the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that is being investigated accurately (questionpro, n.d).

2.1.2.2 Description of Research Tools (Design):

2.1.2.2.1. Description of Students’ Questionnaire:

This study is conducted to explore learners' opinions and attitudes towards the use of CMC during distance learning. To achieve this purpose, and cope with the health situation of the Covid-19 pandemic the country is facing, an online questionnaire was designed with the main objective of gaining insight into the use of CMC.

The questionnaire was designed for Master 2 students of the department of English at the University of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat. It consisted of two types of the question; straight-forward and open-ended type of questions. We asked simple questions to be answered with "Yes" or "No". We also, gave the opportunity to the participants to express themselves through open-ended type of questions.

The students' questionnaire contained fourteen (14) questions. These questions were composed with respect to the cohesivity, clarity, and the flow of the questions. In the first couple of questions, the study aims to investigate whether students have the necessary requirements of distance learning. It consists of four (04) questions about whether to having internet access at home or not, what quality of internet is used, owning a CMC device, and whether they are able to operate it. In the following questions, also, to have an idea about learners' experience with distance education during the Covid-19 period, and what difficulties they have faced.

After these introductory questions, we asked learners whether they comprehend the materials shared by lecturers. We also asked them about their opinions on whether the use of Moodle in our department was effective or not. In addition to that, we sought to know how satisfied are they with the usage of CMC during distance learning, and their opinion about the integration of CMC mediums into virtual learning. Throughout these questions, the researcher will be able to collect the appropriate data to answer the research question represented in learners' attitudes towards the effective use of CMC in distance learning.

2.1.3. Procedures of Data Collection:

The present experimental work lasted one month to be done. For the sake of collecting the appropriate data to answer the research question, a questionnaire is used. This questionnaire is delivered to Master Two (02) EFL students of the university of Ammar Thelidji, Laghouat in

which they are expected to provide their opinions and experiences with the usage of CMC during the remote learning. Before administering the questionnaire, clarifications and explanations about the topic were added to make the answers easier for the respondents. Besides, respondents were informed that the information they provide would be kept anonymous.

This study made use of a descriptive design based on quantitative data. The quantitative data collected employing the questionnaire is organized and analyzed using “Google Docs”. In this study, the results gathered were displayed through pie charts containing percentages as shown below.

Section 2.2 – Data Treatment and Presentation:

2.2.1. Treatment and Presentation of Data from Students’ Responses:

1. Do you have access to internet at home?

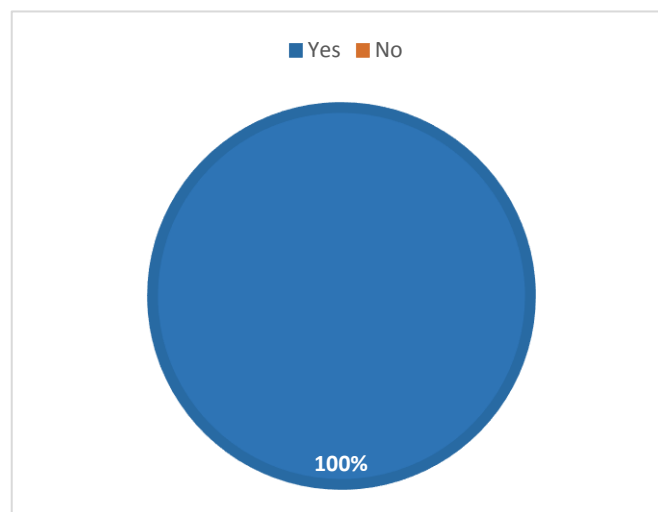


Figure 01: Internet Access at Home.

To begin with, in the first question, learners are asked whether they have internet access at home. As presented in figure 01, all the students claimed that they use internet at home.

