

Prospects of Online Learning in Teaching Drama for EFL University Students

Istabraq Tariq Alazzawi, Ahmed Hassani Yaseen, Fatima Khatab Hussien

Department of English, College of Education, University of Tikrit

Department of Translation, College of Arts, University of Tikrit

Abstract— Online learning is education conducted over the internet. Online language learning may provide students with more options to become acquainted with language acquisition.

The study aims to investigate Iraqi university professors' Perceptions of utilizing the online interactive learning platform in teaching drama as one of the needed learning materials through the Covid-19 program to strengthen the language skills of EFL students. It supplies researchers and educators with a collection of empirical data that assists them in gaining a deeper understanding of students' learning and expectations of this new learning technique. Teaching literature is useful for EFL university students and using online learning platforms may affect EFL students' language knowledge. University professors have different views on using online learning platforms. The sample of this study is literature professors in the Iraqi universities, Department of English during the academic year 2020\2021.

Finally, to analyze the obtained data, suitable statistical methods are used to analyze the questionnaire results. The results revealed that the majority of Iraqi universities professors using the online interactive learning platform is high. In light of these findings, several conclusions, ideas for further research, and recommendations are offered.

Keywords— prospects, online learning, drama, Pandemic, university students

INTRODUCTION

In many ways, online education is conventional, and much has been written on whether or how online courses or degree programs are preferable than face-to-face degree offers. According to Oxford Advanced American Dictionary Prospects may be defined as "the possibility or likelihood of some future event occurring". The inference is that online courses must be superior to or at least distinct from (in a good way) traditional classroom experiences (Lynnette R. Porter: 1957).

MS. Sakshi's (2019:32) concept of educational technology comprises the Internet, email, chat, new groups and texts, and audio and video courses offered through computer networks. It permits the student to learn at their own pace. According to Chen (2019:18), English learners view online learning as a valuable instrument for language development as a foreign language that might build the framework amongst peers. It illustrates that online language learning can increase students' exposure to language learning.

It is widely acknowledged that new technologies can enhance curriculum (Vrasidas and McIsaac, 2000), as well as several studies have proved that the utilization of technology for teaching and learning has the potential to relieve different crises in the education system across the world (Hardman, 2003). In many institutions, new technologies assist curriculum delivery and managerial activities (Mlitwa, 2006). It is commonly considered that the advent of e-learning into curriculum delivery has "reduced a load of having to cope with an inflow of students seeking postsecondary education to better their abilities for an ever-demanding job market" (Mapuva, 2009: 1).

Blended learning is integrating face-to-face education with online technology in a learning program such that authors are not simply adding one medium to the existing medium (Garrison and Kanuka 2004). To do this, academics must select which material will be moved to the online environment and how it will be presented, a task that requires technical skill in generating web publications (Gulbahar and Madran 2009: 2). In addition, it has been suggested that learning outcomes would improve when the rich dynamics of fast-paced communication technologies are strategically integrated into traditional classroom instruction (Garrison and Kanuka 2004). According to Krause (2008), blended learning is "realized in teaching and learning environments in which there is an effective integration of different modes of delivery, models of teaching, and learning styles as a result of adopting a strategic and systematic approach to the use of technology combined with the most effective features of face-to-face interaction." (Krause: 2).

The corona virus infection (Covid-19) was "first detected at the end of 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic due to the fast spread of corona virus illness". By instituting lockdown, maintaining social/physical distance, avoiding face-to-face (traditional) instruction and learning, and limiting immigration, most governments worldwide established a unified objective to stop the spread of Covid-19. The closure of educational institutions impacts approximately 600 million students worldwide. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the closure of academic endeavours profoundly affected education (teaching-learning process). During the lockdown, teachers are

instructed to teach utilizing online learning platforms such as zoom, Google Classroom, YouTube, etc., noting the importance of using new technologies to maintain the teaching-learning process. Students have difficulty adopting the new instructional method known as "e-learning." Through online lectures, teleconferencing, digital open books, online examinations, and engagement on computer-generated meeting platforms, the COVID-19 pandemic culminates in a numerical revolution in the higher education system. It was observed that distance education has achieved great success without any theory Before the year 1979. Today, the same can be said for learning (Kumar and et al: 2020: 7704). The online learning system has recently gained momentum, and it will be the dominating educational tool in the future. A online education system may be deemed inequitable for disadvantaged pupils. During this lockdown time, shutting academic endeavours is seen as a detriment to the school system and teaching-learning process. In this time of crisis, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the teaching-learning process to design interventions that will ensure the continued success of education. Online education has become an option for teaching-learning throughout the present economic crisis. The current research aims to evaluate the effects of online learning on traditional learning during the recent crisis (the COVID-19 pandemic) (Ibid).

