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Investigating Students' Attitudes Towards Online Learning

**Case Study: Second Year Students of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia
University, Jijel**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master in the Didactics of English**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "Investigating Students' Attitudes Towards Online Learning", is our own work and all the sources we have used have been acknowledged by means of references. We also certify that all the sources we have not copied or plagiarized the work of other students or researchers partially or fully. In case any material is not documented, we shall be responsible for the consequences.

Signature

Date

Dedication

I dedicate this work to,

the soul of my beautiful mother who I will never forget,

the most supportive overprotective father ever,

the souls of my grandfather, my grandmother and my uncle who will always be in my heart,

my big brothers who have always been my biggest supporters,

my cousins Zinab, Iman and Wissam who are my sisters, my best friends and my secret keepers and my cousin Ahmed,

my beautiful best friend Mimi, you are such a special person in my heart,

my best friend and my partner in crime Cherifa,

my beautiful friends Riham, Rania, Hadjer, Boutheyna, Roqia, Bouchra, Fatiha, Ismahan, Bouchra and Asma,

the ones I call friends, and those I call home,

I love you all

Khadidja MAHROUK

Dedication

“In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful”

All the praise is due to God alone, the sustainer of all the worlds”

I dedicate This dissertation to:

my dearest parents,

all my family: particularly my sisters: Rayane and Ghaza,

my brothers; Nejmaddine, Mohammed, Ali, and Brahim,

my sweet nephew; Moatasam Bilah,

my Fiance: Walid,

all my closest friends.khadija, Amel, Rania, ,Khayra, Zinab, and Fatiha,

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all those who support me and love me.

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Abstract

The success of online learning systems depends on the students' experiences of and attitudes towards this mode of learning. This research paper dealt with attitudes of second year licence students of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University Jijel towards online learning. The overall aim of the study was to shed light on students' perceptions and attitudes towards online learning, and to explore the possible factors that affect these attitudes. To achieve this aim, a questionnaire was addressed to 50 students. The results revealed that second year students have positive attitudes towards online learning. Moreover, the results showed that the most important key factors that affect students' attitudes towards online learning are generally the proficiency in using online educational technologies, the quality of the system, the internet connection quality, the teachers' interaction and some students' psychological issues.

Key words: Online learning, technology, internet.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

CLT: Communicative Language

Moodle: Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment

%: Percentage

Q: Question

WWW: world wide web

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Resumé

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

The term online learning usually refers to the use of different kind of information and communication technologies in the field of learning. Education in an online setting is an increasingly popular method of instruction. Previous studies have examined students' attitudes towards online learning, and have shown that students have positive attitudes towards this mode of learning.

To begin with, Knowles and Kerman (2017) in their paper studied students' attitudes and motivation towards online learning (students in an online course). They found that there is a missing interaction between students and getting more information through an online course. The study showed that students did not miss interaction with the instructors and did not lack feedback from them. Generally, student's attitude toward online learning was more positive. The results of this study were approximately the same with that of Greg and Wing (2013) which aimed to examine student's attitudes towards online learning (students in a blended course) and to examine their factors such as prior experiences, attitudes, and motivation. The results showed that students became more positive toward online learning because of their prior attitudes and motivation in learning.

However, Bedawi et al. (2020) study aimed to find out students' attitudes towards online learning during Covid 19. The results have shown that there are two aspects of online learning, the first is positive such as: time effectiveness, safety, convenience and participation improving, whereas the negative one concerns: distraction, reduce focus, heavy workload, problem with technology and internet. Similarly, the study of Ullah et al. (2017) examined the attitudes of undergraduate students towards online learning, the study focused on exploring

the relationship between undergraduate students' attitudes towards technology with regard to online learning. The findings of this study showed no significant relationship between students interest in computer, usefulness of computer to students and easiness in using online learning at undergraduate level. Slow and meagre internet facilities, with least understanding of students about online learning, often develop negative approach among students regarding online learning.

The above studies, especially their consequences proved that online learning has been certainly viewed as the more effective option for many students. The current research concerns itself with investigating students' attitudes towards online learning. It aims to find out whether the students have a positive or negative attitudes towards online learning, and to explore the factors that affect their attitudes.

2.Statement of The Problem

Online learning has become a necessity in the higher educational institutions in different universities across Algeria, specially after the pandemic. However, little is known about students' attitudes towards online learning which is considered an important factor for the success of the online learning experience. Higher educational institutions are not considering students' attitudes towards online learning, and are not aware of the factors that affect these attitudes. This issue is causing misunderstanding for students, teachers, and administration in using online learning. This study investigates EFL students' attitudes towards online learning with a focus on their online learning experience at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university, and highlights the factors that affect these attitudes.

3.Aims of the Study

This study is conducted with second year EFL students at the department of English at the university of Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia. It aims at investigating students' attitudes towards online learning, and exploring the possible factors affecting their attitudes.

4.Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

- _ What are the students' attitudes towards online learning?
- _ What are the factors that affect students' attitudes towards online learning?

5.Methodology

For the sake of investigating students' attitudes towards online learning, a student questionnaire is distributed randomly to 50 second year students of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia university. The questionnaire is designed to explore students' attitudes and points of view concerning the experience of online learning and the factors that affect these attitudes.

6.Significance of the Study

Online learning is a need of the day in the Algerian educational institutions. This study presents an understanding of students' attitudes towards online learning. Educational institutions such as universities have tried to design online learning systems to implement in the educational field. However, little is known about students' attitudes which have led to some barriers and difficulties for learners, teachers and administrators. This study helps to fill

this gap. This study is useful and significant in the sense that it helps university administrators and teachers to know students' attitudes regarding online learning, and to understand the factors that motivate students and help them increase their engagement and involvement. It may help promote the use of other online learning tools that are more useful and motivating for learners. It may encourage teachers to use online learning with effective techniques. Therefore, knowing students' attitudes towards online learning has great importance.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The current research begins with a general introduction and finishes with a general conclusion. It is divided into two main parts: theoretical and practical part. The first part includes one chapter, starting with defining online learning, listing types and tools of online learning and addressing online learning variations in addition to mentioning advantages and disadvantages of online learning and the factors that affect students' attitudes towards online learning, then stating the position of online learning in the Algerian context .As for the second part, it represents the practical part, which discusses the results obtained from the analysis of the student questionnaire. Moreover, this part describes how the research instrument is administrated, and interprets the data and discusses the overall results. Finally, it provides some limitations of this study and some recommendations and ends with a general conclusion.

Chapter One: Online Learning

Introduction

Online learning has recently played a definite role in higher educational institutions. Therefore, understanding and studying how online learning systems function has held an important place in education field. This chapter is devoted to the theoretical part of the current study which investigates the attitudes towards online learning of second year students of English at Mohammad Seddik ben Yahia university, Jijel. It begins with the definition of online learning, its historical background, as well as the different variations of online learning. Also the advantages, disadvantages, and tools of online learning are tackled. The chapter ends with an explanation of the factors that affect students' attitudes towards online learning, and a discussion about online learning in the Algerian context.