2. What quality of internet do you use?

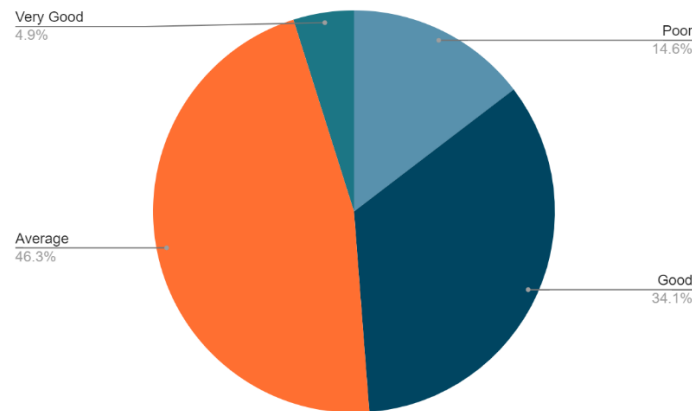


Figure 02: The Quality of the Internet Used.

In the second question, the study tried to investigate what quality of internet the learners use. The pie chart above showcases that (46.3%) of learners have an average internet quality, a percentage of 4.9% of the respondents have very good quality and (34.1%) of the students responded that their internet quality is good, while (14.6) of the students access the internet with poor quality.

3. Do you use the internet for studying purposes?

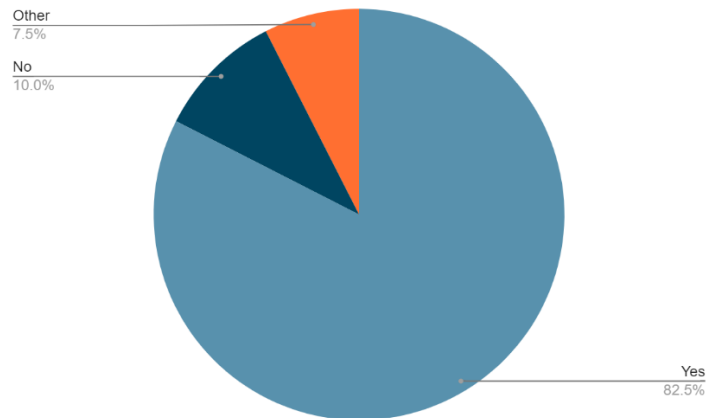


Figure 03: Internet Use for Studying Purposes.

The students' responses indicate that (82.5%) of the participants have said that they use the internet for studying purposes, while a percentage of (10%) said that they do not use it. Four (04) of the respondents representing (7.5%) answered that they only use it when they need to. However, one (01) of the four (04) participants provided a short answer saying that using the internet for studying is more distracting than beneficial.

4. Do you have a CMC device at home (Laptops, phone, tablets...etc.)?

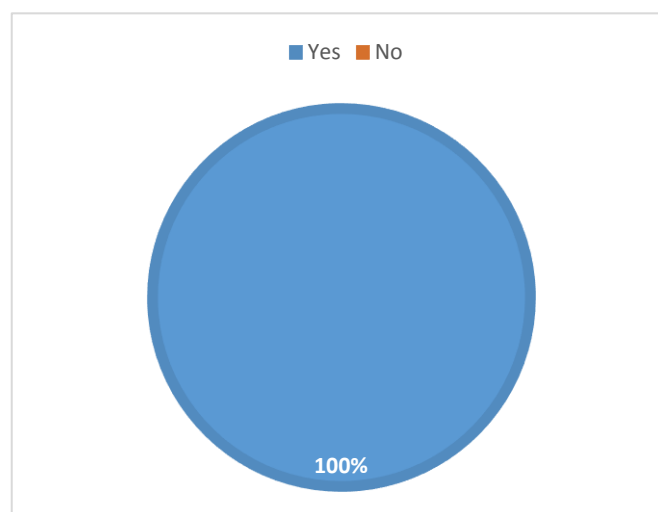


Figure 04: Having a CMC Device at Home.

When it comes to having a CMC device at home, students are requested if they have CMC media or not. Answers revealed that all the participants do have a CMC tool that helped them during the distance learning.

5. If you do. Are you able to use it?



Figure 05: The Ability to Operate CMC.