Teaching literature is useful for EFL university students and using online learning platforms may affect EFL students' language knowledge. University professors have different views on using online learning platforms. Theatre and drama are fields of investigation and practice that often require participation in a collaborative or collective process with substantial individual influence. Due to the current global crises, notably covid-19, this "dynamic" approach to theatre comprehension is included in a completely online distance course. In contrast to positivism, which was founded on ideals of stability, uniformity, and certainty, postmodernism is "characterized by acceptance of instability." (Ibid: 29). Here, "no one owns the truth, and everyone is entitled to be understood." (Doll, 1993:155). There will be a new view of the goal, planning, and assessment of education that is open-ended, adaptable, and centred on the process rather than the outcome (Ibid: x).

The current study is an attempt to collect the university professors' ideas and opinions on online learning on different sides related to language skills, activities to be used, exams, and teachers' views about different advantages of using online learning platforms in teaching literature in general and drama in particular.

The study aims to investigate Iraqi university professors' Perceptions of utilizing the online interactive learning platform as one of the needed learning instruments to strengthen EFL students' language skills during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The value of this study is to expose the predicted prospects for teachers. And to syllabus publishers, to add syllabus materials that improve the effectiveness of online learning. This study is limited to literature professors in the Iraqi universities, Department of English in the academic year 2020\2021.

Questionnaire is used to collect the data from the university professors who specialized in literature at Iraqi universities. Statistical Analysis has been made to analyze the results

1. Material and Methods (Data Collection and Analytical Procedure)

2.1 Population and Sample of the study:

According to Polit and Hungler (1999:37), a population is the aggregate or sum of all things, topics, or members that meet certain criteria. The population of this study was restricted to literature teachers in Iraqi universities.

A sample is a subset of a population chosen to engage in a study; it is a portion of the total chosen to participate in a research endeavour (Polit & Hungler) (1999:227). The current study sample is the College Professor of literature in the Department of English/ College of Education for Human Sciences / University of Baghdad, Tikrit, Wasat, Al – Anbar, Mosull, Maysan and Samara. The number of the sample is 34.

2.2 The construction of the questionnaire:

The questionnaire contains 28 items and includes two parts; the first part is teachers' personal information, which includes information related to scientific title, certificate and years of experience. The second one is related to four domains: exams, activates, skills, teacher's views of online learning in using online learning through teaching literature versus drama. The following table illustrates the domains and their items in the questionnaire.

Table (1) The domains and their items in the questionnaire.

2.3 Validity

Validity is the extent to which the findings may be appropriately understood and broadly applied (Brown and Rodgers, 2004: 241).

Face validity is a subjective judgment of a construct's operationalization. Face validity is the extent to which a

Domains	No. of items
Skills	2,8,11,13,14,16,18,21,27
Activities	6,7,13,17,20,26
Exams	3,12
Teacher's view of online learning	1,4,5,9,10,19,22,23,24,25,28

measure seems to be associated with a particular notion, as evaluated by non-experts such as test takers and legal counsel. In other words, a test possesses face validity if its content appears pertinent to the test-taker. It evaluates the questionnaire's presentation in terms of its practicability, readability, uniformity of style and formatting, and linguistic clarity. In other words, face validity refers to the subjective judgments by researchers of the presentation and relevance of the measuring instrument in terms of whether the items appear relevant, rational, unambiguous, and clear (Oluwatayo, 2012:391-400).

To ensure the face validity of the questionnaire, it is distributed to the jury members mentioned in Table (2). The jury members concur on the validity of all questionnaire statements to a degree of 95%. Their suggestions and modifications are taken into account.

Table (2): The Academic Ranks, Names, Fields, and Locations of the Jury Members.

