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MASTER DISSERTATION

Submitted by:
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**Investigating EFL Students' Perceptions and Teachers' Attitudes
Towards Virtual Classrooms at Mohamed Khider University of
Biskra**

Dissertation submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of **Master** in **Sciences of the Language**.

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Declaration

I, **Karima Guidouam**, do hereby declare that this dissertation entitled " Investigating EFL Students' Perceptions and Teachers' Attitudes Towards Virtual Classrooms at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra" is my original work. It has been completed at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. It is however pertinent to note that all sources of assistance extended during the research and writing of this paper have been recognized. I additionally declared that the content of this dissertation has not been submitted in any university or institution in order to obtain a degree or qualification.

. This study was conducted and completed at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, Algeria.

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Date: 27/06/2024



Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved family, first, my mother whose strength and kindness inspire me every day throughout this journey, and to my father, whose wisdom and encouragement have shaped my path, thank you.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my two sisters and two brothers who have always been there for me as my strength and joy.

To Mohammed, my beloved brother who is sorely missed yet remains a source of inspiration. Your love remains in my heart forever, thank you.

To my esteemed friends and companions on this journey, thank you.

To every person that has been trustworthy and encouraging, thank you.

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to find out the opinions of EFL teachers and students at Mohamed Khider Biskra University regarding virtual classrooms. Accordingly, a mixed-method approach integrating quantitative and qualitative data was adopted to address the study issues. Thus, an unstructured interview with four EFL teachers who were specifically chosen was done in addition to distributing a semi-structured questionnaire to a sample of 77 EFL students who volunteered to participate and complete the online Google Form questionnaire. . In this study, it was exciting to establish that while instructors and students both understood that VCs are flexible and easily accessible, there are factors such as low motivation, low engagement, and technical difficulties that hinder the success of e-learning. These outcomes point to the necessity of exploring ways of enhancing the maximal effective interaction within the context of electronic education and addressing the possible issues.

Key words: Students' perceptions, Teachers' attitudes, Virtual classrooms.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

VCs : virtual classrooms

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General Introduction

1. Background of the study

The use of Internet platforms together with the outbreak of COVID-19 resulted in a shift of fortune in the way language learning and teaching happens; a shift from face-to-face to online classes. This is because they offer flexibility in that they do not require the students to travel to a specific place, they are convenient so they do not interrupt the students' normal routine, and they can also save money since no special teaching facilities are needed. But making sure they work well and teachers use effective methods requires understanding what students and teachers think. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, virtual classrooms bring both good and challenging aspects. It's important to know what EFL students think and how EFL teachers feel about virtual classrooms.

Research has delved into this complex transformation, offering insights into learners' perspectives, challenges, and the effectiveness of virtual learning environments. According to Alshumaimeri and Alhumud (2021), EFL students have favorable opinions of virtual classes, emphasizing improved communication abilities and a more comfortable atmosphere. In fully online EFL, Cancino and Avila, (2021) posited that the presence of a teacher is vital as it fosters communication, connectedness, and engagement. Moreover, Rahman (2020) observed that at the prevalence of COVID-19, students noted that online learning had its advantages but was challenging for them to embrace. Furthermore, Mubarak and Abdel Magid's (2022) study described the advantages of the online mode by mentioning its convenience and orientation towards students, which led to the overall satisfaction of Saudi Arabian EFL students.

The shift to online learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced EFL teaching in various ways, which can help or hinder teachers. Civelek, Toplu, and

Uzun (2021) examined Turkish EFL teachers' opinions on remote teaching during the pandemic, discovering a range of feelings on online learning, from appreciating its consistency to encountering difficulties with technology and student engagement. Moreover, Syahputra and Saragih (2021) investigated how EFL teachers felt about e-learning platforms such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and Zoom, finding that the majority had good attitudes, with Moodle being thought to be the best at creating a welcoming online environment. In addition, Saleh and Meccawy (2022) distinguished four main barriers that EFL instructors in Saudi Arabia's higher education sector had to overcome to make the switch to virtual learning: students' matters, difficulties associated with teachers, institutional factors, and learning technologies. Regarding the views of Iranian EFL high school teachers on virtual learning environments, Rafiee et al. (2022) highlighted both benefits and drawbacks, including the enhancement of memory and the availability of more resources. Similarly, Mozafari et al. (2023) highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of virtual training and concluded that although inadequate internet and communication were the key drawbacks of virtual training, on the positive side, virtual training was flexible, time and cost-efficient, and enabled the production of videos.

These studies underscore the transition from face-to-face EFL contextual learning to virtual one pointing out that to experience the positive impact virtual learning facilitation should be strengthened by a well-established instructor's presence of a variety of learning techniques and focus on community building. They also highlighted the importance of reporting the limitations of these studies, such as the lack of research in a broad variety of learning settings, and the small samples and methodological concerns.

Biskra University is one of the institutions that have adopted virtual classrooms in EFL education. However, we don't know much about what EFL students and teachers at

Biskra University think about these virtual classrooms. Thus, there is a notable gap in research investigating EFL students' perceptions and EFL teachers' attitudes toward virtual classrooms, particularly within the context of Biskra University.

Through addressing these research questions, the study aims to contribute to the comprehension of virtual classrooms in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education at Biskra University. Additionally, it seeks to educate on the necessity and ways to enhance the teaching approach and experience favorable for learning.

2. Statement of the problem

The fact that more universities in the global environment, as well as in Algeria, have switched to the use of VCs emphasizes the urgency of further investigation of people's attitudes toward this innovative approach to learning. While VCs offer advantages like flexibility, convenience, and cost savings, making them work well depends on addressing challenges and ensuring a good learning experience for everyone.

Few studies have examined the opinions of instructors and students on virtual classrooms (VCs) in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) department at Biskra University. This lack of information is a problem because VCs need to work better, and the way to do that is to understand the experiences and opinions of those involved.

Furthermore, in the current research on VCs in the EFL context, discussions are made regarding generalization or other parts of the world different from Algeria. This gap in knowledge raises some questions on the specifics of how Algerian EFL students and teachers perceive or interact with VCs. This absence of knowledge may lead to implementing strategies that may be irrelevant to the host country's culture. So, this study wants to look into what EFL students and teachers at Biskra University think about VCs.

In summary, exploring what EFL students and teachers think about VCs at Biskra

University is an important and timely research project. By learning about their experiences, this study has the potential to greatly improve how well VCs work in the university's EFL program, making learning better for everyone involved.

3.Aims of the study

Aim 1: To Investigate EFL students' perceptions regarding learning in virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra University, focusing on their engagement, effectiveness, and accessibility.

Aim 2: To Explore EFL teachers' attitudes towards teaching in virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra University, particularly their perceived effectiveness, and challenges faced.

4.Research questions

Since online tools have become part of the education system at Biskra University, this study aims to find out EFL students' perceptions and teachers' attitudes toward virtual classrooms, This investigation is guided by the following questions :

RQ1: What are EFL students' perceptions about learning in virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra university?

RQ2: What are EFL teachers' attitudes about teaching in virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra university?

5.Significance of the study

The general use of virtual classes for learning languages has some advantages such as; being flexible, and easier to access lessons and be personal. Nonetheless, little is known about the perception of students and teachers of Biskra University regarding the implementation of virtual classrooms in their English as EFL program. That's why this work aims to address that gap by inquiring about the views and emotions of EFL students and teachers at Biskra University about virtual classes. The primary purpose of this study is to gather insight from their experience and discover any opportunities and challenges

that ensure the provision of relevant information to improve virtual classrooms in the program. Additionally, the findings might help us understand how students and teachers in other EFL programs feel about using technology for learning languages.

6. Research methods

This study aimed to investigate EFL students' perceptions and teachers' attitudes towards virtual classrooms at Biskra University; henceforth, a mixed method was adopted due to the nature of the study to obtain answers to the research questions.

6.1. Population and Sample

To collect data about EFL students' perceptions and teachers' attitudes toward virtual classrooms at Biskra University, the sample will consist of two parts:

- 1. EFL Students:** a sample of (77) EFL students from were randomly selected at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra.
- 2. EFL Teachers:** a sample of (4) EFL teachers were purposively selected from a population of EFL teachers at the Department of Foreign Languages at Biskra University.

To ensure the ethical treatment of participants Both teachers and students provided written informed consent after reviewing detailed information sheets explaining the study, their rights, and confidentiality measures. All participation was voluntary and anonymous. The study adheres to ethical research principles and received approval from Biskra University.

6.2. Data collection tools

To answer the research questions, two data collection instruments were used: a semi-structured questionnaire for students and an unstructured interview with teachers. Firstly, the questionnaire was administered to 77 EFL students from the Department of Foreign Languages at Biskra University. The questionnaire explored students' perceptions of virtual classrooms. Secondly, four EFL teachers were purposively selected from the

department and participated in individual unstructured interviews. The interviews focused on teachers' attitudes toward virtual classrooms.

6.3.Data analysis procedures

The method used in analyzing data obtained from questionnaires completed by students includes using Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets to create frequency tables and basic descriptive statistics in the closed-ended questions. Furthermore, the open-ended question of students' questionnaires were subjected to content analysis to compare the patterns and themes of students' perceptions. Regarding the qualitative data collected through the teachers' interviews, the content analysis approach was used after the interviews were coded to involve various aspects of teachers' attitudes toward virtual classrooms. Eventually, the research outcomes will include synthesizing both Qualitative and Quantitative data to present a holistic view of the perceptions that EFL students bear and the attitudes that EFL teachers have towards Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University..

7.Structure of the study

This study comprises two main chapters: the first part is the theoretical background and the second part is the practical investigation.

The first chapter is structured into two sections. Section one introduces the key concepts of classroom management, including its definition, importance, and essential aspects such as developing student connections, outlining expectations, using engaging teaching methods, and encouraging positive behavior. It explores the roles and responsibilities of teachers and students, as well as common classroom management strategies and challenges, such as managing diverse populations, sustaining discipline while encouraging learning, and balancing management with instructional objectives. Section two then delves into virtual classroom technology, defining it,

discussing its benefits and tools, and examining instructional strategies, EFL teaching methodologies, and language skill development in virtual settings. It also addresses classroom management in virtual environments, including clarifying expectations, sustaining student involvement, and addressing technical issues, while acknowledging the unique challenges posed by virtual classrooms.

The second chapter provides a detailed explanation for choosing particular tools to collect data and outlines the steps for analyzing it. This includes describing, summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting the results to shed light on the perceptions of EFL students and the attitudes of teachers toward virtual classrooms at Biskra University.

Chapter One : Literature

Review

Introduction

Effective classroom management and the usage of virtual classrooms are among the critical issues within the field of teaching. The objective of this chapter is to expand on the theoretical frameworks and potential applications of these two important areas. This chapter explores two significant elements of today's education: how virtual classrooms developed and how classroom management is being utilized. Moreover, having effective classroom management, clear rules, and good relationships between the teacher and students provide a solid ground for learning. It complements virtual classrooms and other online learning platforms where flexibility and ease of learning are essential. Both require specific strategies: When comparing the characteristics of traditional classrooms with that of the virtual, the former requires a management strategy for the more diverse learners while the latter requires the management to devise a way of keeping learners engaged and also have a focus on the technical aspect that may bring learning in the virtual classroom to a standstill. Thus, by learning both of them, educators can create effective learning environments for the future.

I.1. Classroom Management

I.1.1. Definition and Importance of Classroom Management

According to Emmer & Sabornie (2014) and Sieberer-Nagler (2016), Class management refers to the techniques and strategies used by teachers to gain student cooperation and maintain an environment favorable for learning. According to Korpershoek et al. (2016), it is required to facilitate education and support students for their learning in emergencies.