1.1. Definition of Online Learning

Online learning has become a significant educational method in higher educational institutions. The definition of online learning varies from one scholar to the other, depending on their point of view of the term. Some researchers' definitions could be considered as representatives to the ideas about online learning. According to Dhull and Sakshi (2017):

Online learning is a form of distance learning which encompasses a range of technologies such as the world wide web, email, chat, new groups and texts, audio and video conferencing, delivered over computer networks to impart education. It helps the learner to learn at their own pace, according to their own convenience. (p 32)

Dhull and Sakshi definition focused on the online learning tools and technologies, and its importance in the learning process.

While Song (2010) defined online learning as:

The education that occurs only through the web. It does not consist of any physical learning materials issued to student or actual face to face contact. Pure online learning is essentially the use of e-learning tools in a distance education mode using the web as the sole medium for all student learning and contact. (p 17)

Song emphasized on the way online learning occurs in which online learning tools are used with no physical interaction. Thus, it implies that online learning is a kind of distance learning. Whereas Berteau (2009, p 1) defined online learning as an alternative to distance education which integrates multiple technologies with the use of the internet, which provides the transmission of information, such as testing and assessment, that the learners need in the learning process.

To conclude, it is clear that online learning has many definitions. However, these definitions share the same idea that online learning can be considered as a subset of distance learning in which some online educational technologies are used that help the learners in the learning process.

1.2. Historical Background of Online Learning

Online learning and distance learning are not new learning methods, but they have emerged and evolved over the past two hundred years since the 18th century. Since then, its use has continued to develop with new technologies and innovations. Its evolution began with course delivery through correspondence, then by the radio and television, and finally online.

1.2.1. Correspondence

Correspondence education is a "method of providing education for nonresident students, primarily adults who receive lessons and exercises through the mails or some other device

and upon completion, return them for analysis, criticism, and grading" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2012).

The correspondence education was firstly known in 1728, when Caleb Phillips advertised in the Boston Gazette for teaching several lessons weekly through letters and correspondence courses (Sleator, 2010, p 320). "Modern distance education initially relied on the development of postal services in the 19th century and has been practiced at last since Isaac Pitman taught shorthand in Great Britain via correspondence in the 1840's" (Subrahmanyam & Ravichandran, 2013, p 5). Therefore, Sir Pitman was one of the founders of distance education.

The evolution of the commercial correspondence colleges was a result of the development of the postal services in the 19th century. The first university to offer distance learning degrees was the university of London in 1858 by establishing its external courses (Baporikar , 2012, P 32). Furthermore, the first president of the University of Chicago, William Rainey Harper, proposed the concept of extended education and correspondence school in 1899 to further promote education, an idea that Columbia University did (Levinson, 2005, P 69).

1.2.2. Radio and Television

New communication technologies were invented between the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th such the radio and television. They were not only used for communication, but also as a means for learning.

Moore (2003, p 12) claimed that the experience of new technologies started during the 1910's and 1920's when universities attempted to offer programs through radio broadcasting; however, it failed because of the lack of investment. Schlosser and Simonson (2006, p 9) stated that the University of Iowa, Purdue University, and Kansas State College produced

some teaching programs through television in the early 1930's. They were the pioneers to use television in education.

Eventually, the use of radio and television in education was so popular back then because it was more effective and useful than the use of correspondence. Therefore, the invention of radio and television was not only important to the humanity in terms of communication and entertainment but also in term of education.

1.2.3. Online: Internet

Online learning is considered as a more modern form of distance learning that access learning experiences through the use of certain technology (Benson, 2002). The use of online technologies and computers arose at the end of the 20th century.

In 1989, the University of Phoenix became the first institution to launch online educational programs that offered bachelors and masters degrees (Kentnor, 2015, p 28). The world wide web (WWW) firstly appeared in 1989, which was very primitive and designed to provide information-sharing among institution scientists in the world (Jacksi & Abass, 2019, P 75). Eventually, according to Kentnor (2015, p 28), online courses began to be experienced in universities and colleges in the early to mid-1990's.

Online learning has been around for a long time in many different eras. "Online education has not only changed the landscape for distance education, but has greatly impacted higher education as a whole across the globe" (Kentnor, 2015, p 30). Every era took advantage of the technology back then to make learning more accessible.

1.3. Variations of online learning

Since online learning and relevant technology instruments continue to develop, different terminologies associated with online learning are used; these include: E-learning, online

learning, distance learning, hybrid Learning, and blending learning. All these terminologies refer to the act of using technology in learning but it is difficult for students to be able to differentiate between them, because these terminologies can be used interchangeably.

1.3.1. Online Learning

Online learning is often used interchangeably with E-learning; which is a form of distance education that refers to the use of technology as a mediator of the learning process, where teaching totally delivered via internet (Simens et al., 2015). Relying on individual educational institutions, learners should have regular scheduled online lectures, presentations and or discussion. In addition to that, they have usually accessibility to online learning materials such as: activities, assignments, presentations, recorded lectures, reading lists via applied platforms. According to Stander (2020), online learning mainly offers a list of educational applications and given benefits. For instance, students may submit their work, activities and receive feedbacks online. Also students are able to connect and interact with their partners and instructors through digital lessons, materials and assignments.

1.3.2. Distance Learning

Like online learning, distance Learning has basically the same structure, it may be synchronous (happens at the same time) or asynchronous (self-paced) (Offird et al., 2008). According to Moor et al. (2011), distance learning often describes the efforts of providing and supplying access to learning especially for those who are geographically distant. Moor (2011) added that distance learning is teaching and planned learning that normally happens in different place, as result requiring special instruments, special methods of communication via particular Institutional systems and other technologies.

1.3.3. Blending Learning

Blending learning is considered as a new concept in the field of education. Blending learning referred to the application that integrate or blend traditional face to face classroom teaching with online learning (park & Shea, 2020, p 256). According to Graham (2006), this concept refers to the combination of face to face learning method with learning with computer. Driscoll (2002) also described blending learning as a mixing and combination on any form of instructional technology such as, CD-ROM, web-based training with face to face instructor method. However, Park and Shea (2020) made a comparison between all variations of online learning suggesting that in comparison to the other forms of online learning, blending learning provides students with further productive channels, thus the student may communicate with their partners and instructors.

To conclude, online learning variations can sometimes be used interchangeably; however, they can differ from one to the other according to the learning environment. Therefore, in order for the learner to use one of the variations, he needs to understand the differences between them.

1.4. Advantages of Online Learning

Nowadays, online learning has become more common and used by different teachers and learners. Many universities started to share courses online; this method is considered as the easiest and most comfortable one to gain knowledge. The use of online learning has various benefits and advantages.