Name	Rank	Field	University
Dr Marwan Muzher Sahab	Assist prof	Methodology	English Department /Tikrit
Dr Dunia Taher Hamid	Assist prof	Methodology	English Department /Tikrit
Dr Zainb Abdullah Hussein	Assist Prof	Literature	English Department /Tikrit
Dr Awfa Hussain	Assist prof	Literature	English Department /Tikrit
Ibrahim Al-Khalaf Saleh	Assist prof	Methodology	English Department /Tikrit
Dr Arwa Hussain	Assist prof	Literature	English Department /Tikrit
Dr Marwa Sami	Assist prof	Literature	English Department /Tikrit

2.4 Pilot study:

A pilot study is a small-scale preparatory study undertaken before doing a large-scale research project to assess feasibility, length, cost, adverse occurrences, and enhance the study design (Thabane, and et al., 2010: 10). The questionnaire is submitted to five university professors who are teaching literature in the college of education for humanities as a pilot study.

2.5 Reliability:

Reliability is the degree of accuracy with which a particular test or set of results assesses the target variable (Verma and Beard, 1981:86). Kubiszyn and Borich deem the Alpha Crombach reliability coefficient (0.84), which represents the internal consistency, to be adequate (2000:311).

2.6 Discrimination power:

The discrimination power of the statements in relation to the total scores is calculated as shown in the following table:

Table (3) Discrimination power between each item and the

total scores

Statements	T	Sig	R
1	3.85	Sig	0.63
2	2.97	Sig	0.57
3	6.92	Sig	0.48
4	5.38	Sig	0.74
5	7.45	Sig	0.49
6	3.98	Sig	0.66
7	6.38	Sig	0.49
8	9.58	Sig	0.86
9	6.99	Sig	0.38
10	3.75	Sig	0.64
11	5.65	Sig	0.63
12	7.47	Sig	0.53
13	4.76	Sig	0.51
14	5.98	Sig	0.73
15	9.07	Sig	0.59
16	8.65	Sig	0.62
17	7.48	Sig	0.68
18	5.77	Sig	0.53
19	5.95	Sig	0.64
20	3.38	Sig	0.50
21	6.45	Sig	0.74
22	9.65	Sig	0.69

23	3.56	Sig	0.42
24	8.38	Sig	0.55
25	4.84	Sig	0.58
26	6.27	Sig	0.52
27	9.05	Sig	0.74
28	8.46	Sig	0.58
29	5.37	Sig	0.61

2.6 Final Administration of the Questionnaire:

After validating the pilot administration, validity, and reliability, the questionnaire is ultimately administered to literature professors on the 21st of May, 2021. The questionnaire is administrated electronically by using Google Forms. The time of the questionnaire is unlimited (free time).

2.7 Scoring of the questionnaire:

The questionnaire consists of 28 statements. The statements' agreement are rated as agree, disagree, strongly agree and neutral. The scoring of such items is easy since they are objective. The scoring of substitutions is used and the answer is rated from 1-4; the table number 3 illustrates the scoring of the statements.

Table (4) the scoring of the statements

Responses	Scores
Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Neutral	2
Disagree	1

2.8 Statistical Methods:

The following statistical tools are used:

- Cronbach's alpha** was used to calculate the stability of the search tools.

$$a = \frac{K}{K-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum S_i^2}{S_T^2} \right)$$

Where

n= the total number of measurement items

Sn= variation of scores for each of the paragraph

S₂= sum variance scores all paragraphs

2-weight percentile was used to indicate the relative value of each paragraph of the questionnaire and to benefit from it in the interpretation of the result:

$$\text{weight percentile} = \frac{\text{weighted mean}}{\text{max degree}} \times 100$$

3- Weighted mean: it is used to describe each paragraph of the search tool and to know its value and arrangement concerning

other paragraphs within the same field to interpret the result according to the following law:

$$\text{weighted mean} = \frac{T_1 \times 4 + T_2 \times 3 + T_3 \times 2 + T_4 \times 1}{\text{Sum T}}$$

Where

T₁=Repeat the first alternative

T₂= Repeat the second alternative

T₃= Repeat the third alternative

T₄= Repeat the fourth alternative

Sum T= The sum of the repetitions of the four conclusions.

1. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results Related to the Aim of the Study

The study aims to investigate Iraq university professors' perceptions of using the online interactive learning platform as one of the required learning tools through the COVID-19 pandemic to develop EFL students' language knowledge.