I.1.2. Importance of Classroom Management

It is necessary to note that there are several reasons why organized classroom management should be used. As stated in the works of Marzano et al., 2003 and Sieberer-Nagler, 2016, it helps foster a positive learning climate in which the students will achieve lifelong learning, safety, and mutual esteem. A proactive approach to eradicating excessive

conduct that interferes with learning is implemented (Emmer & Sabornie, 2014; Sieberer-Nagler, 2016) and provides rules of student conduct and mechanisms for dealing with mischievous conduct (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Stronge, 2018). Classroom management is useful in helping teachers achieve their teaching goals and objectives as they intend (Emmer & Sabornie, 2014; Korpershoek et al., 2016), and useful in assisting students in learning as well as improving their academic performance (Marzano et al., 2003; Stronge, 2018)

I.1.3.Key Aspects of Effective Classroom Management

Teachers may create an effective and fascinating classroom environment that fulfills learners' needs, encourages their learning achievements and responsibilities, and develops a positive attitude by constantly applying five key principles of class management (Marzano et al., 2003; Stronge, 2018). Teachers can also ensure that they build a positive atmosphere in their classroom that helps the students to learn not just academically but also socially and emotionally to build harmony, set goals and maintain regularity, use incentives to teach the students, and maintain a moderate working approach when correcting misbehavior.

I.1.3.1.Developing Harmonious Connections with Students

Several of the sources establish that to comprehend students' needs and consider their interests, one has to build rapport with them (Emmer & Sabornie, 2014; Stronge, 2018). Teachers can make students feel that they are accepted in the classroom by warmly welcoming them during the first few days of school and combining morning meeting times (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Students in such schools experience positive emotions and feelings since they feel valued in an encouraging atmosphere.

I.1.3.2.Outlining the Rules and Expectations

Classroom rules and expectations if, developed with the assistance of the students themselves will help foster ownership and responsibility among the students (Emmer & Sabornie, 2014; Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Stronge, 2018). After they are developed, these

guidelines should be written down and placed in conspicuous areas so people can easily see them and know what is expected of them (Emmer & Sabornie, 2014; Stronge, 2018). This helps in keeping a well-ordered form of the learning activity so that the learner is not confused or loses direction.

I.1.3.3.Creating Regular Schedules and Processes

Classroom management is a relative concept that depends on the student-teacher time on how consistent a teacher is in the classroom. As stated by Emmer and Sabornie (2014) and Sieberer-Nagler (2016), teachers should spend time teaching and modeling appropriate behavior in various situations related to classroom etiquette including bathroom breaks or transitions, etc. Associated with the above studies, both Korpershoek et al. (2016) and Sieberer-Nagler (2016) have pointed out that students should avoid confusion and interruptions that have a disruptive effect on student learning by structuring their day: understanding the flow of the day and following this with a visual daily plan that is adhered to throughout the day. It is through creating these routines that the implementation of a routine-based organizational structure supports a sense of order and structure in the classroom.

I.1.3.4.Using Various Teaching Methods to Engage Students

Effective organization of a classroom is an important affair, as it needs to engage the students. Teachers may make use of other techniques such as the use of flashcards, questions, games, discussions, and PowerPoint presentations among others to grab the attention of the learner and effectively engage him/her in learning (Marzano et al., 2003; Stronge, 2018). In addition, there is improved credibility of the material being taught to students through the connection between courses and actual experiences or situations (Emmer & Sabornie, 2014; Korpershoek et al., 2016). This way, the students are more likely to stay on track and

contribute positively to the classroom environment because they see the importance of what they are learning and why they are learning it.

I.1.3.5. Encouraging Behavior and Imposing Consequences

There is an effective management strategy that can be used in a classroom, which is known as positive reinforcement. Teachers can motivate learners with positive feelings they want to sustain by providing praise, gifts, or any penalties that teachers consider as right when they observe learners exhibiting the positive feelings they want them to have (Emmer & Sabornie, 2014; Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). The availability of a particular cool-down area can allow students with aggressive or impulsive dispositions to psyche themselves down after or rethink their deeds taken earlier (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016, Stronge, 2018). This procedure makes the classroom safe and tidy and helps students to develop skills of self-regulation at the same time.

I.1.4. Teacher and Student Roles and Responsibilities in the Classroom

Teachers and students have the responsibility of ensuring that the classroom is properly run for efficiency to be achieved. Teachers are powerful figures who influence the classroom climate but the students, on the other hand, have to be involved in the process and bear some of the responsibility as well. It is, therefore, paramount that both parties respect each other and work on deepening the relationship.

I.1.4.1. Teacher Responsibilities

Classroom management is indeed one of the key essential factors, which a teacher has to handle efficiently. As stated by Sieberer-Nagler (2016) and Stronge (2018), learners should be involved in establishing the classroom rules and responsibilities as well as the consequences of rewarding or punishing disruptive behaviors. It is also crucial to maintain harmony, order, and safety in the classroom (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Stronge, 2018).

To capture students' interest as well as encourage them to learn, there are crucial dynamic teaching methodologies that teachers have to consider incorporating in their classroom, namely the use of displays, group assignments, and simulations (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Stronge, 2018). In addition, clear instructions and demonstration of proper behavior help much in preparing for success, according to Sieberer-Nagler (2016) and Stronge (2018). Regarding mistakes, it is recommended that teachers speak to students individually and be polite and non-aggressive in their tone (Stronge, 2018).

Positivity is hence a useful strategy of behavior modification that helps motivate people to improve their manners (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Proper lesson planning and constant note-taking can help organize each class and provide clarity and cohesiveness to teaching (Stronge, 2018). For undesirable behaviors, the best practice is to try to understand the causes of the disruption and have individual discussions with students about such behavior (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Stronge, 2018).

Finally, it is crucial to acknowledge that establishing constructive relationships with students is necessary for effective learning (Stronge, 2018). Teachers may put these ideas into practice by developing a learning environment within the classroom that fosters student achievement, acceptable behavior, and passion for learning.

I.1.4.2. Student Responsibilities

Students also have an important part to play in the construction of an effective learning atmosphere in the classroom. In answering questions, completing assignments, and using language appropriate for the classroom, they should come to class and participate actively as expected by the teacher (Stronge, 2018). This means that they must take responsibility for the actions they take and understand that they are part of a learning institution (Stronge, 2018).

It is expected that students will follow the directions of the teachers, be disciplined, and engage well with the teachers (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Stronge, 2018). Another equally important factor is the need to ensure that the class is organized and clean at all times (Stronge, 2018). Mechanisms that show commitment to learning include abiding by school rules and regulations as well as participating in activities (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Stronge, 2018). that is why students have to manage themselves properly and respect their own time, energy, property, talents, ideas, behavior, feelings, and so on (Stronge, 2018).

In conclusion, both the educators and the learners should work hand in hand to effectively manage the class. Students are involved and take responsibility for preserving the environment, and teachers set the example and framework.

I.1.5. Classroom Management Strategies

Marzano et al. (2003) suggest that a diversified strategy is necessary for effective classroom management. The authors stress the significance of several critical techniques, such as the relationship between efficient classroom management and administrative support, the influence of school-wide policies and procedures on individual classroom management, the necessity of rules and procedures in the classroom, and the importance of student participation in developing these rules.

Additionally, Tomlinson (2014) discusses some specific approaches to learners' application that can enhance learning and interest. These comprise the following: Inquiry and project method, cooperative learning, and differentiated education. Teachers can further facilitate teaching and learning by ensuring that the learning environment is desirable by considering students' needs and preferences.

The instructional methods from Tomlinson (2014) provide an additional insight to the classroom management tactics of Marzano et al., (2003) as a result, they offer educators every tool that can be used in classroom management. Thus, to get the students interested and

be able to teach them effectively, it is first necessary to determine the needs of the target audience and the context in which education will take place and Then use the most suitable strategies.

I.1.6.Challenges in Classroom Management

Currently, classroom management poses a lot of challenges to teachers because it has to have a plan on how to achieve all the goals of instruction and even maintain a positive environment. The following are the main issues:

I.1.6.1.Managing Diverse Student Populations

According to Weinstein et al., (2004), in the involvement of pluralistically diverse learners in their class, the learners are expected to come with more competence from the cultures they come from. The possibility of using culturally sensitive measures when applying disciplinary measures and recognition of such features of students when addressing the management aspects are more important for Native students (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Promoting community culture, and relationships with students, and knowing them in a true sense as multicultural individuals are the first step in managing the classroom for multicultural education (Weinstein et al., 2004).

I.1.6.2.Sustaining Discipline While Encouraging Learning

Classroom management is critical for learning outcomes as many investigations have highlighted the fact that teachers' practice decisively affects students' achievement (Marzano et al., 2003). Learners and teachers should have good relationships if they are to attain improved learning outcomes and reduced cases of disciplinary measures (Marzano et al., 2003). It is proposed, therefore, that culturally appropriate intervention methods coupled with strategies in management should be applicable in enhancing student participation and taming erratic behavior (Weinstein et al., 2004).

I.1.6.3. Finding a Balance between Classroom Management and Instructional Objectives

Positive teacher-student relations help to reduce the probabilities of students' behavioral concerns, pointing to how essential it is to understand and connect with students (Marzano et al., 2003). To eradicate disparities in punitive action strategies and fuel the students to practice healthy behaviors, quality interaction between teachers and learners should be essential (Gregory and Weinstein, 2008).

In conclusion, identifying a proper learning environments for effective and responsible student conduct require relationship development, culture sensitivity, and individual perspective involving target learners as well as the best strategy to achieve these goals. Thus, by addressing these important issues, teachers can create special learning environments in their classrooms to help all children succeed academically as well as socially.

I.2. Virtual Classrooms Technology

I.2.1. Virtual Classrooms Definition

According to Rovai (2002), virtual classrooms are online learning environments that allow teachers and students to communicate in real time across geographic borders. These online learning environments are enhanced by the use of chat, video conferencing, and other collaborative tools (Picciano, 2002). Virtual classrooms are breaking the traditional boundaries of education by providing individualized, flexible, and accessible learning options (Rovai, 2002).

I.2.2. Benefits of Virtual Classrooms

A number of benefits and advantages are used by virtual classrooms to support education, including:

- **Accessibility:** Students from any place in the world can access education through virtual classrooms, without regard to geographical limitations or other physical barriers (Rovai, 2002). Learners can take part from any location with an internet connection, providing access to high-quality education for people from a variety of circumstances (Picciano, 2002).
- **Flexibility:** Students can learn at their own pace and on their schedule in virtual classrooms, which gives them the freedom to manage their academic goals with other obligations (Rovai, 2002). Students who have responsibilities to their families or jobs will especially benefit from this flexibility (Picciano, 2002).
- **Personalized Learning:** Teachers can modify lessons and materials in virtual classrooms to meet the needs of each unique student and their preferred learning style (Rovai, 2002). According to Picciano (2002), this customization improves student engagement and comprehension.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** According to Rovai (2002) virtual classrooms are more cost-effective than traditional education since they eliminate expenses like maintaining facilities and student transportation. Reducing the amount of physical space needed can help educational institutions save money (Picciano, 2002).
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Despite common misconceptions, virtual classrooms frequently offer more chances for communication and collaboration than traditional classroom environments (Rovai, 2002). A strong sense of community and collaboration is fostered via online resources such as chat rooms, video conferences, and forums (Picciano, 2002).

I.2.3.Virtual Learning Platforms and Tools

Virtual classrooms employ a range of web-based resources and instruments to facilitate education, such as:

- The teachers and learners can communicate in real time with the use of Zoom and other tools of virtual class instruction (Hodges et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- Writing boards that enable teachers to write information, illustrate, or even highlight for the learners as they are online (Hodges et al., 2020).
- Using a part of the screen to share demonstrations, images, and educational materials (Hodges et al., 2020).
- Screen-sharing option to display illustrations, examples, and educational resources (Hodges et al., 2020).
- Breakout rooms that allow collaborative workspaces and small working areas (Hodges et al., 2020).
- Using Employing text chat for posing questions and engaging in questions and answers (Hodges et al., 2020).

With the help of such technologies, students remain connected no matter the distance between them and it creates an effective virtual class environment that fosters sociability and learning (Hodges et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).

I.2.4.EFL Teaching in Virtual Classrooms

The online learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has forced instructors globally to reconsider what they are doing in EFL virtual classrooms. Scholars have emphasized the need to adapt language teaching practices for virtual scenarios, developing and fostering language skills through virtual interactions, and assessing language proficiency in virtual environments.

I.2.4.1.Adapting Language Teaching Methodologies

It was found that text interaction can enhance the EFL virtual class synchronous communications and help build virtual students' sense of community (Moorhouse, 2020). However, some challenges such as limits of technology, issues concerning internet

connection, and issues with students' participation have been identified (Moorhouse, 2020). To enhance the quality of online language teaching and learning, Moorhouse (2020) established that teachers and students should be provided with internet connectivity, technology support, and training.