According to Klein and Ware (2003), online learning focuses on the needs of individual learners as an important factor in the process of education rather than on instructions. Some advantages of online learning that they highlighted are as follows:

a. Online Learning is Flexible

When considering time and location, each student has to choose the luxury that suits their location and time (Klein & Ware, 2003, p 37). According to Thomson (2010, p 667), Online learning permits students to work at a time and a place that suit their learning needs. Many instructors and students stated that they are able to focus their attention more on the content of the course and less on issues such as parking, traffic, and other problems that may arise when attending a traditional learning class.

b. Cost-Effectiveness

Online Learning is cost effective because there is no costs for travelling and for buying books or spending money in college context. Because it can happen at any geographic location and there are no travel expenses, this type of learning is less costly than learning at a traditional institute. Students who want to study through this mode require only the possession of a computer hardware as well as paying usually substantial fees for access to an internet service provider (Kellie & Ferguson 1998, p 208.209).

c. Self-Pacing

The use of online learning permits self-pacing. For instance, the asynchronous way allows each learner to learn at his or her own pace and speed whether fast or slow. In addition, online learning offers the increasing of satisfaction and the decreasing of stress (Codone, 2001 ; Amer, 2007).

d. Increasing Instructor and Learner Time

According to Ghoshal (2020, p 983), online learning increases time for both students and teachers. He suggested that, on one hand, students who attend their traditional learning classes may not get personal attention and interaction with their instructors; learners usually

need clarifications and explanations. In the other hand, online learning guide discussions and personal communications with their teachers, increase students' performance due to the time given by their teachers, and improve their problems-solving and communication skills.

e. Online Learning Enhances Basic Computer Skills

According to Dhull and Sakshi (2017, p 33), online learning improves basic computer skills. He stated that Students who study online have an opportunity to acquire specialized technological skills when using different Information and communication devices. These skills may help them in all aspects of their professional life in the future. Therefore, developing different skills promotes creativity, increases their self-esteem and reduces stress.

1.5. Disadvantages of Online Learning

Like any other system, online learning has also some drawbacks that students should pay attention to. Some of the major disadvantages of online learning include:

a. Low Motivation

According to Dhull and Sakshi (2017, p 33), online learners suffer from low motivation while studying. This usually happens because these technologies serve as a means of distraction that deprive students of the needed attention to understand and process what is being said. Guragain (2016, p 8) clarified that this results in students failure and inability to achieve their goals and objectives. Lack of motivation may in turn lead to laziness which can be a serious red flag in students journey towards success.

b. Lack of Communication

According to Colin, Hammoud and Willington (1997), online learning does not allow as much communication and interaction as traditional learning does. The learning process is

easier and more effective when using face to face method with teachers. Dhull and Sakshi (2017, p 33) added that in online learning, the learner does not have the chance to have face to face interaction with the instructor. However, international review of research in open and blending learning suggests that online learning can establish misunderstandings between the teacher and the learner, which may have a determinant impact on the learning process and students' learning outcomes because of misinterpretation of tasks and activities.

c. Lack of Quality Teaching and Learning

Another problem of online learning is lack of quality learning. According to Glusha (1991; p 10.18), non-online learning faculties don't have problems with online learning courses. Too usually, online teachers are not really honest and serious during the online teaching process and this brings about a negative effect on the quality of learning.

d. Issues with Costs

Other disadvantages of online learning pointed out by Glucha (1991, p 10.18) include: expensive cost, hardware problems, connection problems, the quality of content (courses, materials) and unstable financial state. Researches reveal that connectivity cost may cause problems and barriers to online learning. Collin et al. (1997, p 10.16) added that online learning may also lead to the heavy use of some websites which result in unexpected costs both in time and money.

e. Issues with Technology

Problems with technology may make Online learning frustrating especially when materials and notes are not accessible and also the quality of connection network is bad. As a result, it may become a hurdle in completion of online learning. Therefore, the only important

thing both students and teachers have to have is knowledge of technology (Ghoshal,2020, p 984).

1.6. Online Educational Tools

Online learning relies on the use of different technologies and tools. These tools can provide practice, education and information to the learners. Most of them are a mixed of two or more methods together. The most common communication tools used in online learning include: audio and video materials, e-mail, chat tools, social networking, and school management program/system.

1.6.1. Audio Materials

With the help of technology, learners can utilize audio materials in their learning process. An audio material is anything related to sound. Patil (2014, p 281) stated that one of the educational tools that has been used in learning for a long time is the radio, while in the present, an audio material is used as an educational tool by streaming over the internet or downloading webcasts and podcasts. According to Dangwal (2018, p 18), podcasting allows the interaction between students and instructors beyond the school hours and can be very useful in making the students more engaged and organized. Therefore, audio materials are an essential medium for delivering online learning.

1.6.2. Video Materials

Using video materials is an important method to include in an online learning experience. Patil (2014, p 282) stated that a video material is "an electronic medium for the recording, copying and broadcasting of moving visual images". Dangwal (2018, p 18) mentioned that vodcasting is a form of video broadcasting on the internet and that YouTube is a great source of video materials that have an important role in online learning. YouTube makes the online

learning process more interesting and fun for the learners. In addition, video conferencing is one of the best tools to deliver lessons and its popularity in learning is increasing (Subrahmanyam & Ravichandran, 2013, p 12). Therefore, video materials have a significant role in online learning and can make it more effective.

1.6.3. E-mail

Email stands for electrical mail. E-mail is defined as sending and receiving messages between users (Quaresma, Silva & Marreiros 2013, p 6). G-mail and Yahoo mail are the most popular email services. Sending and receiving emails between learners and instructors are considered an effective online learning experience (Dangwal, 2018, p 15). Hassett, Spuches and Webster (1995, p 221.222) declared that the email is an effective educational tool that can enhance learning by providing grade reporting for examinations and assignments, presenting course content, providing learning guidance and feedback, and finding information. Thus, email can be considered as a useful educational tool to promote learning.

1.6.4. Chat Tools

Dangwal (2018, p 16) claimed that chatting tools promote online communication, and help teachers and learners to arrange discussions on a specific issue or topic. In addition, Hejase (2000, p 247) considered chatting as an economic tool for online learning which can facilitate the learning process, increase the interaction between students and instructors, and allow better understanding of concepts. Therefore, chatting is a very useful educational tool to use for both students and teachers.

1.6.5. Social Networking

Social networking is an internet-based platform which provides online interaction to build social relations among people (Sadiku et al., 2019, p 126). "Social networking is increasingly

getting popular" (Subrahmanyam & Ravichandran, 2013, p 11). In the past few years, the terms social networking and social media have played an important role in online learning (Weber & Rothe, 2012, p 1957). Dafoulas and Shokri (2014, p 222) stated that social networking sites promote interaction, communication and collaboration. One of the most popular social networking sites and most used one is Facebook which has become an educational tool used by college students because it is used as a medium to communicate and get feedback.

1.6.6. School Management Program/ System

A school management system is a computer program on which all information can be stored. The school management systems are important for effective management of educational institutions; therefore, schools should develop management information systems to increase the efficiency of administrative services (Gehlawat, 2014, p 57). According to Demir (2006, p 33), a school management system has many advantages for administrators, teachers, and students such as developing a database that includes information of student registration, programs, grades, staff, classes, and course information that can increase the efficiency of the school management and the learning process.

1.7. The factors that Affect Students' Attitudes Towards Online Learning

In online learning contexts, there are many factors and key contributors to learners' success. There are factors that can prevent students from getting the best online learning experience. On the other hand, there are factors that can allow students to get a successful online learning experience. These factors may include: technology control, instructors' characteristics, students' characteristics, and system quality.