The first part of the questionnaire includes information about the sample of the study: title, university, certification and year of experience in teaching literature as shown in the following table:

Table (5) the information of the Sample

No	Information	items	Percentage
1	Title	Prof. Dr.	10.9%
		Prof.	—
		Asst.Prof.Dr.	21.3%
		Asst.Prof.	19.1%
		Instructor.	31.9%
		Asst.Instructor.	14.9%
2	University	Tikrit	46.8%
		Baghdad	6.4%
		AL Anbar	14.9%
		Misan	12.8%
		Samarra	8.5%
3	Certification	M.A.	63.2%
		Ph.D.	36.2%
4	Years of experience	1-5	31.9%
		6-10	—
		More than 10	57.4%

According to weighted mean of the professors' responses the researcher have been found that the statements which are related to the language skills domain are illustrated in the following table:

Table (6) The Responses of the language skills Domain

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Weighted mean	Verification	Weight percentile
2	9	11	11	3	2.76	Verified	69%
8	3	22	5	4	2.71	Verified	68%
11	13	17	3	1	3.24	Verified	81%
13	9	20	2	3	3.03	Verified	76%
14	1	18	10	5	2.44	Unverified	61%
18	2	7	9	16	1.86	Unverified	47%
21	5	15	13	1	2.71	Verified	68%
27	5	13	9	7	2.47	Unverified	62%

The following table shows the statements' weight percentile arrangement from the highest to the lowest one. These results show that the weighted mean of 5 statements is more than 2.5 so they are considered verified and three items are unverified. This means that online learning in teaching literature is useful for improving EFL university students' language skills.

Table (7) The weight percentile of language skills statements

Statements	weight percentile
11	81%
13	76%
2	69%
8, 21	68%

Moreover, the results show that four items related to the activities used in teaching drama via online platforms are verified and only two items are unverified. This indicates that online learning provides chances for teachers to use different activities in teaching drama. The following table illustrates the weighted mean of the statements of this domain:

Table (8) The Responses of the activities Domain

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Weighted mean	Verification	Weight percentile
6	2	8	10	14	1.94	Unverified	49%
7	12	17	4	1	3.18	Verified	80%
15	5	10	13	6	2.41	Unverified	60%
17	0	26	5	3	2.68	Verified	67%
20	5	21	5	3	2.82	Verified	71%
26	5	17	7	5	2.65	Verified	66%

Statement number 7 is the highest weight percentile according to the teachers' responses and number 6 is the lowest. Table 8 shows the arrangement of verification of the activities domain from the higher weight percentile to the lowest one.

Table (9) The weight percentile verification of the activities statements

Statements	weight percentile
7	80%
20	71%
17	67%
26	66%

The statements which are related to the exam domain are illustrated in the following table:

Table(10) The Responses of the Exam Domain

State ments	Stro ngly agree	Ag ree	Neu tral	Disa gree	Weig hted mean	Verific ation	Weig ht perce ntile
3	6	17	7	4	2.74	Verifie d	69%
12	3	14	12	5	2.44	Unveri fied	61%

The researcher has found that one statement is verified and the other is unverified, which means the use of online exam is one of the prospects that should be reconsidered in teaching literature online.

Finally, the university professors' view of different aspects of using online learning platforms in teaching literature in general and drama in particular are illustrated in the following table

Table (11) professors' views of online learning domain

Stat.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Weighted mean	Verification	Weight Percentile
1	1	18	10	5	2.44	Unverified	61%
4	19	8	4	3	3.26	Verified	82%
5	11	13	6	4	2.91	Verified	73%
9	0	7	8	19	1.65	Unverified	41%
10	1	17	10	6	2.38	Unverified	60%
16	8	21	5	0	3.09	Verified	77%
19	1	7	7	19	1.71	Unverified	43%
22	7	20	2	5	2.85	Verified	71%
23	5	21	7	1	2.88	Verified	72%
24	8	14	8	4	2.76	Verified	69%
25	9	18	6	1	3.03	Verified	76%
28	4	14	9	7	2.44	Unverified	61%

The researcher found that 7 statements are verified and 5 are unverified.

Table (12) The weight percentile verification of the teachers' views statements

Statements	weight percentile
4	82%
5	73%
16	77%
22	71%
23	72%
24	69%
25	76%

3.2 Discussion of Results

The responses of the first part of the questionnaire state that most of the participants' title is assisting professor and instructor. In addition 57% of them have more than ten years of experience, 63% of the sample was with M.A. certificates and 31.2% are PhD.