I.2.4.2. Developing Language Skills through Virtual Interactions

Virtual classrooms need to entail the means for interactive learning and instructional opportunities for teaching languages. These opportunities include real-time interactions, tailored feedback, and multimedia learning experiences (Moorhouse, 2020). Research highlights the importance of personalized instruction, prompt feedback, and active learning in online learning environments to maximize language proficiency growth and raise learner satisfaction and engagement (Moorhouse, 2020).

I.2.4.3. Assessing Language Proficiency in Virtual Settings

To develop students' feeling of virtual community and improve language proficiency through online interactions, language proficiency assessment in virtual environments involves utilizing text-based interactions, synchronous e-learning systems, and real-time communication (Moorhouse, 2020). By utilizing capabilities like text interchange, audio chat, and video transmission, virtual classrooms can facilitate synchronous interactions that help students improve their language skills and general proficiency (Moorhouse, 2020).

To summarize, the effective evaluation of language proficiency in virtual settings requires the application of creative assessment strategies, the facilitation of virtual interactions for the development of language skills, and the adaptation of teaching methodologies to online environments.

I.2.5. Classroom Management in Virtual Settings

Important pointers for efficiently running a virtual classroom:

I.2.5.1. Clarify Expectations and Etiquette: Explain to the students the following

principles for the management of the virtual class:

- For better outcomes, many authors advise learning in a calm environment free from interruptions (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020).
- Dress appropriately just like you would when going for a live class as highlighted by Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020) and Hodges et al. (2020).
- Keep microphones off particularly when one is not speaking (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- To pose questions or contribute, students interface are to raise their hands or type their contributions in a chat box (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- Drinking, eating, or doing other activities simultaneously with operations should be prevented (Hodges et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- Model and demonstrate what is expected from the learners (Hodges et al., 2020)
- Be courteous and offer rules and direction to students in a manner as a reminder where needed (Hodges et al., 2020).

I.2.5.2.Sustain Student Involvement and Attention

- Encouraged students to answer questions, have voting sessions, group discussions, and other strategies to make the students active in learning (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- Urge students to keep their cameras turned on whenever they can to boost attendance (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020).
- Provide students with chances to engage with one another (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020).
- Allow students to figure things out and react without interfering (Rasmitadila et al., 2020).

- Reward learners who document good manners (Hodges et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020)

I.2.5.3. Address Technical Issues and Distractions

- Before the class, students should avoid using other applications and ensure that their audio and video are good (Hodges et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- Present the users of the virtual classroom tools with precise guidelines on how to use them (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020)
- If required, turn off unsuitable students and discuss with them after the class (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- Do not panic if there are some problems, or technical issues during the delivery of online classes (Rasmitadila et al., 2020).
- Encourage learners to feel free and inform tutors of any other activities that are likely to disrupt class or any form of inappropriate behavior (Hodges et al., 2020).

Clearly defining expectations, demonstrating excellent behavior, actively involving students, and quickly resolving problems is essential. Even in a virtual classroom, an efficient learning environment may be created with a little regularity and organization.

I.2.6. Challenges of Virtual Classrooms

Virtual classrooms offer many advantages that include cheaper costs, increased access, flexibility of learning, and tailored instruction (Rovai, 2002; Picciano, 2002). Nevertheless, certain issues must also be resolved to ensure the success of virtual learning environments including the following:

Distractions: Since the professor is not present in the classroom and cannot observe the learners' body language and facial expressions, it becomes challenging to keep them focused and intently engaged in a course (Rovai, 2002). Although this can be an issue, it can be managed if teachers can see the content displayed on the screens, and guide the students

back to the lesson, if necessary (Picciano, 2002).

Technical Difficulties: The following Technical difficulties are some of the challenges students encounter in a virtual learning environment such as computer crashes and poor connectivity which affect learning in virtual classrooms (Rovai, 2002). These issues need to be addressed as we can benefit from real-time communication and support that is offered in cases when online technical support is required (Picciano, 2002).

Unsupported Teachers: A possible concern from their side is that they may be replaced by other teachers who are more comfortable with the technology or by robots as they are dominated by the technology employed in virtual classrooms (Rovai, 2002). Some strategies for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy for using technology include providing support groups and structured training to the teachers (Picciano, 2002).

Absence of Appropriate Technology Investment: before buying instructional software for online classrooms or other learning environments, institutions must assess their needs (Rovai, 2002). Since the implementation of social learning is done in both conventional classrooms and online learning, it is essential to choose the most suitable resources (Picciano, 2002).

In conclusion, the challenges that have been indicated include low student engagement and technical issues; thus, the need to adopt continual improvement and innovation (Rovai 2002, Picciano 2002). In the future, as technology continues to remain part of the learning systems virtual classrooms will inevitably define the future of education (Rovai 2002; Picciano 2002).

Conclusion

This chapter has focused its broad message on how class management and the inclusion of virtual environments in teaching play vital roles in establishing modern learning. The work presented these two related disciplines' principles and applications, both theoretical

and practical, respectively. Classroom management is the foundation for positive relationships and groundwork that facilitates learning by providing appropriate association and positive interaction in a way that fosters an excellent relationship between the students and the teachers. They pair well with virtual classes, which are convenient and offer the element of flexibility. Pedagogy is a complex concept where different measures have to be applied to improve it, even though it plays a great role in society. Preparedness for common technical problems in virtual classrooms and most importantly ways, strategies for how to manage diverse students in traditional classes. Thus, teachers with the competencies in both are capable of creating interesting and useful learning situations that foster students' achievement in the emerging context of education.

Chapter Two : Data analysis and interpretation

Introduction

The present research will try to explore the EFL students' reactions to the implementation of the concurrent virtual classrooms and the EFL teachers' insights, associations, and notions concerning the virtual learning setting at Mohamed Khider University at Biskra. Namely, within the context of the present study, it will be appropriate to explore how EFL students at Biskra University experience learning in VCs about engagement, effectiveness, and accessibility. Also, to investigate EFL teachers' attitudes toward virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra University, specifically their perceived effectiveness and challenges. The current chapter is the practical component of this research; hence, it defines and justifies the research methodology, population and sampling, and data collection methods and processes. It begins by outlining and detailing the data-gathering devices, including their purposes, descriptions, and administration. Second, it presents, analyzes, summarizes, interprets, and discusses the findings from the data collection. The chapter finishes with study limitations, recommendations, and proposals for further research.

II.1. Research Method

The study utilized a mixed methods approach to assess the students' attitudes and teachers' perceptions towards virtual teaching at Biskra University. This approach was selected based on the rationale that the study sought to obtain a detailed exploration of the quantitative and qualitative data. The study included both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to fully address the research questions, which eventually resulted in well-founded and useful conclusions. Furthermore, a case study approach was used because of the research's complexity and uniqueness as well as the novelty of the researcher. This design was purposive by targeting a particular group of users which were EFL students and teachers of Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra to enable the researcher to study the research topic

in detail.

II.2.Population and Sampling

Since this study seeks to gather information regarding the topic under analysis, and not to generalize the results of the research to the whole population. Consequently, the researcher purposively chose the sample of EFL teachers to be interviewed because they can supply the important and relevant responses needed. On the other hand, the EFL student population volunteered to participate and answer the questionnaire which was completed online using Google Forms and then shared on different online platforms.

II.3.Data Collection Tools and Procedures

Two instruments were used in this study to gather data: An interview with teachers more specifically structured with open-ended questions and a semi-structured self-completion questionnaire for students. This data collected was used to find out how the teachers and students at Biskra University felt about the timely virtual class and also answer the questions asked in the study.

II.3.1.Students' Questionnaire

II.3.1.1.Aim of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire aimed to collect information on their ideas and perceptions of virtual classes at Biskra University in terms of engagement, efficacy, and accessibility. In order to obtain qualitative insights while still gathering quantitative data, a semi-structured questionnaire was designed and selected. Google Form, an easy-to-use and reasonably priced tool for collecting data on online learning, was used to administer the questionnaire. It fits well with the study's online format and is accessible to participants whenever they like.

II.3.1.2.Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The first study question, "What are EFL students' perceptions about learning in virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra University?" was responded to through the formulation and implementation of the questionnaire. It seeks to identify the demographic profile of students and their perception of the relevance, availability, and participation in Virtual Learning Environment and the challenges they are likely to face. Moreover, the questionnaire also aims at identifying measures that need to be taken towards improving the virtual classrooms for EFL students.

The questionnaire was developed on Google Forms, it consists of three sections therefore all detailed questions are eight in total. The first section was the "General Information" which comprised of four (4) questions from (1 to 4) that focused on general information about the participants besides their gender, age, academic level, and their previous experiences with online classes at Biskra University. The second section was about "EFL Students Feedback on Virtual Classrooms"; This section uses a Likert scale format (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree) for (13) statements related to student engagement, interaction, motivation, learning effectiveness, technology, and preference for virtual learning compared to traditional classrooms. Moreover, the Third section was called 'In-Depth Feedback on Virtual classrooms' and consisted of the following three questions: Q1 & Q2 represent closed questions where students should select the most significant benefits of virtual classes (Q1) & difficulties they faced during virtual classes (Q2). Q3 represents the open type of question where students are free to describe tangible improvements for virtual classrooms.

II.3.1.3. Validating and Piloting the Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was validated and evaluated by the supervisor, who made some comments that mostly entailed rewording several questions to make them clearer and more precise. Furthermore, the questionnaire was e-mailed to five (5) individuals from the

selected sample. The criticisms and opinions received from validating and piloting were taken into account and helped the researcher design the questionnaire

II.3.1.4. Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

After validation and piloting, the questionnaire was generated online using Google Forms survey software. The questionnaire, thereafter, was administered to the participants via e-mail, Facebook, and Messenger groups. The total number of replies received was (77) during 29 days.

II.3.1.5. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

To address the first study question (What are EFL students' perceptions about learning in virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra University?). The data from the students' questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics provided by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets can handle frequency tables and basic descriptive statistics for surveys with closed-ended items. Furthermore, content analysis was carried out on the open-ended question in the student's questionnaire to discover themes and patterns in students' opinions.

Section One :General Information.

Item 01:What is your gender?

The answers to this question are displayed in the form of frequencies in the table below:

Table 2.1 : students' gender

Gender	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Female	59	76.6
Male	18	23.4

Total	77	100
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Table 2.1 demonstrates that out of 77 total respondents, 59 identified as female (76.6%) and 18 identified as male (23.4%) , which indicates a female-dominant sample .

Item 02:: What is your age?

By asking question (02), we sought to understand the age distribution within the surveyed population aiding in the interpretation of any age-related patterns .

Table.2.2 : students' age

Age	Number (N)	Percent (%)
18-20	23	29.9
21-23	46	59.7
24-26	8	10.4
27 or older	0	0
Total	77	100

Table 2.2 displays the distribution of respondents across various age ranges. The majority of respondents are within the 21-23 age range, with 46 respondents, constituting 59.7% of the total , This suggests the sample may be skewed towards a young adult demographic. After that, 23 respondents, or 29.9% of the total, fall into the 18–20 age group. In contrast, the age group of 24-26 comprises a comparatively smaller percentage of participants—just 8 people, or 10.4% of the total—than the overall total. Notably, there are no respondents reported in the "27 or older" category.

Item 03:What is your current academic level?

The aim of the third item was to outline the current academic level of participants, with distinctions made between levels denoted as L1, L2, L3, and M1

Table 2.3 : The participants' academic level

Academic level	Number (N)	Percent (%)
L1	16	20.8
L2	17	22.1
L3	18	23.4
M1	26	33.8
Total	77	100

Table 2.3 provides information about the academic levels of participants, which are divided into four categories: L1, L2, L3, and M1. Among the 77 participants included in the survey, the largest group, comprising 33.8%, falls under the M1 category, indicating a significant number of individuals at an advanced academic level. Following closely behind are participants categorized as L3, accounting for 23.4% of the total, suggesting a considerable presence at an intermediate stage of academic achievement. Meanwhile, the L2 category encompasses 22.1% of the participants followed by the L1 category with 20.8% of responses, indicating a relatively even distribution among those at the early stages of their academic journey.