1.7.1. Technology Control

One of the factors that could affect students' attitudes towards online learning is their skills and experience in using technology. According to Rule et al. (2002, p 1), students are able to improve their learning through online sources and succeed by having technology competency skills. Butnaru et al. (2021, p 3) found that when students feel comfortable in using technology and have the competency in using the internet and technology, it will positively affect their learning and will increase their feeling of satisfaction with the online learning experience. Whereas, Taipjutorus et al. (2012, p, 58) stated that when students are not familiar with computer and technology usage and skills, they might feel less confident and less motivated to attend online learning courses and might negatively influence their performance. Therefore, the lack of skills when using technology can cause demotivation and anxiety for online learners, while good skills in using technology could develop positive attitudes towards online learning.

1.7.2. Instructors' Characteristics

One of the factors that can affect students' satisfaction and achievement in online learning is the instructors' characteristics. Song (2010, p 25) defined instructors' characteristics as the "skills, efforts, and pedagogical technique used by an instructor". Hammoud (2010, p 12) stated that the instructor has a significant effect on the success of online courses; the instructor's interaction, supervision and communication with the student will enhance the student achievement and participation in the online courses. Smidt et al. (2016, p 93) argued that the relationship with the instructor in the online environment can negatively affect the student's online learning experience. For instance, if the instructor's skills and efforts in giving feedback to students are not sufficient, it will lead the student to feel anxious in the course (Hara & Kling, 1999, p559). On the other hand, Eom et al. (2006, p195) found that the

instructor's knowledge and facilitation can positively affect student's satisfaction with the online learning experience.

1.7.3. Students' Characteristics

Song (2010, p 26) stated that students' characteristics include the ability, self-confidence, motivation and learning styles. Ghaderizefreh and Hoover (2018, p 1394) found that students' characteristics are one of the factors that influence their satisfaction with online learning and affect their learning and achievement. Hammoud (2010, p 20) linked student's characteristics and behaviors to the learning experience perceptions and attitudes. She found that there is a relationship between students' performance and abilities and their motivation. Thus, students' characteristics can be considered as a factor that affect students' attitudes towards online learning.

1.7.4. System Quality

System quality is concerned with "whether or not there are 'bugs' in the system, the consistency of the user interface, ease of use, response rates in interactive systems, quality documentation, and sometimes, quality and maintainability of the program code" (Seddon, 1997, p 246). Delon and McLean (1992, p 64) reported that system quality can be measured by data currency and accuracy, response time, reliability, turnaround time, completeness, flexibility, and usefulness. Moreover, Hammoud (2010, p 23) stated that these system characteristics are considered key factors that could affect and influence students' satisfaction and perceptions about online learning.

1.8. Online Learning in the Algerian Context

The rapid changes in technology and communication have universally created the notion of online education, interpreting its activity globally with no reverting point and with the

assistance of its increasing accessibility, flexibility, and openness. Harsim (2001) and Ali (2020) clarified that in the duration of these last months, the entire world witnessed huge changes in educational systems due to the outbreak of Covid19, which resulted in unpremeditatedly abrupt and unprecedented learning systems in schools and universities. This change has also affected the Algerian universities, and started a new era in the field of education.

To begin with, according to Ghemid and benchaiba (2012, p 4), the corporation of distance learning systems in Algerian universities was launched in 2006 when Algeria basically collaborated with Tomas and Microsoft. This section service provided 4.000 courses and lectures designed basically in order to teach ICT and communication skills. They stated that ICT refers to "forms of technologies that are used to transmit, store, create, share, or exchange information". Additionally, Dhawan (2020) added that like all universities around the world, Algerian universities opted for distance education and coined the term online learning. There are different digital platforms people use nowadays to study online including the so-called 'Moodle' which is an alternative method to face the pandemic of coronavirus and to go through its challenges. Unlike the other platforms, Moodle supplies both teachers and students with a safe system to interact and exchange different kinds of information. According to Krasnova and Ananjev (2015), learners can be engaged by Moodle through "highly motivating activities that positively affect students' performance and improve their development because they can work not only with course materials but also access any web resource (Bouguebs, 2019, p. 1). In the same vein, the concept of online learning is used to help ambitious learners who are not able to attend their regular full-time classes in order to accomplish their education. Moreover, this digital platform helps enhancing students' interactions through synchronous and asynchronous technological implements.

Abou El-Seoud et al.(2014) claimed that in order to solve the problem of leaving regular classes courses, Algerian schools and universities have taken prodigious and hardy measures to face this challenging confusion. Teachers should adapt a learning method opting for online learning in order to conserve a concrete number of educational continuity and enhance the education system in schools and universities. Similary, Ghounane (2020, p 22.27) observed that Algerian universities make big efforts to develop online learning both in formal and informal settings. They use social networks like Facebook in order to announce for students' exams, tests, and other issues. On the other hand, introducing lectures or courses is not an option both on Facebook and YouTube because most teachers believe that social networks are mostly unsecure. That is, using Facebook in learning is not essential and effective in language learning because learning a foreign language requires face-to-face interaction. Although language learning happens in an informal setting, Facebook is still helpful because learners can share and develop their reading, listening, and writing skills by sharing different texts and videos. Scholars like Kirwin (2012), Fewkes and McCabe (2012) stated the advantages of Facebook for students learning process; Fewkes and MC Cabe (2012, p 93) considered Facebook as the most important platform for learners calling it "the second nature to our students ", while Kerwin (2012) argued that the use of Facebook increases students' creativity and level-up their thinking skills. Moreover, he pointed that when learners post texts, videos, and images on Facebook, they are extremely using their acquired knowledge in the language. Therefore, this platform can help learners use both synchronous and asynchronous learning techniques. These will eventually reinforce motivation and engagement in the learning process.

Overall, the Algerian ministry of higher education and scientific research ministry has established the system of distance learning for many reasons. The first reason behind such a decision is to reinforce the education that requires presence. To clarify, distance education is

intended to reduce distances and to achieve managing time of the educational process in universities and without giving up on the presence learning process. Second, to soak up the continuous increasing number of students and to overcome the impacts that currently distinguish learners (quantitative criterion). The last one is to enhance the quality of learning and to approach international standards in terms of quality assurance (qualitative standard) (Bellatrache ,2020, p 270).

Conclusion

Online learning is regarded as an important method in the educational field. It is viewed as a form of distance learning in which internet is used. Its historical development took a shift from correspondence courses to online courses. Online learning has different variations which were sometimes used interchangeably such as e-learning, blended learning and distance learning. In online learning, there are some online educational tools and technologies that can be used to facilitate the process of learning such as video and audio materials, chat, social networking, school management system and email. To make online learning systems more effective, the factors that affect students' attitudes towards online learning should be considered; this may include system quality, technology control, students' characteristics and teachers' characteristics.

Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the field work of the current study which investigates the attitudes of second year student of English at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university towards online learning. It aims to describe the procedures followed in collecting data, and to present, analyze and discuss the findings of the investigation. A questionnaire is distributed with second year students of English at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university. The purpose of the investigation is to explore the students' different attitudes and perceptions towards online learning and the factors that affect these attitudes.

2.1. Data Collection Procedures

For the purpose of gathering data, a questionnaire was handed to second year licence students of English at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university. The questionnaire was administered to investigate students' attitudes towards online learning and what factors that affect their attitudes. The questionnaire was submitted to students face to face. 50 students filled in a paper copy of the questionnaire.

