

The Effect of E-Learning on the Achievement of Iraqi EFL Learners
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فاعلية التعليم الالكتروني على تحصيل المتعلمين العراقيين للغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية

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الملخص:

الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو دراسة تأثير التعلم الإلكتروني على تحصيل متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وتحديد دور هذا النوع من التعلم في التحصيل الأكاديمي للمشاركين. تتكون العينة التي تم إجراء الاختبار عليها من 30 طالباً من المرحلة الرابعة (2017 - 2018) من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية، جامعة بابل. تم إنشاء استبيان للطلاب ليكون الأداة الرئيسية المستخدمة. توضح النتيجة أنه من الواضح أن استخدام التعليم الإلكتروني لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية يمكن أن يكون أداة مفيدة لتطوير مهارات المتعلمين. ومع ذلك، يمكن أن يكون استخدامه مفيداً للمتعلمين الذين ليس لديهم وقت كافٍ لدراسة دورات اللغة أو أولئك الذين يرغبون في تعريض أنفسهم إلى محيط اللغة الإنجليزية. لم تكن مقاطع الفيديو الخاصة بقواعد اللغة الإنجليزية في متناول يد متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كما هي في الوقت الحاضر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعليم الإلكتروني، التحصيل، التكنولوجيا

Abstract

E-learning today has been a key factor in various aspects of life and teaching is one among them; especially teaching language. E-learning has redefined some strategies and concepts of teaching that have enabled the teaching community to perform better. It is a powerful educational and motivational tool that is being used in the EFL classroom (Duffy, 2007:173).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of E-learning on the achievement of Iraqi EFL learners and to determine role of this type of learning in the academic achievement of the participants. The sample to which the test has been administered consists of 30 students of fourth academic year (2017 - 2018) of Department of English at College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Babylon. A questionnaire for students have been constructed to be the main instrument used. The result shows that it is clear that using e-learning for learning English can be a helpful tool for developing learners' skills. However, its usage can be useful for learners who do not have enough time to study language courses or those who would like to expose themselves to the English language surroundings. English grammar videos have never been within easy reach of learners of English as they are nowadays.

Key words: E-Learning, achievement, technology

1. Introduction

Infusing technologies in classroom learning have added to stimulus and enhanced learner's interaction within the classroom. E-learning has a vast presence in almost every field. Language teaching is one such field where technology has taken over and improved the ways of learning. Teachers today use different techniques like movie-clippings, advertisements, commentaries, dramatics and more. Not only it makes the session much more interesting than the

old book style teaching but also keeps the learner attentive during the class. E-learning has also changed the perspective of distance learning.

E-learning is used for varying purposes, to exposure the authentic English as well as to promote a learning style that is more autonomous learning; to provide an opportunity for freedom of expression; to serve as a vehicle for collaboration; to inspire and motivate students; to make learning fun; to set an appropriate mood or tone; to decrease anxiety and tension on scary topics; and to create memorable visual images. It makes a particularly. While Prensky (2001:13) names today's students as digital natives, Tapscott (1998:87) calls them net generation that is because they are born in a different world which is full of digital technology and this technology is an important part of their lives. Prensky (2001:15) states that the new generation is exposed to a huge amount of information since early childhood and therefore they think and process information much faster and are used to multi-tasking.

The problem is embodied in the high rate of failure in the final examination in "grammar". The use of the target language in explaining the rules of grammar may lead to a discrepancy between the levels of achievement realized by the learners of English at the same stage. Thus, it is hoped that this study may fill part of the gap in English teaching. Because understanding the rules of grammar is essential for improving learners' competence in English, the use of the native language can, in some way or another, guarantee the achievement of that goal. To decrease students' mistakes in learning English, especially in grammar, teachers must be able to create a favourable condition in teaching and learning process in order to make the students comprehend and use English easily. Using suitable method, technique and media which are appropriate to the main subject, learning can increase the students' interest and motivation in studying English, so the students feel interested and pay attention to that subject.