Item 04: How many online classes have you attended at Biskra University?

The target aim of the fourth question was to explore the attendance of online classes among participants at Biskra University

Table 2.4 : Participants' attendance of online classes at Biskra University

Online classes	Number (N)	Percent (%)

1-5	42	54.5
6-10	19	24.7
11-15	14	18.2
More than 15	2	2.6
Total	77	100

Table 04 demonstrate that the majority, comprising 54.5% of the surveyed individuals, attended between 1 to 5 online classes , indicating a prevalence of occasional online class participation. Following closely behind, 24.7% of participants attended a slightly higher range, between 6 to 10 online classes , suggesting some regular online class engagement. Moreover, 18.2% of respondents attended between 11 to 15 online classes, Finally, only a minor fraction, 2.6% of participants, attended more than 15 online classes, This shows that the size of the examined population attends online classes are less often.

Section Two :EFL Students Feedback on Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University

Item01: choose the relevant answer for each statement.

The aim of this question was to measure the students' experience with virtual classrooms (VCs) for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) studied at Biskra University ; participants were given (13) statements, and they were asked to rate their experience through 5-point scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”.

The data collected from this question was calculated via Exel ; and they were displayed via two graphs customized in Exel . The first graph displayed data on statements from (1) to (6) , and the second graph displayed data on statements from (7) to (13). The data was displayed as follows:

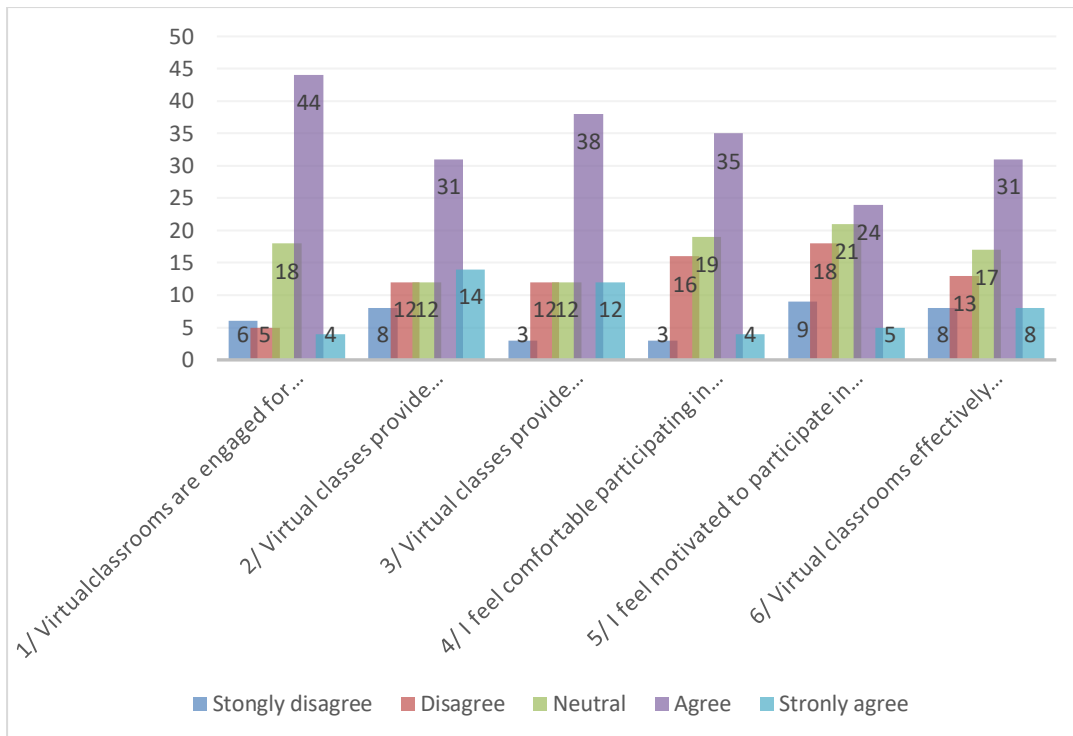


Figure 2.1: participants' experience of Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University

To simplify what was displayed in the figure 2. 1 each statement is discussed individually :

Statement 01:“Virtual classrooms are engaged for my EFL studies at Biskra University.”

As figure 2. 1 demonstrates, (44) of the participants agreed that virtual classrooms are engaged for their EFL studies at Biskra University along with (4) other participants who strongly agreed . (18) of those participants selected “neutral”, and only (5) of them disagreed while (6) chose “ strongly disagree ”.

Statement 02 :“Virtual classes provide opportunities for interaction with other students.”

Regarding statement number 02, a considerable number of participants (31) agreed that virtual classes provide opportunities for interaction with other students, (14) participants used “strongly agree” to show the extent to which they agree with the statement while (12) of them were not sure whether they had opportunities for interaction with other students or not . Contrastingly, (12) participants disagreed and (8) participant strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 03 : “Virtual classes provide opportunities for interaction with the instructor.”

As show in figure 2. 1, (38) participants agreed and (12) others strongly agreed with the statement whereas (12) participants were not sure if they had opportunities for interaction with the instructor or not . On the other hand, (12) participants selected “disagree” and (3) more participants strongly disagreed with the statements.

Statement 04 : “I feel comfortable participating in discussions and activities in VCs.”

The data shows that a lot of participants (35) agreed that they felt at ease taking part in conversations and activities in VCs. Furthermore, four individuals indicated their level of agreement with the statement by marking "strongly agree". Nevertheless, the remark was rejected by 16 respondents, 3 strongly disagreed, and 19 selected the "neutral" option.

Statement 05 : “I feel motivated to participate in virtual classes.”

As indicated above, a number of (24) participants stated that they agree and (5) of them noted that they strongly agree with the statement. (21) of the participants were not certain whether they feel motivated to participate in virtual classes or not . In addition, (18) participants chose “disagree” and other (9) who strongly disagree with the statement .

Statement 06 : “Virtual classrooms effectively support my English language learning at Biskra University.”

Additionally, when the participants were asked about the extent to which they agree or disagree with the sixth statement, a number of (31) participants stated that they agree while (8) others noted that they strongly agree that virtual classrooms effectively support their English language learning at Biskra University. In addition, (17) participants selected “neutral”, (13) of them claimed that they disagree, and (8) participant chose “strongly disagree”.

The follow up figure:

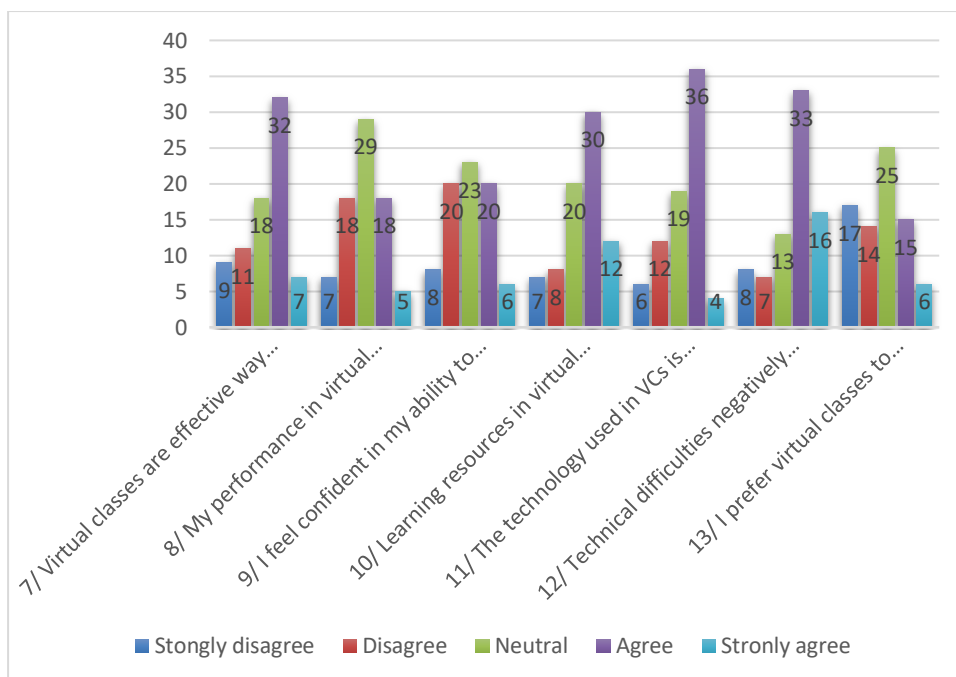


Figure2.2: participants' experience of Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University

To simplify what was displayed in the figure 2. 2 each statement is discussed individually:

Statement 07 : “Virtual classes are effective way to learn English.”

It is clear in the figure 2. 2 that (32) participants agreed and (7) others strongly agreed that virtual classes are effective way to learn English unlike (11) other participants who claimed that they disagree and (9) strongly disagree. Moreover, (18) participants were not sure whether they agree with the statement or not.

Statement 08 : “My performance in virtual classes has improved since starting my studies at Biskra University.”

As the data supplies, (18) of participants agreed that their performance in virtual classes has improved since starting their studies at Biskra University along with (5) more who strongly agreed. On the other hand, (18) participants disagreed and (7) participant strongly disagreed while another (29) participant who were not sure.

Statement 09 : “I feel confident in my ability to learn English in virtual classes. I would recommend virtual classes to other EFL students.”

Concerning the current statement, a number of participants (20) selected “agree” and (6)

more selected “strongly agree”. However, (23) participants noted that they were not sure whether they feel confident in their abilities to learn English in virtual classes. And they would recommend virtual classes to other EFL students or not. (20) participants disagree and (8) chose “strongly disagree”

Statement 10 :“Learning resources in virtual classrooms are accessible compared to traditional classrooms.”

As the figure 2. 2 indicated, (30) participants usually thinks that learning resources in virtual classrooms are accessible compared to traditional classrooms , (12) participants strongly agreed that they do whereas (20) others selected “neutral”. In addition, (8) participants selected “disagree” and other (7) strongly disagreed with the statement .

Statement 11 :“The technology used in VCs is reliable and user-friendly.”

In addition, a considerable number of participants(36) agreed, (4) of them strongly agreed, and (19) more were not sure if the technology used in VCs is reliable and user-friendly or not. On the opposite position, (12) participants disagreed and (6) other strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 12 : “Technical difficulties negatively affect my ability to engage in virtual classes.”

The twelve statement indicated that (33) participants agreed and (16) others strongly agreed that technical difficulties negatively affect their abilities to engage in virtual classes unlike (7) other participants who claimed that they disagree and other (8) strongly disagree . Moreover, (13) participants were not sure whether they agree with the statement or not.

Statement 13 :“I prefer virtual classes to traditional face-to-face classes.”

The final statement asked participants to rate their level of agreement or disagreement. Out of the individuals that replied, fifteen (15) expressed agreement, six stated strong agreement, fourteen showed disagreement, and seventeen expressed strong disagreement. In addition to

(25) participants who were not certain about whether they agree or disagree.

Section Three : In-Depth Feedback on Virtual classrooms

Item 01 :What are the biggest advantages of learning English in VCs compared to traditional classrooms?

- Flexibility and Comfort
- Interactive and Engaging Content
- Enhanced Technological Integration
- Cost-Effective Education

What are the biggest advantages of learning English in Virtual classrooms compared to traditional classrooms?

77 responses

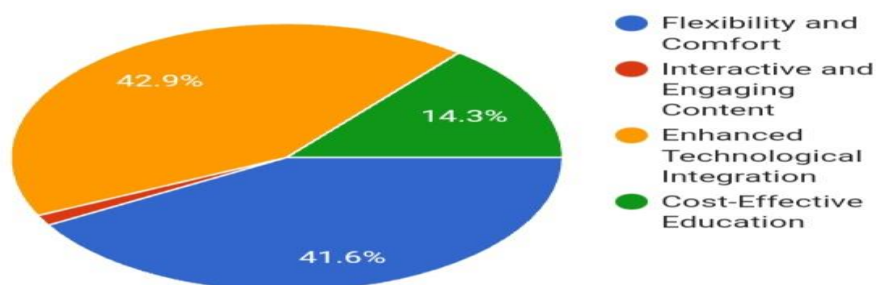


Figure2.3: The biggest advantages of learning English in virtual classrooms compared to traditional ones

The study shows that enhanced technological integration (42.9%) emerges as the most commonly recognized advantage of virtual classrooms (VCs). Learners appear to embrace the role that technology plays in their English learning experience. Flexibility and Comfort (41.6%) follow closely behind, indicating that learners value the convenience of studying at their own speed and location. Considering practical benefits, cost-effectiveness education (14.3%) is a moderate benefit, showing that some learners are concerned about the financial

component. However, Interactive and Engaging Content (1.3%) obtained the fewest votes, which might indicate that learners do not see virtual classrooms as having a clear advantage over regular classes in this regard .