2.2. Population and Sampling

The population targeted in this study is that of second year licence students at the department of English at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university, Jijel. Fifty second year students are chosen to be the sample of this research.

The purpose of choosing second year LMD students as our population can be justified by the fact that these students have experienced online learning the past year due to the pandemic, so they are aware of the concept and their answers would be more reliable than of

first year students. Conducting this study can help these second year students in the next years in studying and using online learning.

2.3. Student Questionnaire

2.3.1. Description and Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of 32 questions which, in general, require students to pick up the most appropriate answer from a series of options. These questions are divided into three sections. Section one, entitled general information, consists of 8 questions. In question (1), students are asked to indicate which electronic device they use. In questions (2) and (3) students are asked to answer if they have access to Internet connection and where they have it. In questions (4) and (5), students are requested to state if they have an email account and their teachers email accounts. In question (6), students are asked to indicate how often they use internet for studying. In questions (7) and (8), students are asked to state if they have any experience with online learning and which online learning tools they use.

The second section deals with students' attitudes towards online learning. It consists of fifteen questions from question (9) to question (23). Question (9) is designed to illustrate students understanding about online learning. Questions from (10) to (17) are statements about online learning that students are asked to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with them. Questions from (18) to (23) are designed to ask students about their online learning experience as EFL students at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university. In question (18), students are asked to evaluate their online learning experience. Questions (19) and (20) are designed to determine if the online learning tools used are sufficient or not, and which online learning tools can be added. Questions (21) and (22) are designed to evaluate the university platform, and determine which adjustments it needs. In question (23), students are asked to evaluate teachers' proficiency in using online learning materials.

The third section deals with the factors that affect students' attitudes. It consists of eight questions. Questions from (24) to (27) are statements designed to evaluate the quality of system, connection, content... Questions from (28) to (31) are statements designed to indicate to what extent students agree or disagree with them. In question (32), students are asked to indicate the consequences of overusing online learning.

2.3.2. Analysis of the Results Obtained through the Students Questionnaire

The present section is devoted to the presentation and analysis of data which were collected from the student questionnaire.

1_ Section One: General Information:

Q1: which electrical device do you have?

Table 1: The kind of electrical devices that students have

Option	N	%
Smart phone	44	55.7
Computer	15	19
Laptop	12	15.2
Tablet	7	8.9
Nothing	1	1.2
Total		100

The findings presented in the table above show that the half of students 55.7% use smart phones. 19% of the students use computers while 15.2% of them use laptops. 8.9% of the

students use tablets. Whereas only 1.2% of the students have nothing to use as an electrical device.

Q2: Do you have access to Internet connection?

Table 2: Students access to Internet connection

Option	N	%
Yes	49	98
No	1	2
Total	50	100

The results above show that the almost all the students (98%) have access to Internet connection while one student with the percentage of 2% answered that he doesn't have access to Internet connection.

Q3: where?

Table 3: The place where students have access to Internet connection

Option	N	%
At home	27	54
At University	4	8
Both	18	36
None	1	2
Total	50	100

The findings presented in the table above show that 54% of the students have access to Internet connection at home. 8% of them have it at the university, while 34% of the students have it at both home and university. 4% of them don't have access to Internet connection.

Q4: Do you have your teachers' email accounts?

Table 4: Students' possession of their teachers' email accounts

Option	N	%
Yes	42	84
No	8	16
Total	50	100

The findings presented in the table above show that most of the students 84% said that they have their teachers' email accounts while only 16% of the students don't.

Q5: Do you contact your teachers through email to get feedback or assessment?

Table 5: Students' contact with their teachers through email

Option	N	%
Yes	40	80
No	10	20
Total	50	100

The results above show that 40% of the students contact their teachers' through email to get feedback and assessment. Whereas 20% of them don't have.

Q6: How often do you use internet for studying?

Table 6: The frequency of students' use of internet for studying

Option	N	%
Always	28	56
Often	16	32
Rarely	6	12
Never	0	0
Total	50	100

The findings presented in the table above show that 56% of the students always use internet for studying, 32% of them use it often for, and 12% of them use it rarely. While none of the students never used internet for studying.

Q7: Have you ever experienced online learning?

Table 7: Students experience of online learning

Option	N	%
Yes	50	100
No	0	0
Total	50	100

The results above illustrate that all of the students (100%) have experienced online learning.

Q8: Which kind of online learning tools have you used for studying?

Table 8: The kind of online learning tools used for studying

Option	N	%
World Wide Web	22	25
Video and audio conferencing	16	18.2
Email	11	12.5
Social networks	17	19.3
University platform	22	25
Total		100

As it is revealed in table 8, 25% of the students use world wide web as an online learning tool. 18.2% of them use video and audio conferencing. 12.5% of them use the email. 19.3% of them use social networks such as Facebook for studying online. While 25% of the students use the university platform.

2_Section Two: Students attitudes towards online learning

Q9: What is your understanding of online learning?

Table 9: Students' understanding of online learning

Option	N	%
Using internet to obtain information	18	20
Learning without the teacher	23	25.6
Reading the lessons on the websites	14	15.5
Watching the lessons through videos	16	17.8
Receiving the lessons through emails	11	12.2
Learning through video and audio conferencing	8	8.9
Total		100

The results above show that 20% of the students think that online learning means using internet to obtain information. 25.6% of them think that online learning is learning without the teacher. 15.5% of them have the idea that online learning means reading the lessons on the websites. 17.8% of them think that online learning is watching the lessons through videos. 12.2% of them think that receiving lessons through emails is what online learning about. 8.9% of them think that online learning means learning through video and audio conferencing.

Q10: To what extent do you agree that the quality of learning can be increased through online learning?

Table 10: The role of online learning in increasing the quality of learning

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	9	18
Agree	18	36
Neutral	9	18
Disagree	8	16
Strongly disagree	6	12
Total	50	100

According to the the table above, 54% of the students agree that online learning increases the quality of learning, and 18% of them preferred to be neutral. Whereas, 28% of them disagree with the statement.

Q11: To what extent do you agree that using online learning can make learning interesting and enjoyable?

Table 11: The effect of online learning on making learning interesting and enjoyable

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	14	28
Agree	15	30
Neutral	10	20
Disagree	8	16
Strongly disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

The results above show that 58% of the students agree that using online learning can make learning interesting and enjoyable, 20% of them choose the option “neutral”, Whereas only 22% of them disagree with the statement.

Q12: To what extent do you agree that the use of online learning materials is easier than using books in the library?

Table 12: The use of online learning materials is easier than using books in the library

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	14	28
Agree	16	32
Neutral	6	12
Disagree	9	18
Strongly disagree	5	10
Total	50	100

According to the results above, 60% of the students agree that the use of online learning materials is easier than using books in the library, only 12% of them choose the third option “neutral”, and 28% of them disagree with the statement.

Q13: To what extent do you agree that online learning is economic in terms of time and money?

Table 13: Online learning is economic in terms of time and money

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	12	24
Agree	13	26
Neutral	15	30
Disagree	6	12
Strongly disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

The findings presented in the table above show that 50% of the students agree that online learning is economic in terms of time and money, 30% of them preferred to be neutral, while 20% of them disagree with the statement.