As used E-Learning techniques to learn English is still a fresh idea, how it can be used in facilitating language learning in class effectively is still not clear. Most literature on the educational use of these techniques focuses only on its impact on motivation and ideas for using the videos (Yuen Fung Yee Vian, 2015:5)

Additionally, the use of the above mentioned techniques in the classroom, particularly Grammar classroom has contributed to much greater flexibility in instruction.

In this study, it is believed that the E-Learning is the ideal technique in teaching grammar to EFL learners. The aim is to identify and classify effectiveness of using e-learning grammar lesson on EFL Iraqi college students in Babylon.

The following hypothesis have been posited:

1. Iraqi EFL learners are expected to use e-learning technology in learning English.
2. Iraqi EFL learners are expected to have positive attitudes towards E-Learning.

The steps adopted to fulfill the aims of the study are as follows:

1. Presenting a theoretical part about E-learning techniques depending on the different accessible publications in the field.
2. Choosing a sample of Iraqi EFL learners as subjects for the administration questionnaire.
3. Explicating the results of the data in order to reveal the effectiveness of using e-learning grammar lesson on EFL Iraqi college students in Babylon.

This study is limited to the students fourth academic year (2017 – 2018) of Department of English at College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Babylon. The reason behind choosing the fourth year students is that they have been taught using several types of e-learning techniques and they supposedly possess the ability to understand the subject of this study.

2. The concept of E- Learning

E-Learning can be defined as a learning system based on formalised teaching but with the help of electronic resources. While teaching can be based in or out of the classrooms, the use of computers and the Internet forms the major component of E-learning. E-learning can also be termed as a network enabled transfer of skills and knowledge, and the delivery of education is made to a

large number of recipients at the same or different times. Earlier, it was not accepted wholeheartedly as it was assumed that this system lacked the human element required in learning.

However, with the rapid progress in technology and the advancement in learning systems, it is now embraced by the masses. The introduction of computers was the basis of this revolution and with the passage of time, as we get hooked to smartphones, tablets, etc, these devices now have an importance place in the classrooms for learning. Books are gradually getting replaced by electronic educational materials like optical discs or pen drives. Knowledge can also be shared via the Internet, which is accessible 24/7, anywhere, anytime.

The early studies on attitudes to computer technology generally revealed that existing culture, interaction with the tutors and dialogue were the predictors of success in distance learning. Moreover, these researches suggested that there was no significant difference in achievement levels between distant and traditional learners.

Thomas (1987:15) emphasizes the importance of the cultural/social norms of a country to the acceptance of technology. Thomas states, "How acceptable a new technology will be in a society depends on how well the proposed innovation fits the existing culture". A user may resist a technological innovation because it may not fit within their micro- or macro-cultures. Thomas names his hypothesis as the cultural suitability factor. As Stone (1990:22) argues in his assessment of interactivity in distance learning, high quality learning can occur as long as students have interaction with tutors. Johnstone (1991) stated that there was no significant difference in achievement levels between distant and traditional learners, but there is considerable variance in student attitudes and satisfaction levels (cited in Threlkeld & Brzoska, 1994: 49).

A diverse range of technological tools that can be used by capable teachers to enhance learning and teaching situations. These tools make learning more interesting, interactive, meaningful and stimulating for the students. These tools are powerful as they are capable of bringing a change and reform traditional forms of learning. Internet, YouTube, Skype, Twitter, Smart-boards, Blogs and Podcasting are some of the successful tools that have changed the way language is taught.

2.1 The Purpose of Using E-Learning

Learning is used for varying purposes, to expose the authentic English as well as to promote a learning style that is more autonomous learning; to provide an opportunity for freedom of expression; to serve as a vehicle for collaboration; to inspire and motivate students; to make learning fun; to set an appropriate mood or tone; to decrease anxiety and tension; to create memorable visual images. It makes a particularly powerful contribution to both the content and the process of language learning; especially contribute to interest and motivation, sense of the context of the language, and as a specific reference point or stimulus, and the majority of uploaded videos are used to provide linguistic and cultural content and information on and related to the target language. E-Learning is now used for classroom lectures, institutional promotions, bulletins and newsletters (Harmer, 2001:282;).