Item 02 : Have you faced any challenges while engaging in virtual classes? Please describe them.

- Internet Issues
- Technical Difficulties
- Distractions and Lack of Focus
- Limited Interaction and Collaboration

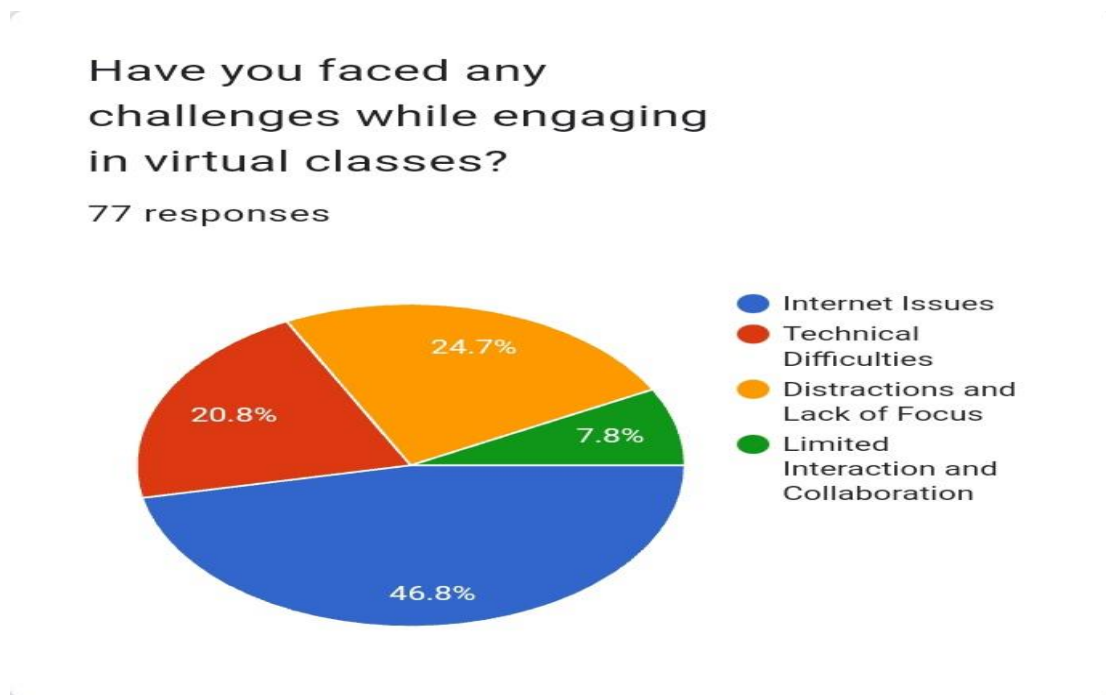


Figure2.4: The challenges facing EFL students while engaging in virtual classrooms

This data shows the main struggles that students experience in virtual classes. Internet problems (46.8%) predominate among the critical challenges, highlighting that availability and stability of connection is critical. Distractions and lack of focus (24.7%) are significant concerns; this may mean that self-regulation could be needed in virtual learning

environments. Technical difficulties have scored (20.8 %) and despite being less significant, should also be taken into account. However, it is rather surprising that limited interaction and collaboration estimated as only (7.8%) as a problem, it is important to understand that even such a low percentage can be indicative of a large number of students who experience difficulties with this aspect.

Item 03 : In your opinion, how can virtual classrooms be improved to better support EFL students at Biskra University?

The last question was “In your opinion, how can virtual classrooms be improved to better support EFL students at Biskra University?” The given open-ended question seeks to get feedback and suggestions from participants as to what could be done to improve virtual class environments for EFL students at Biskra University. The intended purpose of the inquiry involves obtaining specific ideas on the improvement of aspects within the virtual classroom environment as well as recognizing participants’ perspectives on current issues and prospects of the virtual classroom environment. By gathering feedback, the goal is to encourage participants to offer their unique thoughts, experiences, and ideas, which may subsequently impact decision-making processes targeted at improving the quality and efficacy of virtual education for EFL students at the institution.

Content analysis was carried out on this open-ended question to discover themes and patterns in students' opinions :

1. Internet Improvement:

The most obvious subject is the need for better internet services and connections. It was mentioned in 35 responses (45.5%), that respondents identified poor internet quality and technological concerns as the primary challenges to effective virtual learning. Suggestions include improving technology, offering better and more stable internet connectivity, and making internet accessible to all students.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

"The internet is the main issue so it should be improved first."

"The university needs to improve the internet quality, especially in the university city."

"Upgrade hardware and provide a better internet ."

"Make the internet in Algeria stronger, so the students and teachers will not find excuses to be absent. "

"Boost the internet to enhance virtual classroom experiences. "

2.Flexible Scheduling and Timing:

12 responses (15.6%) underlined the necessity of having flexible scheduling choices for virtual classrooms, allowing students to select class times that meet their requirements and interests. Respondents requested that the scheduling of virtual classrooms be appropriate and convenient for both teachers and students.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

"Give us the right to choose the suitable time for us ."

"The timing of virtual classes must be valid for both teachers and students ."

"The schedule of the virtual classrooms is not suitable for me ."

"Set flexible scheduling options for learners."

"It is usually hard for me to find suitable timing for virtual classrooms."

3.Teacher Training :

10 responses (13%) emphasized the need for instructors to have more training in using technology successfully for virtual education and promoting engaging interactions. Suggestions include providing instructors with the required technical tools and teaching them techniques to encourage student engagement and promote communication in the virtual environment.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

" Training the teachers on how to present and use the technology effectively in Virtual classes. "

"Some teachers are not familiar with this technology, they need to be trained to teach and interact in virtual classes. "

"The teacher should be trained for better classes"

"Training teachers to use them because they are more familiarized with traditional classrooms"

"The teachers are teaching us like face-to-face classrooms and that needs to be improved"

4.Interactive and Engaging Learning:

Nine (9) respondents (11. 7%) needed more interactive virtual learning to be created; for instance, using multimedia resources such as films, quizzes, and games to make students more active in the learning process. Lack of participation involves furthering the English language proficiencies to be developed, improving the ability for growth in students' social skills, as well as putting measures to promote collaborative project work and group discussion.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

"Providing personalized feedback on assignments and introducing collaborative projects and group discussion to cultivate teamwork and communication abilities."

"Fostering English skills, developing social skills."

"I think teachers should interact more with us by names and use more educated games to fully focus with them."

"The tasks increased not only our knowledge of specific areas but also our general knowledge"

«Incorporating interactive materials such as videos, quizzes, and games to engage students actively in learning English. "

5. Technical Support and Troubleshooting:

Seven (7) responses (9.1%) recognized the need for technical support and problem-solving in virtual classrooms, including connection issues and software/hardware problems. One suggestion is to have a dedicated technical support person or engineer available to assist both teachers and students.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

"By finding solutions to these issues: the internet is awful/technical issues sometimes we can't join even the session. "

"The university should place a technical engineer next to the teaching professor to avoid technical problems."

«I think virtual classrooms need more support to solve the technical difficulties that we face."

"Provide technical support during virtual classes to avoid technical problems."

"There are a lot of things to be improved like training teachers how to use technology and solve any technical problems."

6. Attendance and Participation:

A total of 6 responses (7. 8%) embraced the importance of maintaining attendance and engagement in virtual classrooms with recommendations concerning the practice of making virtual attendance as mandatory as face-to-face teaching sessions. The respondents also supported the idea of guiding teachers to incorporate ways to achieve learner engagement during virtual education.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

" Make it account, for example, the teachers need to write the presence when the online classes are TD sessions. "

" In my opinion, virtual classes can be improved by the administration emphasizing their importance to the curriculum, incorporating more interesting classes or even TDs as virtual

classrooms (not only lectures)which I believe will encourage students to attend the online classes."

«The teachers must adopt some strategies to motivate us to participate in virtual classrooms."

«Use games to motivate us to focus and participate. "

"To me, my pronunciation got better than ever and it was an amazing opportunity to practice my language."

"By removing them, unless they improve internet issue and the fact that they give as much time to students to participate as they do in classic classrooms, also the teachers have to put extra effort into making the lesson understood because virtual classes always make it harder for the students to understand. "

7.Distracton and Lack of Focus:

A small number of four (4) responses (5. 2%) argue that it is challenging for them to concentrate in a virtual classroom because of other activities and noises from their phones and the environment. This implies that there is a need for strategies, which would minimize these distractions as well as help the learners achieve a better focus.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

" The phone usually distracts my concentration with the teacher and I do not know how to improve it from this perspective maybe making the VCs more fun. "

"I find it hard to focus with the teacher virtually, and I get distracted by my phone or the environment, so I think the teachers should try to interact more. "

«The presentation of lessons should be more lively than just reading and explaining it to keep our focus on the teachers. "

«Use educational games to stay focused and not get distracted by other stuff. "

8.Challenges and Limitations:

A few replies, 3 responses (3.9%), acknowledged the difficulties and limitations of developing virtual classrooms, admitting that the existing situation and available resources may provide significant obstacles to considerable advances. Due to the numerous restrictions that the university and the students have, some of the respondents expressed their uncertainty about the possibility of enhancing virtual classrooms.

Examples of responses related to this theme include:

"Some modules cannot be effectively taught virtually, such as grammar."

"Unfortunately, considering the circumstances and the materials we have, it cannot be improved in our country."

"In my opinion, we are still so far away from virtual classrooms, and it is hard to improve virtual classrooms in our university due to various factors such as internet issues and lack of experience among teachers."

«No , they can not . "

II.3.1.6. Interpretation of the Students' Questionnaire

The first research question was addressed in a meaningful and rational way by the analysis of the data from the students' questionnaire. The sample is predominantly female (76.6%), with the majority of respondents (59.7%) falling within the 21-23 age range, indicating a young adult demographic. It is important to say that the academic level of participants is quite evenly distributed, the largest proportion of which, 33.8%, are learners at the M1 (Master 1) level, followed by the L3 (23.4%), L2 (22.1%), and L1 (20.8%) levels. When it comes to the number of times students attend online classes, (54.5%) of respondents indicated that they have between 1-5 virtual classes meaning that they are occasional attendants, (24.7%) of respondents have been to 6-10 classes; (18.2%) have been to 11-15 classes. A smaller percentage of them, precisely (2.6%) have reported attending more than 15 online classes.

This questionnaire aimed at identifying how students perceive VCs for their EFL learning involved 13 statements which were scored on a 5-point Likert scale to give a comprehensive insight into students' perception regarding these VCs. Despite a great number of students' positive perception of VCs use for learning activities and interaction with instructors and classmates, there were quite many students who either were not sure or disagreed with the statement, which points to the necessity of improving the level of active involvement of students into virtual classroom activities. The same pattern of results is displayed in the aspects of motivation and comfort level where a significant portion of the participants reported high levels of motivation and comfort while others were either unsure or disagreed. From such results, it is possible to identify the areas that need to be further developed for enhancing the educational process and increasing students' activity at the university. The majority of participants reported that learning resources in virtual classrooms are easier to access as compared to normal classrooms and an overall percentage of students agreed that virtual classrooms are beneficial in learning English. These findings give a rather more positive outlook on the learning considerations and assets. As for technology and usage, while most of the respondents are confident about the dependability of VC technology as well as its ease of use, a relatively large number of them cannot confidently answer the question. This underlines the need to clear any possible technological barriers that might hinder students from accessing the program. Additionally, the majority of the participants strongly believed that technical challenges impacted their interaction with VCs prominently calling for proper technology infrastructure. There is yet a controversy on whether VCs are better than normal classes; this may be due to challenges such as motivation and engagement issues as mentioned earlier or just a bias towards physical classroom instruction.