Q14: To what extent do you agree that there is no interaction in online learning?

Table 14: Interaction in online learning

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	5	10
Agree	13	23
Neutral	20	40
Disagree	9	18
Strongly disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

According to the findings, 33% of the students agree that there is no interaction in online learning, 40% of them are neutral, and only 24% of them disagree.

Q15: To what extent do you agree that online learning is less motivating than learning in school?

Table 15: Online learning is less motivating than learning in school

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	7	14
Agree	17	34
Neutral	7	14
Disagree	13	26
Strongly disagree	6	12
Total	50	100

The findings presented in the table above show that 48% of the students agree that online learning is less motivating than learning in school, 14% of them preferred to be neutral, and 38% of them disagree.

Q16: To what extent do you agree that online learning is useful in terms of copying up missed lessons?

Table 16: The usefulness of online learning in terms of copying up missed lessons

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	16	32
Agree	18	36
Neutral	10	20
Disagree	6	12
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

According to the findings, 68% of the students agree that online learning is useful in terms of copying up missed lessons, 20% of them choose the third option “neutral”, and 12% of them disagree.

Q17: To what extent do you agree that teachers in the university are well trained about online learning and know how to use online learning materials?

Table 17: Teachers competence in using online learning materials

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	7	14
Agree	9	18
Neutral	14	28
Disagree	11	22
Strongly disagree	9	18
Total	50	100

The findings presented in the table above shows that 32% of the students agree that teachers in the university are well educated about online learning and know how to use online learning materials, 28% of them are neutral, and 40% of them disagree.

Q18: How Would you evaluate your online learning experience?

Table 18: The student's evaluation of online learning experience

Option	N	%
Excellent	4	8
Good	20	40
Average	16	32
Bad	10	20
Total	50	100

The findings presented in table 18 show that there are 4 students (8%) who think that their online learning experience is excellent. The other 20 students (40%) think that their online learning experience is good which is the biggest percentage. Whereas, 16 of students (32%) think that it is average. In addition, 10 of the students (20%) think their online learning experience is bad.

Q19: Are the online learning tools used in your learning program sufficient and can replace the traditional learning method effectively?

Table 19: Student's opinions about whether the online learning tools are sufficient

Option	N	%
Yes	19	38
No	31	62
Total	50	100

According to the findings, 62% of students do not think that the online learning tools used in their learning program sufficient and can replace the traditional learning method effectively and said "no", whereas the rest of the students (31%) said "yes". This implies that the online learning tools that are used in learning program are not sufficient.

Q20: If no, which online learning tools can be added to make the experience more effective?

Few students answered this question. However, most of the answers were that the online learning tools that can be added to make the experience more effective are video and audio conferencing and posting lessons through videos.

Q21: How would you evaluate the university platform(websites) quality?

Table 21: The student's evaluation of the university platforms (websites quality)

Option	N	%
Excellent	4	8
Good	11	22
Average	17	34
Bad	18	36
Total	50	100

The answers tabulated above show that there are 4 students or 8% who indicated that the platform's quality used in university is excellent. However, 36% of the students said that the quality of platform in university is bad. In addition, 17 students (34%) considered it as average, and only 22% of students claimed that it is good. From the findings, we can notice that the platform used in our university does not satisfy the students.

Q 22: Which adjustments do you think the university platform need?

Table 22: Student's opinions about the adjustments that the university platform need

Option	N	%
Design	9	11.25%
Organization	27	33.75%
Content	17	21.25%
Usability	9	11.25%
Accessibility	18	22.5%
Total	80	100%

The result obtained show that 33,25% of students have chosen the option b (organization) which means that the platform organization have to be improved. 11.25% of the students prefer to adjust the design. 17 students (21.25%) selected content, 9 students (11.25%) selected usability. In addition, 22.5 of the students chose accessibility as the element needed to be improved in the platform.

Q23: How would you evaluate your understanding of the feedback and assessment given by teachers through the email?

Table 23: Students understanding of teachers' feedback and assessment through email

Option	N	%
Excellent	9	18
Good	23	46
Average	18	36
Bad	0	0
Total	50	100

The findings show that 23 of students (46%) saw that their understanding to teachers' feedback through email is good. 36% of them said it is average. In addition, 18% of them said that it is excellent. However, none of them said it is bad.

3_Section Two: The Factors that Affect Students' Attitudes Towards Online Learning

Q24: How is your internet connection quality?

Table 24: Students' evaluation of their connection quality

Option	N	%
Excellent	7	14
Good	11	22
Average	15	30
Bad	17	34
Total	50	100

The answers generated from the question 24 show that 34% of the students consider their connection quality as good, whereas 30% said that their connection quality is average. 11 students 22% indicated that their connection quality is bad. However, only 14% of them have chosen the option excellent. This support the idea that the quality of the internet used by students is generally not so good.

Q25: How is your current proficiency in using online learning technologies?

Table 25: Student's proficiency in using online learning technologies

Option	N	%
Excellent	9	18
Good	25	50
Average	12	24
Bad	4	8
Total	50	100

The results indicate that half of the students consider their proficiency in using online learning technologies as good. 20% of them opted for the option average. Moreover, 9 students (18%) said that their current proficiency in using online learning technologies is excellent. However, only 4 students 8% indicated that their proficiency in using online learning technologies is bad. We can notice the proficiency of most students is mainly good in using online learning technologies.

Q26: what do you think about the quality of the content available on the internet?

Table 26: Student's perceptions about the quality of the content available on the internet

Option	N	%
Excellent	7	14
Good	25	50
Average	17	34
Bad	1	2
Total	50	100

The respondents' opinions regarding the quality of the content available on the internet show that 50% of students are satisfied with it choosing the option good. However, only 2% of the students face difficulties when using the content from the internet. This affirms that the content available on the internet that is used by the students is generally good.

Q27: what do you think about the quality of the system in terms of usability and accessibility?

Table 27: Students' perceptions about the quality of the university system (usability and accessibility)

Option	N	%
Excellent	1	2
Good	11	22
Average	25	50
Bad	13	26
Total	50	100

From the findings, we can notice that 50% of the learners think that the quality of the university system is average, and 22% of them see that it's good. However, 26% of the students said that the quality of the university system is bad. This implies that the quality of the usability and the accessibility of the university websites is mainly average and not so good.

Q28: Do you think that using online learning technologies such as websites can be costly?

Table 28: Students' opinions about the cost of online learning technologies

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	18	36
Neutral	17	34
Disagree	7	14
Strongly disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 28 shows that 36% of the learners agree with the idea that the use of websites can be costly, 34% of them are neutral, while 16% disagree with the statement.

Q29: Do you think that slow internet connection may make the learning process frustrating?

Table 29: Students' opinions on the effect of slow internet connection on making learning frustrating

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	18	36
Agree	19	38
Neutral	3	6
Disagree	2	4
Strongly disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

As shown in the table above, most students (74%) agree that slow connection may make learning frustrating, and 6% of them have chosen the option neutral. However, only few students (6%) have chosen the last two options strongly disagree and disagree.