From figure 05, we notice that forty-one (41) of the students representing (100%) of them answered “Yes” to a question asking them whether or not they are able to operate their CMC devices. In other words, none of the respondents expressed any difficulty concerning the use of their CMC media.

6. How often do you use your CMC device to study?

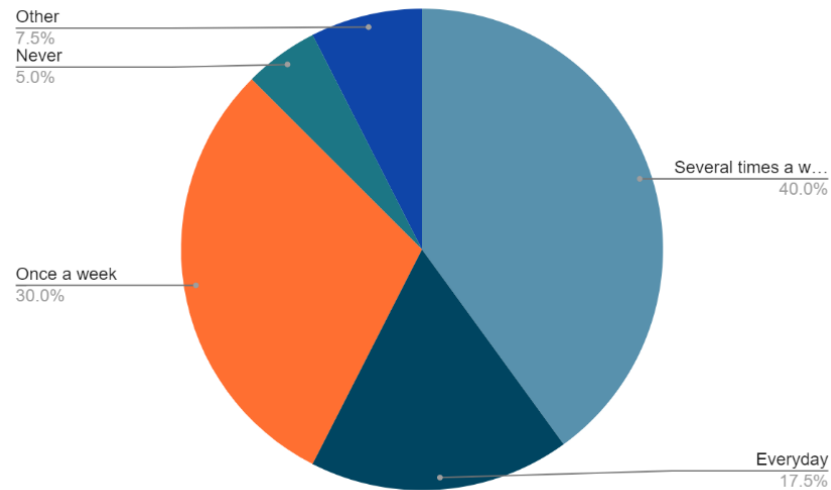


Figure 06: The Use of CMC Device.

As shown above, we notice that (40%) of student-respondents use their CMC media several times a week to study, and (30%) of them claimed they use their CMC device to study once a week, whereas (17.5%) of the participants state that they use it every day, while a slim (5%) claimed they never use it.

7. During the pandemic, was there any kind of an online classroom held by teachers?

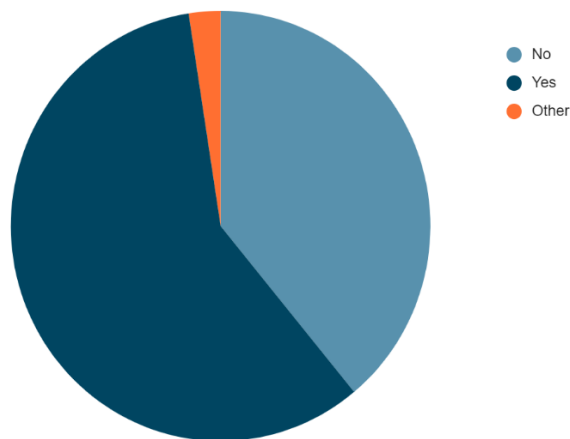


Figure 07: Online Classroom During the Pandemic.

As it is apparent in the figure above, students were asked whether an online classroom was arranged by their teachers or not. As expected, twenty-five (25) of the participants representing (58.5%) reported that their teachers arranged an online classroom, while fourteen (14) of student-respondents representing (39%) reported otherwise. The other two (02) of the participants representing (2.5%) stated that lecturers have been posting Pdfs only.