Feedback from students using VCs shows that there is a conflict between the benefits of technology and difficulties with engagement. While students overwhelmingly appreciate the

role of technology in their learning (42.9%) citing enhanced technological integration as the biggest advantage), they also value the flexibility and comfort of learning at their own pace and location (41.6%). Cost-effectiveness plays a moderate role (14.3%). notably, interactive content is not seen as a stronger element of virtual study than conventional academic environments (1. 3%). On the other side, reliable internet connectivity is essential and according to the survey, internet problems are the main concern (46. 8%). Another significant challenge is maintaining focus during virtual learning, with (24.7%) of the respondents expressing concern regarding this issue, which underscores the importance of self-regulation. Technical difficulties are also an issue here, with (20.8%) citing it as a concern. Lastly, despite receiving the lowest response percentage of (7.8%), limited interaction and collaboration should not be dismissed since even one student in a class can suffer from difficulties in this respect. To tackle these problems, the university can improve its internet connection for virtual class participation, promote a better experience of virtual lessons, and provide strategies for dealing with distractions.

Moreover , Biskra University learners defined other areas that require improvement in virtual classrooms for EFL learning. The most concerning problem raised first is an unstable internet connection, students demand improvements in the quality of internet connection, technology, and connectivity for all the learners (45. 5%). In addition, Biskra University learners defined other areas that require improvement in virtual classrooms for EFL learning. First of all, being the most significant concern, some students demand improvements in the quality of internet connection, technology, and connectivity for all learners (45. 5%). As for the preferences of the students, flexible options about the offering of classes are also preferred as they give students greater control over the timing of classes (6/15). One more crucial issue is the preparation of teachers to integrate technology, engage students, and support communication with each other in the online classroom (13%). Furthermore, (11.

7%). Requested multimedia and other related aids and techniques including videos, games, and methods can be used in VCs to enhance social skills, language comprehension, teamwork, and group debate to handle distractions and issues related to lack of focus which is another challenge faced by students(5. 2%) undergoing VCs. It is also essential to have technical support to address connection issues and software /hardware problems (9.1%). Maintaining students' involvement is another concern, with suggestions for mandatory virtual attendance and techniques to encourage participation during classes (7.8%). While some acknowledge limitations like infrastructure and difficulty teaching certain subjects virtually (3.9%). By addressing these issues, Biskra University can create a more supportive and effective virtual learning environment for its EFL students.

II.3.2. Teachers' Interview

II.3.2.1.Aim of the Teachers' Interview

To investigate the attitudes and experiences of English language teachers at Biskra University regarding virtual classrooms, an unstructured interview was employed. The reason this particular data-gathering tool was chosen was because probing is the most effective way to obtain detailed responses. The researcher was able to understand the relevance an an overwhelming number of in-depth and precise data by directly speaking with teachers as they discussed their opinions of virtual classrooms from a concrete practical standpoint through their experiences with students.

II.3.2.2.Description of the Teachers' Interview

The unstructured interview was designed and administered to answer the second research question (What are EFL teacher's attitudes about teaching in virtual classrooms (VCs) at Biskra University ?). The interview comprised (9) open-ended questions. Question number (1) was about the duration of teaching experience in English at Biskra University. Question number (2) focused on the length of experience in virtual teaching. Furthermore,

question number (3) seeks to understand teachers' general impressions and feelings towards virtual classrooms in EFL teaching. The fourth question focused on the experience of teaching in virtual classes which revealed some of the challenges below. Question number five (5) in the study explored the measures that can be taken to keep learners' interest when teaching EFL on an online platform. Thus, question number six (6) was focused on finding teachers' views regarding the usefulness of VCs for the enhancement of English language skills. Regarding inquiry number seven (7), respondents were asked about differences noticed in terms of participation or achievement of students who attend virtual and traditional classrooms. Question number eight (8) assessed the level of comfort of the teachers with the technology that is used in VCs. Lastly and finally, the ninth question aims at getting specific recommendations on modifying or developing the virtual learning platforms for EFL instruction..

II.3.2.3. Validating the Teachers' Interview

The supervisor approved the interview but because of time constraints and the teacher's lack of availability, the interview was not piloted.

II.3.2.4. Conduction of the Teachers' Interview

The four teachers were invited to participate in the interview via e-mail, and the four teachers accepted the invitation. To further ensure their comfort and ease, the interviews were conducted in quiet settings at times and locations of their choice, and the teachers permitted the interviews to be recorded.

II.3.2.5. Interpretive Analysis of the Teachers' Interview

To answer the second research question and obtain comprehensible, significant, and objective answers, we attempted to make use of the content analysis method. Content analysis is frequently employed in analyzing interviews since it best suits the nature of the variables under study. In order to carry out a content analysis of the qualitative data,

the interview recordings were transcribed, organized, and codified. The second step included identifying themes to draw connections determine possible explanations, and report themes. The interview's answers were analyzed and interpreted as follows:

Question01: : How long have you been teaching English at university?

Table2.5. Teachers' Teaching Experience at Biskra University

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
5 years.	Since October 2023.	I've been teaching English for 3 years now.	More than 18 years.

The answers reveal a range of teaching experiences among Biskra University's English teachers, ranging from less a year to more than eighteen. This indicates a mix of experienced and new teachers.

Question 02: How long have you been teaching virtually ?

Table.2.6. Teachers' Teaching Experience in Virtual Classrooms

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
1 year.	since October 2023.	I've only held online sessions during the pandemic as a security measure.	Since covid-19 pandemic.

According to the comments, the teachers' experiences with virtual teaching differ; some have been doing it for around a year, while others have been doing it ever since the pandemic started. This shows that the faculty has, to various degrees, adjusted to teaching

virtually.

Question03: Can you share your general impressions or feelings about virtual classrooms in EFL teaching?

Table.2.7. Teachers' General Impressions about Virtual Classrooms in EFL Teaching

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
<p>It is not as efficient as face to face classrooms, but when students are engaged and interested, it can be equally effective and rewarding. I would say it is good but requires students to be interested and willing to learn.</p>	<p>To be honest that the administration assign to me can not be taught virtually which are grammar and cinilization in td form , and that create a bad impression.</p>	<p>Overal, I believe that they positively impact learning in this day and age as they can provide access to language learning opportunities for individuals who might not otherwise have the chance due to geographical constraints for example. . The online spce can also</p>	<p>VCs is important and can serve as a complementary face-to-face education.</p>

		<p>allow for innovative teaching methods to be implemented such as interactive multimedia tools and real-time interactions with peers.</p>	
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According to the table above, Teacher 01 gave a neutral opinion, Commenting that although students attend the lessons willingly, the virtual learning is as effective and fulfilling as the traditional one. As it can be seen from this, the instructor posits that participation and motivation from the students are critical to the effectiveness of online learning environments. Secondly, teacher 02 has a negative impression, they argue that the administration has placed them with classes that cannot be taught online especially grammar and civilization in TD form. This creates a negative perception suggesting that the teacher feels that the classroom environment is unworthy of some lessons or techniques. Thirdly, as highlighted by teacher 03, virtual classrooms are beneficial for learning especially for students who reside in rural areas. The teacher explains the advantages of virtual classrooms with a focus on language learning and new opportunities for innovative approaches to class handling such as multimedia interactions, and real-time presentations, ...ect. Lastly, teacher 04 also had a positive

attitude acknowledged the importance of virtual sessions, and considered them as an extension of face-to-face learning. This comes across as the instructor supposing that online environments could be used to enhance the traditional learning process.

Question 04 :What challenges have you encountered while teaching in virtual classrooms?

Table.2.8. Challenges Faced by Teachers while Teaching in Virtual Classrooms

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
<p>Virtual classrooms or online teaching, the way it is conceived by the people in charge, is to be applied to Lectures only, or “Discovery Units”. The module I teach has a practical nature, in that it mainly consists of exercises and activities, because the theorizing behind it (Translation) would not benefit, at least in my humble opinion, EFL students. So it is challenging from that perspective. On the other hand, the number of students in a virtual classroom has to be limited, otherwise, many students will not benefit from attending, and if we add to that</p>	<p>There are plenty of challenges , starting with the mindset of students , they do not really respect the online sessions as they do with traditional ones , for example : they keep the mic on and speak as if we are in the market . another challenge is that they do not attend the online classes and complain all the time that they</p>	<p>Students’ lack of engagement and enthusiasm. Keeping them all focused on the screen content and the lack of face-to-face interaction can sometimes make it harder for students to practice speaking and listening skills, which</p>	<p>Teaching statistical mathematics virtually is challenging due to limited internet access in the area where i live, with some students lacking laptops or reliable internet. This can hinder interaction</p>

<p>the fact that the module requires a lot of practice, then you will only have a small number who are really participating and benefiting. Students will also log in using some usernames or someone else's email (some family member for example), so I have to remind them to log in using their real names lest I wouldn't know who I'm dealing with. That makes their names even harder to remember. Also, it is difficult for me to keep track of who is taking notes and who is only passively attending in virtual classrooms. If students are in front of me, I will call out those who aren't paying attention or aren't taking notes, etc. So I need to constantly remind my students in online sessions that I assume they are taking notes and writing what needs to be recorded.</p>	<p>cannot access to the internet . moreover , I think that the modules that the administration assign to me can not be taught virtually because they need more practice and exercises like grammar and civilization .</p>	<p>are crucial components of language learning. Additional technical issues such as those related to sound quality and image freeze.</p>	<p>with them.</p>
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According to the table. 2. 8. Teaching in virtual classrooms has its benefits and difficulties that vary depending on teachers' experience and knowledge and the subject they teach.

The table above shows that teacher 01 had some challenges because the subject he teaches is mostly practical type since their module involves many exercises and activities as opposed to theories or transitions. They complained that it was difficult to capture the students' attention within a virtual classroom setting particularly when the module involves several practice sessions. In addition, educating a group of many students in a particular virtual environment where some of them may be inactive or just use fake names at the login account is another difficulty. In comparison to face-to-face classes, the teacher found it difficult to monitor student engagement and note-taking during online sessions.

In addition, teacher 02 teacher highlighted challenges related to student mindset and behavior in online sessions. Students may not show the same level of respect or engagement as in traditional classes, leading to disruptions like background noise or connectivity issues. The identified challenges also included the major problem of the teacher, who mentioned that some modules were challenging to teach virtually especially the ones that require many practice lessons and exercises such as the grammar and civilization modules

Furthermore, the issues observed by teacher 03 are associated with learners and their lack of enthusiasm in the online learning process. In technology-assisted projects focused on practicing speaking and listening skills, student attention to content displayed on a screen is difficult to manage without live face-to-face contact. Other factors, which affect the continuity of a class are technical ones like sound quality and image freezing

during the class. The identified challenges also included the major problem of the teacher, who mentioned that some modules were challenging to teach virtually especially the ones that require many practice lessons and exercises such as the grammar and civilization modules

Moreover, the issues observed by teacher 03 are associated with learners and their lack of enthusiasm in the online learning process. In technology-assisted projects focused on practicing speaking and listening skills, student attention to content displayed on a screen is difficult to manage without live face-to-face contact. Other factors, which affect the continuity of a class are technical ones like sound quality and image freezing during the class.

Another point that teacher 04 noted was, teaching statistical mathematics virtually which proved to be challenging due to inadequate internet connection and the students who did not own laptops or reachable internet connection. These are some of the limitations that limit the ability of the teachers in online classes to interact with the students.

In summary, The challenges identified by teachers include issues with student engagement, technical difficulties, module suitability for virtual teaching, and limitations in internet access and technology for both teachers and students.

Question 05 : How do you maintain students engagement in virtual EFL classrooms?