Q30: Do you think that the lack of teachers Interaction may confuse and demotivate Learners?

Table 30: Students' opinions about the lack of the teacher's interaction (if it may confuse and demotivate learners)

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	16	32
Agree	14	28
Neutral	7	14
Disagree	1	2
Strongly disagree	5	10
Total	50	100

From the analysis of the results presented in the table above, we noticed that 32% of the students strongly agree that the lack of teachers' interaction may confuse and demotivate learners, 28% of them agree, and 14% of them preferred to be neutral. Only 12% of them disagree.

Q31: Do you think that being proficient in using online learning technologies will make the learning process more effective?

Table 31: Students' opinions about the role of proficiency in using technologies in making the learning process more effective

Option	N	%
Strongly agree	22	44
Agree	18	36
Neutral	6	12
Disagree	3	6
Strongly disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

From the analysis of the results obtained, 44% of students strongly agree with the statement. While 36% of them chose the option agree. 12% of them chose to be neutral. However, only 6% of them disagree with the statement, and 2% of them strongly disagree.

Q32: Overuse of online learning technologies may cause you

Table 32: The effect of the overuse of online learning technologies

Option	N	%
depression	20	40
Anxiety	01	2
Fear	03	6
Pressure	16	32
Nothing	10	20
Total	50	100

According to the obtained results, 40% of the students suffer from depression when they frequently use online learning technologies. While 32% said that the overuse of these technologies lead them to feel pressure. However, only 10 of the students declared that the overuse of online learning technologies do not affect them with anything. 6% of them have chosen the option of fear. 2% of them declared that the overuse of these technologies cause them anxiety.

2.4. Interpretation and Discussion of the Results Obtained Through the Questionnaire

This section is devoted to the discussion and interpretation of the main results collected from the student questionnaire. The thirty two questions elicited students' attitudes towards online learning, and the factors that affect these attitudes.

To begin with, Q1, Q2, Q3 demonstrated that all students have electronical devices and have access to internet connection which means that all students are capable of being online learners. Moreover, Q4 and Q5 showed that the majority of students are in contact with their

teachers through email to get feedback or assessment which is a form of online learning. In Q6 and Q7, the results showed that all the students are using internet for studying, and have experienced online learning. In Q8, students were asked to provide answers about the online learning tools and technologies they used for studying, and the results indicated that they are using different kinds of tools; however, the most used ones are the university platform and WWW; this implies that they are using more traditional online tools rather than developed ones such as video conferencing.

The second section aimed at collecting data about students' attitudes towards online learning. The results obtained from the analysis of the second section showed that the students have positive attitudes towards online learning in general, which implies that they are more likely to accept it as a mode of learning. The results illustrated that they generally agree that online learning can increase the quality of learning and is an enjoyable, interesting, useful and easy to use method compared to the traditional learning method. This perception will lead to satisfaction with the online learning experience. However, in statements 14 and 15, the results showed that they think online learning prevent interaction which will lead to demotivation for students; this implies that the online educational tools used are not the ones that allow interaction and communication. Nevertheless, in the application of online learning in their context, students, as online learners at the department of English at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university, have a positive attitude towards their online learning experience. However, the majority of the students think that the online learning tools and technologies used in the learning program are not sufficient and that they need some other online educational tools to be added to the program to make the experience more effective which are video and audio conferencing and posting lessons in the form of videos. This implies that students want some interaction and communication to make them understand the lessons and make the learning process more effective and productive. In addition, they think

that the university platform is not so good and it needs some adjustments in the system in terms of organization, accessibility and content. This illustrates that they have difficulties in using the platform and this is affecting their online learning experience. Moreover, they evaluated their understanding of teachers' feedback and assessment through as good, so they don't have difficulties in understanding the feedback.

Concerning the third section which seeks to gather information about the factors that affect students' attitudes towards online learning, the results obtained showed that the critical factors that can affect learners' attitudes towards online learning are their proficiency in using educational technologies, quality of the system, internet connection quality, lack of teachers interaction and some psychological issues. The results indicated that the technology control and skills is an important factor that influences online learning usage. In other words, when students are aware of the use of the educational technologies, they will be more productive in the learning process and will make them satisfied with online learning method and vice versa. Additionally, the quality of the online learning system and of the content is a significant predictor of students' satisfaction with the online learning experience, because the more student is involved with the online learning system, the more benefits he will obtain from its use. Moreover, the lack of teachers interaction is also a key factor affecting students' attitudes towards online learning, because it will prevent the learner from understanding the lesson like in the classroom. The student himself is a factor because he feels not motivated, anxious or depressed, this will affect his performance in learning which will affect his satisfaction with his online learning experience.

To recap, the student questionnaire discussed fully the major concern of the study. As apparent in the findings, second year students had positive attitudes towards online learning. Most importantly, the results showed the most critical factors that affect these attitudes are

the proficiency in using online educational technologies, quality of the system, internet connection quality, lack of teachers' interaction and students' psychological issues.

Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the fieldwork of the current study. The content of this chapter reproduced within data collection procedures, the population and sampling and the student questionnaire which was described, analyzed and discussed. The analysis of the findings revealed that second year students tend to have positive attitudes towards online learning. Moreover, the results showed the most important key factors that affect students' attitudes towards online learning which are generally proficiency in using online educational technologies, quality of system, internet connection quality, lack of teachers' interaction and students' psychological issues.

General Conclusion

1. Putting it Together

The current study aims at investigating students' attitudes towards online learning. This study is made up of two parts: a theoretical part and a practical part. The first chapter is devoted to the theoretical part. It provides for a better understanding of the concept of online learning. The second chapter is devoted to the practical part. It moves on to analyze and interpret the data gathered from the questionnaire.

The first chapter took a closer look at online learning by firstly defining it, and tracing the historical development of online learning which witnessed a shift of focus from correspondence courses to online courses. The variations of online learning namely: online learning, e-learning, blended learning, and distance learning were discussed. Then, it moves to mention the advantages and disadvantages of online learning. Moreover, it sheds light on the tools and technologies used in online learning, besides the factors that affect student's attitudes towards online learning. Finally, the chapter closes by exploring online learning in the Algerian context.

The second chapter is concerned with the practical side of this work in terms of the results obtained from the data collected. The data was gathered through a questionnaire administered to second year students of English at Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia university, Jijel. This chapter presents an analysis and interpretation of the results. The results of the student questionnaire revealed that second year students have a positive attitude towards online learning. Most importantly, the results showed the most critical factors that affect these attitudes which are the proficiency in using online educational technologies, quality of the system, internet connection quality, lack of teachers' interaction and some students' psychological issues.

In the light of the results obtained in this research, some pedagogical recommendations were suggested as the need to develop and make online learning more effective through the use of more effective online educational technologies and providing good internet connection quality.

It is hoped that the outcome of this study will provide useful guidelines for students, teachers and administrators to include in the online learning process. It is also hoped that the results of this study will be used for further research.

2. Pedagogical Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to understand online learning as a learning method, investigate students' attitudes towards online learning, and explore the factors that affect these attitudes. This study has resulted in several significant findings and conclusions. Based on these findings, the researchers recommend the following:

1. Online Learning Technologies

Universities should consider the use of other additional technologies and tools such as audio and video conferencing and instant text messaging that would create more comfortable and motivating learning environment for students which would help improve online learning.