**8. In our department, what CMC application have been used the most?
Especially during the pandemic.**

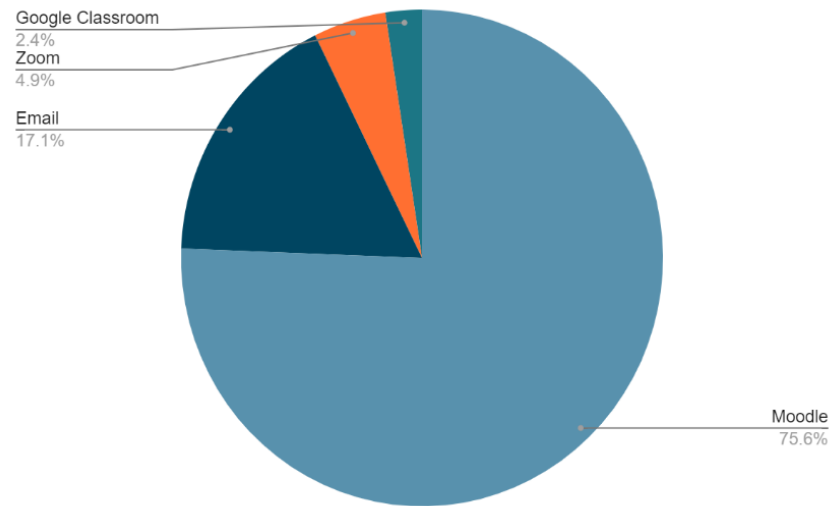


Figure 08: CMC Application Used the Most During Pandemic.

There were several applications used during the distance learning using CMC: Google Classroom, Email, Zoom, and Moodle. As expected, the majority of students who participated in our questionnaire representing (75.6%) responded that the most widely used application utilized by lecturers in delivering materials during the pandemic was Moodle platform. While, (17.1%) of participants responded with “Email”, (4.9%) responded with “Zoom”, While two (02) of the participants representing (2.4%) claimed that lecturers used “Google Classroom” in the delivery of materials.

9. Have you faced any difficulties in accessing Moodle platform?

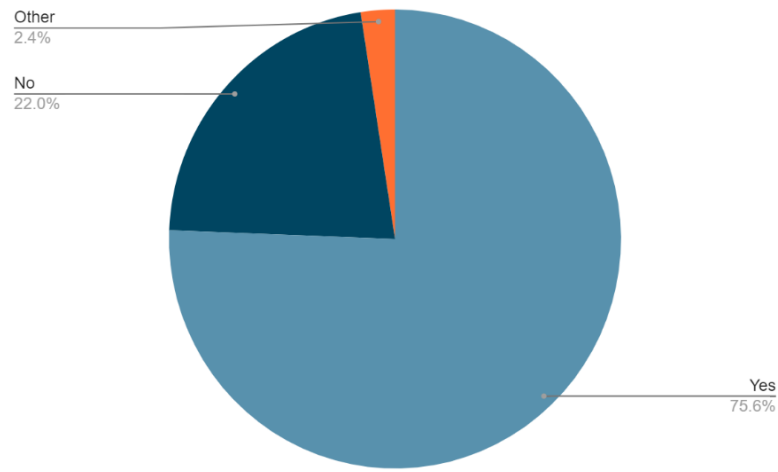


Figure 09: Difficulties Faced in Accessing Moodle Platform.

When it comes to the use of Moodle platform, and since it is the most application used during the pandemic, learners were asked whether they have faced any difficulties while using it. The students' responses indicate that the majority of learners (31) representing (75.6%) have said that they have faced difficulties while accessing Moodle; whereas, nine (09) of the participants representing (22%) did not encounter any difficulties. The other two (02) of the participants representing (2.4%) stated that they have faced difficulties in accessing Moodle at the beginning of the process only.

10. As a student, were you able to comprehend the lessons submitted by educators in Moodle platform?

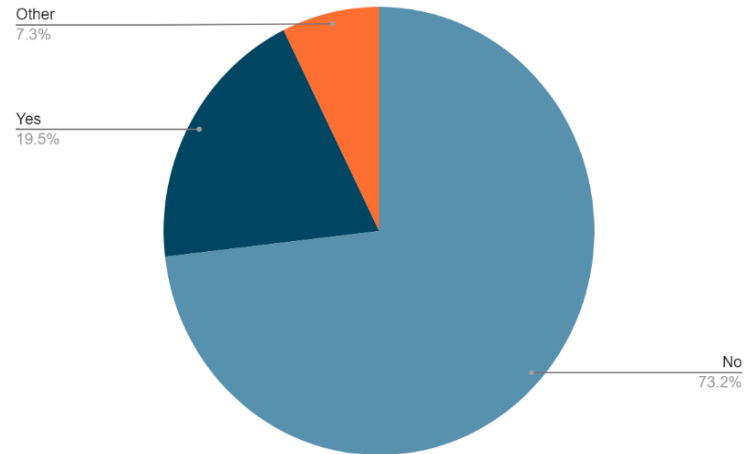


Figure 10: The Comprehension of Materials Submitted in Moodle.