The university professors' responses to the questionnaire show their various ideas about using online learning platforms in teaching literature in general and drama in particular. They show that the language skills, listening and reading can be improved through online learning more than writing and speaking.

While the responses of the activities domain illustrate that online learning affects the teachers' use of different activities via online learning platform. For example the answers to statements 20 and 26 explain that online learning reduces

teamwork and collaboration among the students during the online lecture and the use of role play activity, which is very important in teaching drama.

Using online learning platforms in the exam does not participate positively in helping the teachers to test the students' abilities in literature in general and drama in particular.

Finally the teachers' view on using online learning platforms in teaching literature shows that online learning is positive on some sides such as: facilitating teaching process, enabling the absent students to get benefit of listening to the recorded lectures, and facilitating sharing the assignment and homework.

Moreover, the responses illustrate that online learning does not enhance the students' ability to learn new vocabularies in addition to its ineffectiveness in supporting students' critical understanding of the text. The university professors disagree with making the online learning part of the university's English lessons.

CONCLUSION

The following are the main conclusions of the study

1. Teachers choose face-to-face examinations over internet examinations.
2. Students have greater options to study anywhere and at any time since online learning is autonomous learning.
3. Students' reading abilities have increased due to the abundance of material available online.
4. There are still certain obstacles to online learning, even though watching the video has improved listening abilities.

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Title
 Prof. Dr.
 Asst. prof. Dr
 Asst. Prof.
 Instructor.
 Asst. instructor.
 Prof.
University
 Tikrit
 Baghdad
 AL Anbar
 Mosul
 Wasit
 Misan
 Samarra
Certification:
 M.A.
 Ph.D.
Years of experience:
 1-5
 6-10
 More than 10

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

A Letter to Jury Members

Dear Mr / Mrs

The researcher intends to conduct a study entitled “Prospects of online learning in teaching drama for EFL university students.” The study aims to investigate Iraqi universities professors’ perceptions of using the online interactive learning platform as one of the required learning tools through the pandemic Covid-19 to develop EFL students’ language knowledge. It provides the researchers and educators with a set of empirical data that help them better understand students’ learning , as well as their expectations of this new learning approach.

I would be grateful if you, a specialist in the field of methods of teaching English as a foreign language and literature pass your judgment on the suitability of the Questionnaire.

Any comments or modifications would be highly regarded and appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and cooperation.

Prof. Istabraq Tariq Al-azzawi (Ph.D

Appendix (2)

No.	Statements	strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1.	Online learning enhances student's ability to learn new vocabularies from dramatic texts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Online learning decreases the student's ability of reading skill.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Online learning stimulates the students learning by making oral quizzes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Using online learning is for a limited time not as a substitute for face to face learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Online learning is more effective in course delivering.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	Videos help students maintain in attention and strengthen motivation in learning drama.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	Online learning (internet facilitate) enrich teaching literature by giving chance to ask questions which activate students thinking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	Online learning advances the students ability to write.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Online learning tools can be effectively used to				
No.		strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree
10.	Online learning improves the teacher's knowledge of technology.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11.	Online learning stimulates the students' skill of reading.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	As the exam is an open book, online learning pushes teachers to give indirect questions (i. e, questions that need creative and critical thinking) to know the students' levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	Online learning improves the student's speaking skill.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	Online learning minuses the students' speaking skill.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	Online learning provides multiple resources for learning like (links, electronic libraries, pedagogical videos, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	Online learning enhances time management skill.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	Online learning gives more chance for non-participant students to participate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18.	Online learning improves the writing skill.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No.		strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree
19.	Online learning should be part of English lessons at university.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20.	Online learning reduces the use of role play technique in teaching drama.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21.	Online learning develops students' listening skill.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	Online learning facilitates sharing assignments and homework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	Online learning needs less expenditure than face to face learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24.	Online learning enables absent students to listen to the recorded lecture later.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25.	Online learning facilitates teaching process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26.	Online learning reduces teamwork and collaboration between students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27.	Screen sharing in online learning improves students' skills in writing and reading.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28.	Online learning improves the students' knowledge of technology.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>