Table.2.9. Teachers' strategies to Maintain Student Engagement in Virtual Classrooms

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
The content of the "lecture" has to be captivating. The	It is hard to do that but for me I teach civilization	I aim to include	It is not possible and

<p>module I teach is Translation. So I try my best to choose texts which touch upon the topics that our students would be typically interested in, or which address the challenges and difficulties that they encounter, for instance as members of the “GenZ” generation. So I’ll choose for example texts which deal with social media and its pros and cons, etc. Also, during an online session, the teacher has to maintain student’s attention by constantly involving them in whatever is being discussed or dealt with, via questions, observations, etc.</p>	<p>virtually so I divide students into small groups and assign to them a particular theme like the American or British civilization.</p>	<p>online discussions and ask them direct individual questions about the content and do some formative tasks and activities together online during the session. Gamification is quite useful as well as giving personalised feedback is a</p>	<p>the number of students varies from one session to another.</p>
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<p>Sometimes a teacher may forget themselves talking for a half an hour on a particular issue assuming his students are listening, but it is easy for them to be then distracted or disinterested.</p>		<p>plus in the online context.</p>	
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The teachers described the following tactics used to ensure students interact in the virtual EFL classroom. Teacher 01 cited that interesting content and students' involvement through questions and observations are vital, with the choice of texts to raise students' interests and make them involved or challenged with something they use, such as social media and Generation Z. Teacher 02 noted that the division of students into groups and assigning specific civilization themes for discussion in virtual classrooms depending on the course which teaches civilization. However, teacher 03 explained that online discussions, direct questions, formative activities, games, and feedback were implemented to cater to and engage the learner in virtual EFL classrooms to make it interactive and personal but teacher 04 noted that it is a challenge to engage learners in virtual learning environment due to different number of learners that can be admitted in a class at a given time.

Question 06 : In your opinion, how effective are virtual classrooms for teaching English language skills?

Table.2.10. Teachers' Opinions about the Effectiveness of Virtual Classrooms for Teaching English Language Skills

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
<p>In our context, virtual classroom were primarily resorted to as a way to deal with the Covid 19 lockdown measures which spanned over a relatively long time during which it was not judicious for learners to stay without any access to school or lessons. But online teaching has been around on the internet for a while now and some platforms offer language learning</p>	<p>I studied abroad online for one year during Covid-19 , there was a restrictive regulation where the administration is responsible of creating students' online accounts so they knew whether you join the virtual classes or not . in general , teaching English online is good idea.</p>	<p>They can be quite effective but such classes are harder to handle and manage, so they require training in how to keep students' engagement going. The positive aspects are that they allow for more individualised learning to occur and they tend to be</p>	<p>VCs can be effective mainly for teaching pronunciation, and listening comprehension skills.</p>

<p>opportunities where teachers and learners meet. It is my impression that it is mainly effective if it is a one-on-one private lesson setting, or when it is teacher or tutor dispensing knowledge to a very limited number of learners/ students.</p>		<p>more accessible and flexible. The possibility of sharing multimedia resources is higher and this is a huge plus too.</p>	
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As this shows, teachers' perceptions of virtual classrooms and their use in teaching English language skills differ depending on the teacher's experience or attitude. Teacher 01 insisted on using virtual classrooms during the Covid-19 lockdown and how conducive it is especially if it has to be on one or very few learners, she emphasized the importance of language learning through online platforms. On the other hand, Teacher 02 reported a positive experience in studying abroad online because of COVID-19, implying that the necessity of teaching English online is favorable since the administration strictly supervises attendance. Yet, Teacher 03 acknowledged the benefits of using the virtual classroom but altogether admitted the problems faced when managing them pointing to the need to train teachers in keeping the learners focused as well as emphasizing the

advantages of deliveries on an individual basis and the uses of media materials. Moreover, Teacher 04 discussed the benefits of virtual classes by using them in teaching pronunciation and listening comprehension as one of the key aspects of language instruction.

Question 07 : Have you observed any differences in students participation or learning outcomes between virtual and traditional classrooms?

Table.2.11. Teachers' Observation about the Differences in Students Participation or Learning Outcomes between Virtual and Traditional Classrooms

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
Not really, but that may only be my own personal experience and other teachers may tell you otherwise. Again, there will always be good students who will do their best to participate and score good marks simply because they are motivated by learning and improving, be it in virtual classroom or traditional ones. But when we take into	Yes , I believe traditional classes is much better because while in virtual classrooms you work with few number of students , personally , I am teaching 7 classes but I am working only with 5 students so they cannot	Peer interaction and teacher-student relationships which are typical in the traditional classroom do contribute to student engagement and motivation, but virtual	The scores are equally excellent.

<p>consideration the fact that many students wouldn't attend virtual classrooms because they assume that the module is "less important", then a large number may miss the opportunity of learning and scoring good marks even though they may be otherwise good hardworking students. Also, and since they will study the module in the next level, they will move up to the next year while accumulating lackings and gaps in said module, so they will have to deal with it as for instance third year students, but don't have an accurate idea about what the module is about, because</p>	<p>engage with the lecture</p>	<p>classrooms can be effective for realising learning outcomes compared to traditional classrooms, particularly when effective teaching strategies and technology integration are utilized. However, certain skills, such as hands-on learning, may be more difficult to develop in a virtual environment.</p>	
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<p>they weren't attending the previous year. So I would say that there must be a difference, even a small one, between outcomes in both settings.</p>			
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The teachers' observations on the differences in student participation and learning outcomes between virtual and traditional classrooms present a range of perspectives. Teacher 01 noted potential drawbacks in virtual classrooms, where some students may perceive the module as less important, leading to gaps in knowledge accumulation over time, despite the presence of highly motivated learners. However, they acknowledged the possibility of differing experiences among teachers. In contrast, Teacher 02 expressed a preference for traditional classes due to limited student engagement in virtual settings, where working with fewer students can hinder interaction. Teacher 03 highlighted the benefits of peer interaction and teacher-student relationships in traditional classrooms for student engagement and motivation, while recognizing the effectiveness of virtual classrooms in achieving learning outcomes with appropriate strategies and technology integration, acknowledging challenges in hands-on learning. Conversely, Teacher 04 observed equally excellent scores in both virtual and traditional classrooms, suggesting comparable learning outcomes regardless of the setting. These varied viewpoints highlight the slight distinctions between the learning outcomes and student participation in virtual and traditional learning environments, highlighting the importance of specific methods to maximize academic achievement and engagement.

Question 08 : How comfortable are you with the technology used in virtual classrooms?

Table.2.12. Teachers' Level of Comfort with the Technology in Virtual Classrooms

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
Quite comfortable I would say, we use Google Meet, and it's pretty easy to use. I've been using the Internet for a long time now, but there are still many tools that I need to discover and master.	Everything is fine , I am working with Google Meet which is simple and clear , I am enjoying the process.	I am fairly comfortable.	I prefer teaching face to face rather than teaching virtually.

The teachers' responses regarding the importance of specific methods to maximize academic achievement and engagement in virtual classrooms vary in terms of their comfort with technology. Teacher 01 expressed a moderate level of comfort, noting familiarity with Google Meet but acknowledging the need to explore additional tools for enhanced teaching. In contrast, Teacher 02 demonstrated a high level of comfort, particularly with Google Meet, highlighting its simplicity and enjoyment in the teaching process. Teacher 03 indicated a fair level of comfort without specifying the tools used, while Teacher 04 expressed a preference for face-to-face teaching, suggesting a lower comfort level with technology in virtual classrooms. Overall, the responses from the teachers show a range of comfort levels with technology in virtual classrooms; some expressed satisfaction and ease of use with particular

tools, such as Google Meet, while others preferred traditional face-to-face instruction. These responses emphasize how crucial it is for teachers to be comfortable and proficient with technology to maximize student engagement and academic achievement in virtual learning environments.

Question 09 : What changes or improvements would you like to see in virtual classrooms for EFL teaching?

Table.2.13. Teachers' Suggestions to Improve Virtual Classrooms

Teacher 01	Teacher 02	Teacher 03	Teacher 04
As far as I'm concerned, there are quite a few modalities that I still need to explore, get familiar with and use in virtual classrooms... I'm already overwhelmed with the technology available and I don't need it to get even more developed or sophisticated.	I think teaching online is fine but the tests must be done face-to-face in order to discover students' real level in English . Also , we must investigate whether module can be taught virtually or not .	I believe that including more technologies is very important e. g. those of speech recognition and the inclusion of cultural content is equally useful. The automation of	I would prefer that there are virtual classrooms in the university that we can use and another thing is that teachers have to be trained to use these virtual classes as well as the

		assessment and tracking is also important and will become useful in the overall evaluation of students' progress.	availability of internet for both teachers and students.
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The teachers' suggestions to improve virtual classrooms, as learned from the provided interviews, offer diverse perspectives on enhancing online learning environments. Teacher 01 expressed a need to explore new modalities in virtual classrooms while feeling overwhelmed by existing technology, hinting at a cautious approach towards further advancements. In contrast, Teacher 02 emphasized the importance of conducting face-to-face tests for accurate assessment of students' English proficiency levels and evaluating module suitability for virtual instruction, suggesting a blended learning approach. Teacher 03 advocated for the integration of speech recognition and cultural content, along with automating assessment processes to enhance student progress evaluation. Additionally, Teacher 04 recommended the establishment of dedicated virtual classrooms at universities, emphasized teacher training in virtual classroom usage, and highlighted the necessity of internet availability for effective online teaching and learning. These diverse recommendations highlight the many factors to take into account when enhancing virtual classrooms, including infrastructure development,

content integration, assessment techniques, technology exploration, and teacher training to maximize the virtual learning environment for both educators and students.

II.4. Discussion and Synthesis of the Findings

This study explores how students and teachers perceive and experience virtual classes for EFL education at Biskra University. The majority of the student population surveyed is made up of young adult females with a range of academic backgrounds and irregular attendance at online classes. Although some students understand the benefits of virtual classrooms (VCs) regarding their educational process and appreciate opportunities provided by open access to learning materials, there are vital questions about interest, willingness, and convenience. Teachers, on the other hand, are relatively diverse in terms of teaching experience, with some teachers having been in the virtual teaching field for a long time, while others, as mentioned above, joined the virtual teaching system upon the outbreak of COVID-19. While some educators are positive about how online classrooms (VCs) could enhance traditional methods of teaching, others raise doubts about which modules are appropriate for online instruction.

There are several obstacles for both teachers and students in the virtual learning environment like technical challenges specifically, unreliable internet connectivity, which appear to be a prevalent obstacle. In the virtual classroom, students find it difficult to stay focused, while teachers deal with problems including low student attendance, big class sizes, and limited internet access. Teachers are also concerned about students using fake names, which makes it difficult for them to properly monitor student engagement. Still, the use of technology in EFL is considered to be helpful by educators and learners despite the faced challenges. While teachers stress the advantage of increased individualization and the material being studied, learners appreciate the opportunities to sit wherever they like and the possibility to study at any pace. However, both groups identified the need for better provision

of technology support and facilities here. Several approaches from students show how important it is to address these problems. While they emphasize the importance of having a stable internet connection that is necessary for online learning, they also recognize that they have the opportunity to learn at their leisure.

The recommendations for improvement were under the following categories, technical support for the connectivity problems, use of multimedia materials and interactive activities, and training of teachers on how to better use and integrate the available technologies. Similarly, teachers come up with ways of increasing the interest of the students such as using relevant and interesting topics, discussing the topics, and giving feedback to the students. However, issues related to the continuous engagement of students and chances of receiving mixed responses across different language skill levels emphasize the need for effective strategies for conducting e-learning. Similarly, both the teachers and the students acknowledge the differences in terms of participation and learning outcomes of traditional as compared to the virtual classroom environment and an urgent need for specific program recommendations to address the issues emerging from such environments. While some participants have concerns regarding the effectiveness of implementing virtual training, other participants recognize the benefits of flexibility and customization.

In conclusion, the analysis of instructors' and students' attitudes towards Virtual Classrooms (VCs) as a platform for EFL education calls for a discussion of the benefits and the limitations of using Information Communication Technology systems. Thus, by addressing challenges, implementing great practices, assigning the best priority to teacher preparation, and technological support, universities may facilitate the formation of an inclusive and productive virtual learning environment for EFL students. Thus, all EFL educators, students, and other stakeholders involved in EFL education at Biskra University

could have a pleasant and motivating experience when experiencing the use of this interaction road map solution for solving technological issues and enhancing learner confidence and motivation in the online learning environment.

Conclusion

The last and final chapter of the current study forms the practical segment of the research. First, areas such as the population, sample, and research methodology were described, as well as the rationale for the choice of the data-gathering instruments. Second, the chapter provided knowledge about data collection methods based on the teacher's interviews and students' questionnaires, as well as a description of the main features of study findings and outcomes' analysis and interpretation. In this study, the current view and perception of teachers and learners in virtual classrooms (VCs) of Biskra University are explored. As highlighted in the findings, online learning can be effective and beneficial to EFL instruction when implemented properly, but it also has its limitations.