Students were asked whether they understood the materials shared by lecturers in Moodle. The pie chart above indicates that thirty (30) of the participants representing (73.2%) did not understand the lessons shared by teachers, and eight (08) of the participants representing (19.5%) did comprehend the lessons. However, four (04) of the participants representing (7.3%) understood the lessons but to a certain degree, mainly because:

- Some materials were uploaded with abundance of unnecessary information making it harder to focus on the primary pieces.
- Some students are auditory and discussion-based learners (Harkness method)

11. Considering your experience with distance learning, do you think Moodle platform was effective to carry out the learning process in our department?

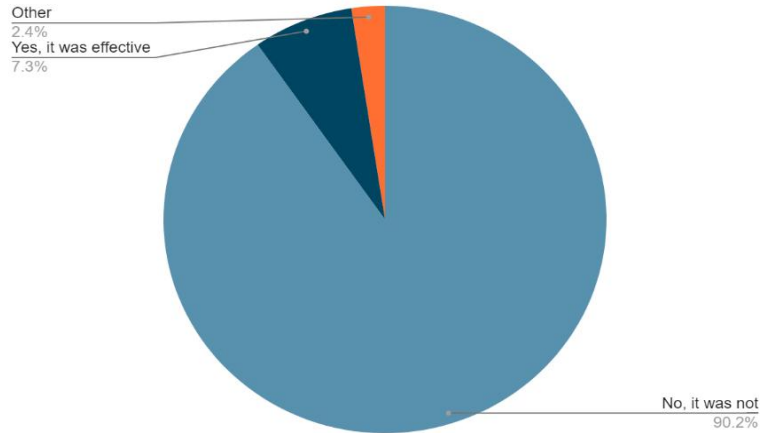


Figure 11: The Effectiveness of Moodle to Carry Out the Learning Process.

Duo to Covid-19 pandemic, education could no longer be carried, thus, in order to ensure the continuity of the learning process, Moodle was used as a temporary substitute. As displayed in figure 11, we wanted to know what learners think of the use of Moodle as a tool to carry out education, the results showed that (7.3%) of participants said it was effective, while the majority of them (90.2%) said otherwise. One (01) of the participants representing (2.7%) commented saying; it would have been effective if teachers knew how to use it properly.

12. How satisfied are you with the usage of CMC in distance education during Covid-19 period?

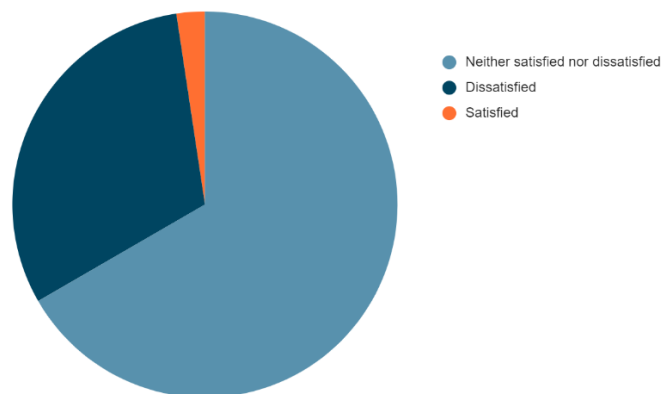


Figure 12: Students' Satisfaction with the Use Of CMC.

As seen in the figure above, twenty-eight (28) of student-respondents representing (68 %) appear to be “neutral” (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) with the usage of CMC, thirteen (13) of them representing (31.5%) were “dissatisfied”. However, there is a slim percentage of (0.5%) whom they claimed that they are “satisfied”.