3. Methodology

3.1 The Objectives

In order to gain information about identifying and classifying effectiveness of using E-Learning lesson based grammar on EFL Iraqi college students in Babylon, a questionnaire of 20 items has been constructed drawing on the following sources: Related literature: They are books, journals, and articles related to the problem of the research.

3.2 the Sample

The sample of this study includes (30) fourth year college students of the English language in Babylon Governorate. Regarding the time allotted for answering the items, it has been found that students need 30 minutes to respond to the questionnaire items.

4. Results, Conclusions, Recommendations

4.1 Results

This study aiming to understand the attitude of Iraqi EFL learners towards technology and to determine role of these factors in the academic achievement of the participants.

Table 1: The Mean Ranks of the questionnaire.

No.	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Weighted Average	Weight Percent
1.	I have a personal computer.	14	11	1	4	1.9	88%
2.	Watching YouTube videos help me to learn English grammar easily.	19	9	1	1	1.4	79%
3.	Using Internet makes the classroom more interesting.	22	4	2	2	1.4	79%
4.	Authentic English would be beneficial to improve English grammar skill.	13	15	1	1	1.6	83%
5.	Internet is a useful resource for oral and written learning.	15	11	3	1	1.7	84%
6.	Social media resources can be used in the EFL classroom.	9	12	4	5	2.1	90%
7.	YouTube should be focused on the syllabus that are presented in the classroom.	12	14	1	3	1.8	86%
8.	Using Internet motivates me to study English.	18	9	1	2	2.1	90%
9.	I think watching YouTube videos is a useful activity for language learning.	9	13	2	6	2.1	90%
10.	I think using Smart-board is a good way of learning English grammar.	14	9	2	5	1.9	88%
11.	Online classes facilitate learning English.	12	10	1	7	2.1	90%

12.	I would have liked the lessons that include different kinds of activities after watching grammar lessons in PC.	7	10	7	6	2.4	95%
13.	Grammar is best taught through using PC.	19	8	1	2	1.5	81%
14.	Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structures in YouTube.	11	14	2	3	1.9	88%
15.	Students enjoy class when videos are shown.	19	9	1	1	1.4	79%
16.	Students would like to see more videos in class that is relevant to their grammar topic.	11	8	5	6	2.2	91%
17.	Students learn grammar more successfully if it is presented in YouTube.	19	5	2	4	1.7	84%
18.	Students would prefer to watch videos of language that contain grammar.	8	10	6	6	2.3	93%
19.	Students are visual learners. They love to learn visually.	10	15	2	3	1.9	88%
20.	Students remember things they see more than they read.	20	8	1	1	1.4	79%

According to the results of the study, students would like the lessons that include different kinds of activities after watching grammar lessons in PC (95%) and prefer to watch videos of language that contain grammar (93%). Most of the participants (90%) agree on using social media resources and the Internet motivates studying English in the EFL classrooms. The same rate was for watching YouTube videos as a useful activity for language learners especially to facilitate learning grammar. According to the data collected, many participants (88%) have personal computers.

On the other hand, very few participants (23%) state that they take advantage of form pages. They think that online classes do not facilitate learning English.

The first hypothesis which indicates that "Iraqi EFL learners are expected to use e-learning technology in learning English" is verified.

According to the results of the study, most of the participants agree on using personal computers, particularly they watch YouTube videos in their learning English. Students would prefer to watch videos of language that contain grammar. These findings indicate that Iraqi EFL learners have a positive attitude towards E-learning and they are at the stage to make a decision to adopt or reject the technology. It has been shown that the second hypothesis is validated. The learners' perceived ease of use and usefulness were the significant factors influencing the attitude of students using E-learning. They show more favorable attitudes toward computer use.

4.2 Conclusion

On the basis of the procedures followed by this study and in compliance with the results and findings arrived at, the following conclusions can be introduced: it is clear that using e-learning for learning English can be a helpful tool for developing learners' skills.

However, its usage can be useful for learners who do not have enough time to study language courses or those who would like to expose themselves to the English language surroundings. English grammar videos have never been within easy reach of learners of English as they are nowadays.

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