Most of the students affirmed that it is possible to learn at their own pace in virtual classrooms because the modality allows flexibility and ease of delivery. However, issues of involvement, motivation, and technology are still a concern with the main concern being internet connectivity. Teachers, on the other hand, have different opinions on VCs. Some expressed optimism for better pedagogy, while others questioned whether certain courses were suitable for online learning.

This study describes the complex environment of virtual classrooms used by Biskra University to teach EFL. While both teachers and students believe in the convenience and availability of using virtual communities (VCs), issues of presence, motivation, and technical difficulties persist. These findings contribute to the further discussion of the topic and stress

the need for an effective strategy when it comes to delivering language classes in online environments.

Universities such as Biskra can benefit from the factors discussed above that relate to virtual classrooms to put in place an appropriate learning model that will be beneficial to all the teachers as well as the students. This can be achieved by funding teacher preparation programs that support technology, addressing connectivity issues, and encouraging students' participation through multimedia interfaces. Another important factor for the improvement of the learning process should be the development of virtual education which adapts to the learner's ability level.

General Conclusion and Recommendation

General Conclusion

The purpose of the study at Mohamed Khider University in Biskra is to investigate how EFL students and teachers feel about online learning environments. It specifically looks into the opinions of EFL students at Biskra University regarding accessibility, efficacy, and participation in virtual classrooms. It also looks into the opinions of EFL professors regarding the advantages and disadvantages of virtual learning environments.

A semi-structured questionnaire with 77 EFL students and unstructured interviews with 4 EFL teachers were used in the research approach. The results show that there are a variety of benefits and drawbacks to virtual learning settings. Although students value the flexibility and accessibility of virtual learning environments, questions about engagement, motivation, and technical difficulties like internet availability continue to be raised.

Teachers' perspectives on the possible advantages of virtual classrooms differ; while some emphasize better pedagogy, others doubt that particular modules are appropriate for online learning. The suggestions include improving the training that educators receive on using technology, offering technical assistance for problems related to connectivity, and implementing in place specialized methods to deal with a range of language competency levels.

In summary, the study emphasizes how important it is to implement a thorough strategy for virtual classrooms at Biskra University to create an environment that is both successful and interesting for teachers and students. Through a mixed-methods investigation of the perceptions, and attitudes of EFL students and teachers in virtual classroom settings, this study offers important insights into the opportunities, problems, and preferences related to online learning. The results can help design focused professional development programs for EFL teachers and apply research-based techniques to build and support successful online learning environments. Ultimately, this research advances knowledge about the long-term

efficacy of virtual learning environments for EFL students in comparison to traditional classroom settings and emphasizes how virtual learning can enhance the success and language proficiency of EFL students at Biskra University.

Recommendations

The results gained from both the students' questionnaires and teachers' interviews shed light on some suggestions and recommendations for teachers and administration to improve virtual classrooms for EFL learners at Biskra University:

- Supply technical assistance to resolve software issues and connectivity difficulties
- Provide fair access to the internet (e.g., Wi-Fi access points) for students who do not have dependable home connections.
- Show teachers how properly incorporate technology into teaching practices and help them get institutional support in implementing online learning.
- Let students select their class schedule or the type of lessons that should be taught online so that students can plan their study time.
- Develop training programs that can help teachers learn how effectively teach English through technology.
- Create online exercises that help students improve their communication and teamwork abilities.
- Make studying English more engaging and enjoyable by using games, quizzes, and other interactive components.
- Teachers should be trained on the use of online tools and activities in support of student involvement and collaboration.

Limitations of the Study

It is important to acknowledge that there are various limitations associated with this research. A major drawback of the study is sample bias. Young adult females made up the majority of participants, which is unlikely to be a realistic representation of the diverse group of EFL students at the university. Altogether, it remains to include participants of a broader age spectrum and, perhaps, gender in future research for a better picture. Similarly, Interviews were conducted with teachers and this is also a study limitation because teachers for the interview were selected purposefully, not randomly. This approach probably neglected the opinion of ordinary educators regarding the occurrence of virtual teaching techniques that they learned. To avoid this problem guarantee a more representative sample and aim at a wider coverage of the experiences in the study, future advancements could use random samples.

Also, the data used in the study relied on student self-reported data that may not be valid, reliable, and accurate. The results of the survey can potentially be not fully accurate or depict the situation in the online learning context. Future research could employ more observational approaches, for example, observing students and teachers within classrooms to offer a better assessment of virtual learning scenarios without bias. Moreover, although the study analyzed students' experiences in online learning environments, it could have explored the details of these experiences much further. It might be useful to ask the students themselves during interviews or focus groups to ask for more detailed information about their extricating experience, preferences, and possible development. It will provide detailed data that might not be easily spotted when conducting surveys alone.

Finally, it is recommended to point out that the findings of this study are valid only for Biskra University and may not be generalized to other instances. The variables used in

particular universities can vary significantly from others where there are dissimilarities in teaching styles, students, and technologies. Therefore, caution needs to be exercised when generalizing these findings to other forms of virtual EFL learning scenarios.

Suggestions for Further Research

Recommendations for More Research Expanding on the framework established by this investigation, numerous suggestions for future research could lead to a better understanding of online learning environments for EFL learners. The efficiency of particular online teaching strategies in encouraging language learning and engagement is one such research topic. Researchers can find best practices that can be used to improve the learning experience in EFL virtual classrooms by examining the effects of various instructional techniques. An additional topic for future investigation could be the impact of virtual classes on students with different levels of proficiency. Knowing how to adapt online learning to meet the needs of students at various levels of language development may lead to more customized and effective learning experiences. This knowledge may have an impact on the development of virtual learning environments that satisfy the diverse needs of EFL students.

Implication and Suggestions for Further Studies Based on the framework initiated by this study, several promising research directions could potentially help explore the online learning context for EFL learners further. An example of the active research area is the efficacy of certain approaches to online teaching to facilitate language acquisition and interest. Thus researchers can identify some practices that can be utilized to enhance learning in EFL virtual classrooms about the impacts of different instructional strategies. Yet, one more topic for future research is the influence of virtual classes on students with high, low, or average skills. It also makes sense to believe that the comprehension of how to apply the principles of online learning to the specific needs of students belonging to a particular development level ensures the best learning outcomes. This insight may help contribute to the advancement of virtual learning environments that would suit the varying requirements of EFL students.

Furthermore, Future research could focus on how to promote social motivation and lessen isolation in online learning environments. Maintaining the opportunities for students to feel like a part of a community, when the challenges of distance learning are considered, can be very helpful in ensuring their motivation and active participation. Better and promising practices of virtual learning environments may be achieved by researching ways to promote connectivity and academic achievement among students in technology-mediated learning environments. Other issues that require further investigation include the long-term impacts of virtual classrooms as an approach to teaching as well as their efficiency compared to virtual classrooms for EFL learners. Longitudinal research that tracks students' progress and language development over a long timeframe may provide useful fresh views on the possibly long-term impacts of online learning.

Last of all, more research could explore how teacher training and preparation can enhance the effectiveness of virtual classrooms for EFL learning. As a result, targeted training programs would be suggested in return with the recognition of the required skills and knowledge, as well as the challenges teachers experience when transitioning to online platforms. The institutions may ensure EFL teachers are capable of developing effective and interesting blended learning for the students, through attending to their professional development needs. By addressing the limitations of this study and expanding them into future research streams, Biskra University and other institutions can enhance the virtual learning environment and apply it to the EFL students getting an efficient as well as interesting experience. Thus, it can achieve the vision of virtual classrooms and help EFL learners achieve better success and language development by embracing efficient practices and collaboration.

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Appendices

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIAN MINISTRY OF HIGHER
EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY MOHAMED KHIDER OF BISKRA
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN
LANGUAGES ENGLISH BRANCH.



Questionnaire on EFL Students' Perception Towards Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University

Dear Student,

This questionnaire is an attempt to collect data for the accomplishment of a master dissertation on “EFL Students' Perception and Teachers' Attitudes Towards Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University.” Therefore, you are kindly requested to read each question carefully and choose the answer that best reflects your thoughts or experiences.. Be sure that your answers will be anonymous and will be used for research purposes only. Keep in mind , There are no right or wrong answers, so be honest and share your true perspectives.

Thank you for your time, effort and collaboration..

Section 1: Demographic Information

Q1 : What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Q2 : What is your age?

- 18-20
- 21-23
- 24-26
- 27 or older

Q3 : What is your current academic level?

- L1
- L2
- L3
- M1

Q3 : How many online classes have you attended at Biskra University?

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- More than 15

Section 2: EFL Students Feedback on Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University

- Please choose the relevant answer for each statement. :

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1/ Virtual classrooms are engaged for my EFL studies at Biskra University					
2/ Virtual classes provide opportunities for interaction with other students					
3/ Virtual classes provide opportunities for interaction with the instructor.					
4/ I feel comfortable participating in discussions and activities in VCs					
5/ I feel motivated to participate in virtual classes.					
6/ Virtual classrooms effectively support my English language learning at Biskra University					
7/ Virtual classes are effective way to learn English. .					
8/ My performance in virtual classes has improved since starting my studies at Biskra University.					
9/ I feel confident in my ability to learn English in virtual classes. I would recommend virtual classes to other EFL students					
10/ Learning resources in virtual classrooms are accessible compared to traditional classrooms					
11/ The technology used in VCs is reliable and user-friendly					
12/ Technical difficulties negatively affect my ability to engage in virtual classes.					

13/ I prefer virtual classes to traditional face-to-face classes.					
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Section 3: In-Depth Feedback on Virtual classrooms

- Please answer the following questions :

1/ What are the biggest advantages of learning English in VCs compared to traditional classrooms?

- Flexibility and Comfort
- Interactive and Engaging Content
- Enhanced Technological Integration
- Cost-Effective Education

2/ Have you faced any challenges while engaging in virtual classes? Please describe them.

- Internet Issues
- Technical Difficulties
- Distractions and Lack of Focus
- Limited Interaction and Collaboration

3/ In your opinion, how can virtual classrooms be improved to better support EFL students at Biskra University?

–

Thank you for your participation!

Interview on Teachers' Attitudes Towards Virtual Classrooms at Biskra University

Question 01 : How long have you been teaching English at university?

–

Question 02 :How long have you been teaching virtually ?

–

Questions 03 :Can you share your general impressions or feelings about virtual classrooms in EFL teaching?

–

Question 04 :What challenges have you encountered while teaching in virtual classrooms?

–

Question 05 : How do you maintain student engagement in a virtual EFL classroom?

–

Question 06 : In your opinion, how effective are virtual classrooms for teaching English language skills?

–

Question 07 : Have you observed any differences in student participation or learning outcomes between virtual and traditional classrooms?

–

Question 08 : How comfortable are you with the technology used in virtual classrooms?

–

Question 09 : What changes or improvements would you like to see in virtual learning platforms for EFL teaching?

–

المخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف آراء اساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وطلابها في جامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة حول الفصول الدراسية الافتراضية. وفقاً لذلك ، تم اتباع نهج متعدد الطرائق يجمع بين البيانات الكمية والنوعية لمعالجة قضايا الدراسة. لتحقيق ذلك ، تم إجراء مقابلة غير موجهة مع أربعة مدرسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تم اختيارهم خصيصاً بالإضافة إلى توزيع استبيان شبه منظم على عينة مكونة من 77 طالباً من طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة عبر الإنترنت. في هذه الدراسة ، كان من المثير للاهتمام أن Google Form أجنبية تطوعوا للمشاركة واستكمال استبيان ندرك أنه في حين يدرك كل من الاساتذة والطلاب أن الفصول الافتراضية مرنة وسهلة الوصول إليها ، إلا أن هناك عوامل مثل انخفاض الدافع والمشاركة المنخفضة والصعوبات التقنية التي تعيق نجاح التعلم الإلكتروني. تشير هذه النتائج إلى ضرورة استكشاف طرق لتعزيز التفاعل الفعال إلى أقصى حد في سياق التعليم الإلكتروني ومعالجة القضايا المحتملة

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفصول الدراسية الافتراضية، تصورات الطلاب ، مواقف الاساتذة.