13. The integration of CMC mediums (Zoom, Blogs, Skype, Forums...etc.) into the e-learning will help enhance the distance education, do you agree with this point of view?

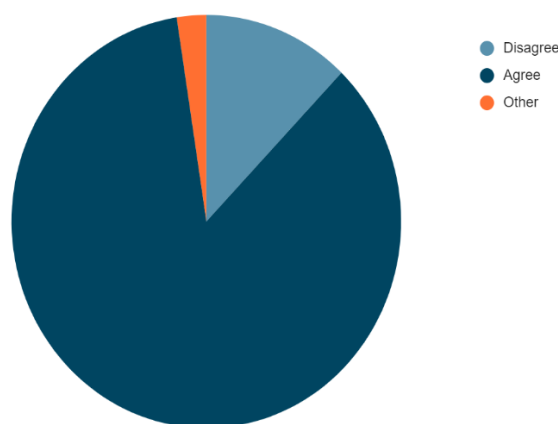


Figure 13: Students' Thoughts on the Idea that the Integration of CMC Mediums will Improve Distance Education.

As we can notice from the chart above, thirty-five (35) of the participants representing (85.4%) agree with the fact that the integration of CMC mediums such as; Blogs, Forums, and Skype will improve distance learning in our university, while, five (05) of them representing (12.2%) disagree with this point of view. The remaining (2.4%) responded with the idea that the use of CMC mediums will improve distance education only when used correctly.

2.2.2. Analysis of Data from Students' Responses:

2.2.2.1 Learners Use of CMC:

The data tool collection used in this study is a questionnaire. At the end of the questionnaire, the respondents answered further questions relating to any additional suggestions concerning the utilization of CMC in distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In an attempt to investigate learners' use of CMC, the results of the study revealed that all of the students do have internet access (see figure 01), and have CMC devices (see figure02). This gives them the opportunity to have access to several documents and courses, and it allows them to communicate with each other and with their instructors. Also, there were no obstacles or problems with the usage of these devices (see figure 04).

Indeed, the results of the students' questionnaire indicated that the vast majority of learners have an average quality of internet (see figure 02). Furthermore, the findings clearly reveal that nearly everyone representing (82%) of them use their CMC devices for studying purposes. Together, the findings indicate that there are no network constraints or inadequate internet connection that prevent learners from studying online. Also, there are no constraints concerning having and operating CMC media. In fact, the vast majority of learners have already been using their CMC devices for studying purposes.

2.2.2.2 Learners' View about the Use of CMC in Our Department:

When it comes to our department, the majority of learners reported that their teachers arranged online classes during the e-learning (see figure 07), and the most CMC application used by lecturers to deliver their materials was Moodle platform (see figure 08). However, students encountered a lot of difficulties regarding the access and the usage of the digital platform (see figure 09). This result was broadly in line with the result of a question about the comprehension of materials shared by lecturers via Moodle. The results indicated that (73.2%) of learners did not understand the materials, and that is due to the inconsistent upload of lessons with an abundance of unnecessary information (see figure 10). In addition, students who participated in

our questionnaire shared their struggles with the usage of the digital platform Moodle, these struggles were represented in technical and software difficulties, we mention; the app is outdated and it crashes a lot, it is unstable which makes it hard for learners to find the information they looking for (chaotic) and very buggy. Together, the present findings confirm that there is a serious need for an alternative to the current method of learning or an enhancement of the existing one.

2.2.2.3 Learners' Experience Towards the Usage of CMC during Distance Learning:

When it comes to education, students were asked whether or not they are satisfied with the use of CMC during the pandemic. The majority of respondents (68.3%) stood neutral; they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while the remaining (31.7%) were dissatisfied and none of them were satisfied (see figure 12). According to this result, and with regard to students' feedback on the matter, we concluded that CMC was not used efficiently in our department. Students expressed their dissatisfaction and demonstrated how the department of English at the University of Ammar Thelidji, did not put a remarkable effort to ensure the continuity of education unlike other universities of the same country. In addition, respondents provided several suggestions and alternatives to the current digital platform. Surprisingly, these suggestions were represented in the utilization of different platforms and apps to deliver materials such as Zoom, Skype, Discord...etc., which goes along with what this research is trying to achieve in the first place. Moreover, learners believed that the appropriate use of CMC and the integration of its mediums such as Blogs, Forums, Zoom, and Skype can be advantageous, and will certainly improve the teaching-learning process in our department (see figure 13).