2. Training

Strategies like training the use of educational technologies are effective for facing the difficulties in using technologies relevant to online learning and enhancing the online learning experience.

3. Internet Connection

It is important for the university administration to provide a good internet connection for students to facilitate their access to online educational tools.

4. Interaction and Communication

Teachers should consider providing a good response time to students' questions that will give them a better understanding of the lessons and will increase their motivation with regard to learning online.

5. University Platform

It is recommended that the university platform, which is the most used online educational tool, needs some adjustments to facilitate its use and access.

3. Limitations

Although the results of the study were quite interesting and played an essential role in describing the students' attitudes towards online learning, like any other study, the present study faced some obstacles and restrictions in various forms.

√ The inaccessibility of some sources like: books and articles which are not free of charge obliged the researchers to change some of the content.

√ The unavailability of references for certain elements in the theoretical part.

√ The questionnaire was delivered during exams period, it was not easy to interact with second year students of English ,additionally, the attempt was to deal with a sample of 60 participants failed. Unfortunately, only 50 of the students have answered the questionnaire (some of them did not gave us back the hard copies of the questionnaire).

√ Most of second year students did not answer the open ended questions that obliged us to delete some of the questions.

√ Because of the current circumstances caused by the pandemic, it was impossible to meet neither with each others as partners nor with the supervisor, consequently, it obliged us to work remotely from home especially the second chapter (practical part).

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Appendix

Student Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly invited to answer this questionnaire. It would provide us with the data needed to investigate students' attitudes towards online learning. Please give your answers sincerely in order to guarantee the success of this study. Thank you very much for your collaboration.

Please put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box or boxes if needed.

Section One: General Information:

1_ Which electrical device do you have?

a_ smart phone b_ computer c_ laptop d_ tablet e_ nothing

2_ Do you have access to Internet connection?

a_ yes b_ no

3_ Where?

a_ at home b_ at University c_ both d_ none

4_ Do you have your teachers' email account?

a_ yes b_ no

5_ Do you contact with your teachers through email to get feedback or assessment?

a_ yes b_ no

6_ How often do you use internet for studying?

a_ always b_ often c_ rarely d_ never

7_ Have you ever experienced online learning?

a_ yes b_ no

8_ which kind of online learning tools have you used for studying?

a_ World wide web b_ Video and audio conferencing

c_ Email d_ Using social networks (such as Facebook)

e_ Using university platform (website)

Section Two: Students attitudes towards online learning:

9_ What is your understanding about online learning?

a_ Using the internet to obtain information

b_ Learning without the teacher

c_ Reading the lessons on the websites

d_ Watching the lessons through videos

e_ Receiving the lessons through emails

f_ Learning through video and audio conferencing

*To what extent do you agree/ disagree with the following statements:

Do you think	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10_ the quality of learning can be increased through online learning					
11_ Using online learning can make learning interesting and enjoyable					
12_ The use of online learning materials is easier than using books in the library					
13_ Online learning is economic in terms of time and money					
14_ In online learning, there is no interaction					
15_ Online learning is less motivating than learning in school					
16_ online learning is useful in term of copying up missed lessons					
17_ Teachers in the university are well educated about online learning and know how to use online learning materials					

*During your online learning experience as an EFL student of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia university:

18_How would you evaluate your online learning experience?

a_Excellent b_good c_average d_bad

19_ Are the online learning tools used in learning program sufficient and can replace the traditional learning method effectively?

a_yes b_no

20_ If no, which online learning tools can be added to make the experience more effective?

.....

21_ How would you evaluate the university platform (website) quality?

a_Excellent b_good c_average d_bad

22_ Which adjustments do you think the university platform need?

a_Design b_organization c_content

d_usability e_accessibility

23_ How would you evaluate your understanding of the feedback and assessment given by teachers through the email?

a_Excellent b_good c_average d_bad

Section Three: The Factors that Affect Students' Attitudes:

*Rate the following statements:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Bad
24_ Your connection quality				
25_ your current proficiency in using				

online learning technologies (email, WWW, video and audio conferencing..)				
26_ the quality of the content available on the internet				
27_ quality of system (university website) in term of usability and accessibility				

*To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
28_ Using online learning technologies such as websites can be costly					
29_ Slow internet connection may make the learning process frustrating					
30_ Lack of teachers interaction may confuse and demotivate learners					
31_ being proficient is using online learning technologies will make the learning process more effective					

32_ overuse of online learning technologies may cause you:

a_ depression b_ anxiety c_ fear d_ pressure e_ nothing

Resumé

De nos jours, avec l'augmentation de la technologie Internet, l'apprentissage en ligne est devenu une nécessité dans le domaine de l'éducation au niveau universitaire. Néanmoins, le succès des systèmes d'apprentissage en ligne dépend de l'attitude et de la satisfaction des étudiants à ce sujet. Ce document de recherche portait sur les attitudes des étudiants de deuxième année de licence d'anglais à l'université Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia vis-à-vis de l'apprentissage en ligne. L'objectif global de l'étude est de faire la lumière sur les perceptions et les attitudes des étudiants envers l'apprentissage en ligne, et d'explorer les facteurs possibles qui affectent ces attitudes. Un questionnaire quantitatif a été adressé à 50 étudiants de deuxième année. Les résultats obtenus ont révélé que les étudiants de deuxième année ont tendance à avoir des attitudes positives envers l'apprentissage en ligne. De plus, les résultats ont montré que les facteurs clés les plus importants qui affectent les attitudes des élèves envers l'apprentissage en ligne, qui sont généralement la maîtrise des technologies éducatives en ligne, la qualité du système, la qualité de la connexion Internet, le manque d'interaction des enseignants et certains problèmes psychologiques des élèves.

ملخص

في الوقت الحاضر ، مع تطور تكنولوجيا الإنترنت ، أصبح التعلم عبر الإنترنت ضرورة في مجال التعليم في المستوى الجامعي. ومع ذلك ، فإن نجاح أنظمة التعلم عبر الإنترنت يعتمد على مواقف الطلاب ورضاهم عنها. تناول هذا البحث مواقف طلاب السنة الثانية في كلية اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى نحو التعلم عبر الإنترنت. تتمثل الأهداف العامة للدراسة في إلقاء الضوء على تصورات الطلاب ومواقفهم تجاه التعلم عبر الإنترنت ، واستكشاف العوامل المحتملة التي تؤثر على هذه المواقف. تم توجيه استبيان كمي إلى 50 من طلاب السنة الثانية. أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها أن طلاب السنة الثانية يميلون إلى امتلاك مواقف إيجابية تجاه التعلم عبر الإنترنت. علاوة على ذلك ، أظهرت النتائج أن أهم العوامل الرئيسية التي تؤثر على مواقف الطلاب تجاه التعلم عبر الإنترنت هي إجابة استخدام تقنيات التعليم عبر الإنترنت وجودة النظام وجودة الاتصال بالإنترنت و تفاعل المعلمين وبعض المشكلات النفسية لدى الطلاب.