Furthermore, some ideas were suggested by the respondents who participated in our questionnaire as a means of improving virtual learning. Some of them suggested CMC training for users; learners, lecturers, and administration staff members. One of the respondents suggested engaging in more activities and assignments claiming that it eases accepting and understanding the materials. Also, recommending that our university should create its own online environment the same as the University of Science and Technology-Houari Boumediene, Algiers.

Overall, Computer Mediated-Communication was not used efficiently during the remote learning in our department. Thus, this research will provide some suggestions for the university to treat the shortcomings of the current learning environment.

2.2.3 Some Suggestions to Treat the Shortcomings of the Current Learning environment in the Department of English:

In order to achieve a successful learning environment that benefits both educators and learners, the university should integrate CMC applications into virtual learning. As stated in the review of the literature; Blogs, Zoom, YouTube even Emails can be very helpful in the teaching-learning process.

The asynchronous medium of CMC represented in the apps mentioned above can facilitate learning for students. Teachers can use, for instance, Tutor Blogs which replace the traditional notebook that enables learners to have access to the information at any time and publish their writings for the sake of educating other colleagues on a particular topic. Blogs also enable teachers to publish assignments and keep students up to date on events such as due dates. There are several studies that were conducted on the impact of Blogs on learners' academic writing. The majority of the findings, if not all, revealed that Blogs help students improve and develop their writing skills. Along with using Blogs, prerecorded video of the teacher explaining the lesson can be used, as it can replace the traditional face-to-face classroom. It is an effective way of delivering lessons as it is less time-consuming. With the use of pre-recorded videos, students can save and rewatch the video whenever needed, while teachers can reuse the videos for future classes.

As for the synchronous CMC, teachers can make use of apps such as Zoom, Skype, and Discord for face-to-face communication. According to the results of the study, the social interaction between teachers and students was not maintained during remote learning. Therefore, the research suggests the use of the Zoom platform, it enables teachers to hold meetings with up to 100 participants, and students on the other hand can wordlessly signal to the teacher if there is any question on the topic being studied.

It is better if the university creates its own website that offers interaction between teachers and students. Only learners, teachers, and staff members of the university will be able to access the website. The website should be well organized, and it must contain online courses, pre-recorded videos, and pdfs. The university should also make pedagogical training for users: students, lecturers, and administration staff members that would teach them use the software and prevent any technical issues and confusions.

2.2.4 Conclusion:

In conclusion, the present chapter of the study aimed at providing a clear answer of the research question. It was divided into two sections, the first section covered the research methodology, in which it covered a description of everything done and anything involved in the study. However, the second section covered the presentation and discussion of data collected from students' questionnaire, as it provided suggestions for the English department, teachers, and future researchers. The research used a descriptive methodology to reach its purpose, it made use of a quantitative method approach, in which the data gathered were treated quantitatively using pie charts. The results obtained from the analysis of the quantitative data reveal that learners had a bad experience with the use of CMC in distance learning. Yet, they remained motivated and believed that the integration of CMC tools would facilitate and improve remote learning in our university.

General Conclusion

2.2.5 General Conclusion:

The COVID-19 epidemic has forced the closure of schools all over the world, and the teaching-learning process has changed to various new techniques that necessitate the use of technology such as ICTs. Computer-Mediated Communication is one of the ICT tools used in online learning (CMC). As a result, the current study evaluated English as a Foreign Language learners' experiences using CMC in remote learning at the University of Ammar Thelidji during the Covid-19 term. Throughout this study, the researcher attempted to investigate the difficulties encountered by students while studying remotely, as well as how CMC is used in the English department. The study's findings support the assumptions provided in the general introduction, namely that learners have a bad experience with the use of CMC in virtual education.

This dissertation is divided into two chapters. It first started with a general introduction that highlights the most important elements of the research which are; the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, research questions and hypotheses, research technique and methodology, and the structure of the thesis.

The first chapter discusses the significance of CMC in distant learning. It has sought to offer an outline of the study's variables. The influence of the Covid-19 epidemic on the area of education was then discussed, along with an overview and clear explanation of CMC, as well as its relevance in virtual learning. Then, it discussed some of the benefits and drawbacks of CMC, as well as several CMC environments that may be used in language teaching and learning.

The second chapter is empirical in nature. It is separated into two sections, the first of which is about research methods and design. It outlines the technique used in this study (quantitative method). It also includes a summary of everything done to carry out such research, such as a description of the study's objectives and a description of the population and sample. It also outlines the study's data gathering technique (a student questionnaire). The second portion, on the other hand, is devoted to the presentation and discussion of the findings.

According to the study's findings, students exhibit negative attitudes regarding the usage of CMC in remote learning. According to the data, the "Moodle platform" is the most often utilized application during "remote learning." Students had several challenges in accessing the site, which manifested itself in technological concerns. In addition to that, teachers were only

able to share digital copies of their lectures via the platform; however, learners were unable to understand the materials expressing their dissatisfaction with the matter. They claimed that live meetings are needed, as it would ease understanding and accepting the materials for them. The results also indicated that students believed that the effective use of CMC and integration of its tools would certainly enhance the process of learning in our department.

In order to approach the generalizability of the results, the researcher suggests that it is better for future researchers to consider developing a questionnaire for teachers, or interviewing teachers as well as students. Collecting data from two different perspectives and different points of view will certainly make the research more reliable. Also, it is recommended that future researchers should consider a larger population of students in other Algerian universities. It is worth conducting research on the attitudes of learners and teachers towards the effective use of CMC during remote learning, the results of the study could raise awareness about the issues encountered in the learning process. Eventually, this will make policy makers in general, and Algerian universities in particular act to solve the current issues and provide better solutions.

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Appendix of the Questionnaire:

Students' Questionnaire:

Dear Students,

We would like to ask you a few questions regarding the use of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) in distance learning; behind which we aim at getting some information about your attitude towards using it. This will help us collect the necessary data to bring this research into end. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be used for the sake of research only.

Thank you in advance for your precious collaboration.

1. Do you have access to internet at home?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. What quality of internet do you use?

☐ Very Good

☐ Good

☐ Average

☐ Poor

3. Do you use the internet for studying purposes?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. Do you have a CMC device at home (Laptops, phone, tablets...etc.)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. If you do. Are you able to use it?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. How often do you use your CMC device to study?

☐ Everyday

☐ Several times a week

☐ Once a week

☐ Never

7. During the pandemic, was there any kind of an online classroom held by teachers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other:

8. In our department, what CMC application have been used the most? Especially during the pandemic.

☐ Email

☐ Zoom

☐ Google Classroom

☐ Moodle

☐ Other:

9. Have you faced any difficulties in accessing Moodle platform?

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. As a student, were you able to comprehend the lessons submitted by educators in Moodle platform?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other:

11. Considering your experience with distance learning, do you think Moodle platform was effective to carry out the learning process in our department?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other:

12. How satisfied are you with the usage of CMC in distance education during Covid-19 period?

☐ Satisfied

☐ Neutral

☐ Dissatisfied

13. The integration of CMC mediums (Zoom, Blogs, Skype, Forums...etc.) into the e-learning will help enhance the distance education, do you agree with this point of view?

☐ Agree

☐ Neutral

☐ Disagree

14. What additions do you suggest concerning the utilization of CMC in distance learning during Covid-19 period?

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Done! Thank you very much for answering our questionnaire! We appreciate your help, time and input.