

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research  
Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English



**EFL Learners' Attitudes Towards the Use of Online Learning During  
COVID-19 Pandemic. The Case of EFL Undergraduate Learners at  
Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel-**

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

**Candidates:**

BOUMEKAH Cheima

DEBIECHE Imene

**Supervisor:**

Sabrina HADJI

**Board of Examiners**

**Examiner One:** Meriem BOUSBAA

Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia Jijel University

**Examiner Two:** Houda BOUHADJAR

Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia Jijel University

**Supervisor:** Sabrina HADJI

Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia Jijel University

**Academic Year: 2020-2021**



## Dedications

*In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the most Merciful*

*All the praise and thanks be to Allah the almighty who had guided us to this.*

*I dedicate this work to the dearest persons to my heart, my precious and wonderful parents, the reason of whom I have become today. Thank you for the infinite and unconditional love, support and guidance, you have been with me every step of the way, through good and bad times. I do not have enough words that I could interpret my gratefulness and love to you. May Allah enable me to recompense for you your great favor.*

*To the memory of my dearest uncle, and grandmother, without forgetting to mention my cousin. Their absence today brings me a lot of pain, may Allah rest their souls in peace.*

*With love and appreciation, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to whom I love, and appreciate, to everyone in my heart, Thank you all for your unforgettable support and encouragement.*

*Cheima*

## Dedications

*My graduate is to **ALLAH**. The Almighty*

*With all the love, I dedicate this work:*

*To **my father**, the leader of my life and the dearest person to my heart for his care, his love and every word of encouragement he has been supporting me with.*

*To **my beloved mother**, the source of happiness and success in my life.*

*To my dearest brothers, "**Aymen**" and "**Amin**", for being proud of me all the time.*

*Also, a special affectionate dedication goes to my wonderful best friend "**Imen**", who has never saved any effort to help me.*

*My thanks to my friends "**Hadjer**" and "**Bouchra**" for being around when no one else was.*

*Without forgetting my uncle's wife, "**Maria**" for her encouragement.*

*May Allah keep you safe!*

*Imen*

## **Acknowledgments**

First and Foremost, we would like to express our thanks to **Allah** for giving us the power and patience to achieve this modest work.

It is a pleasure to thank everyone who made this dissertation possible.

Our deepest gratitude goes to our supervisor **Mrs. HADJI Sabrina** who guided us and gave us the freedom to explore on our own. Our sincere thanks to her for being kind and accepting to direct this work.

We would like also to thank all our teachers and the examiners who have kindly accepted to read, examine, and evaluate this work.

Last but not least, we would gratefully express our special thanks to all those who have encouraged us and accepted to cooperate to accomplish this piece of work.

## **Abstract**

One of the main consequences of COVID-19 pandemic was the shift from classroom learning to online learning which may affect negatively or positively the students learning process. The present study seeks to investigate the attitudes of EFL undergraduate learners towards the use of online learning during COVID-19 pandemic at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel University as well as the challenges that they encounter during their learning process. Also, learners who are used to online learning and have technology skills develop positive attitudes towards online learning. In order to achieve the aims of this descriptive study, a questionnaire was designed and submitted online to EFL students at the department of English. It was revealed that students are aware of the advantages of online learning making them more responsible and autonomous; however, they prefer classroom learning because of the difficulties they encounter when learning as the lack of technology skills, lack of support and interaction with the teachers, as well as the technical problems they face. Some pedagogical recommendations are suggested to pave the way for a better implementation of online learning process such as raising the awareness of the importance of using online learning tools in the learning process and preparing both teachers and students to this new way of learning.

**Keywords:** Online learning, EFL learners, COVID-19 pandemic

## **List of Abbreviations and Symbols**

ALLP: The Athema Language Learning Project

ALT: advanced learning technologies

CAMILLE: The Computer Assisted Multimedia Interactive Language Learning Environment

CAL: Computer Aided Learning

CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

CMS: Course Management Systems

COVID-19: Corona Virus Pandemic

EFL: English Foreign Language Learners

GC: Google Classroom

ICT: information and communication technologies

IIT: interactive and information technologies

IT: information technology

MALL: Mobile Assisted Language Learning

OMLS: Online Management Learning Systems

SNS: Social Networks

TICCIT: Time-shared, Interactive, Computer Controlled Information Television

=: Percentage

## List of Tables

<b>Table 2.1:</b> Level of Instruction of the Subjects.....	33
<b>Table 2.2:</b> Teachers' Implementation of Online Learning before COVID-19 Pandemic ...	34
<b>Table 2.3:</b> Student's Preparation to the Use of Online Learning.....	34
<b>Table 2.4:</b> Online Learning Impacts on the Student's Learning Experience.....	35
<b>Table 2.5:</b> Students' Preferred Type of Learning.....	36
<b>Table 2.6:</b> Internet Access.....	37
<b>Table 2.7:</b> Most Used Devices in Online Learning .....	37
<b>Table 2.8:</b> Types of Materials Posted Online.....	38
<b>Table 2.9:</b> Students' Opinions about the Materials Delivered Online.....	39
<b>Table 2.10:</b> Teacher's Online Interaction with Students.....	39
<b>Table 2.11:</b> The Use of Internet Applications.....	40
<b>Table 2.12:</b> Frequency of Teachers' and Students' Interaction.....	41
<b>Table 2.13:</b> Purpose of Teacher's Interaction.....	42
<b>Table 2.14:</b> Online Assessment.....	42
<b>Table 2.15:</b> Types of Assessment.....	43
<b>Table 2.16:</b> The Challenges Encountered by Students during Online Learning .....	44
<b>Table 2.17:</b> Benefits of Online Learning on EFL Learners.....	45
<b>Table 2.18:</b> Students' Opinions Concerning Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic.....	46

## List of Figures

<b>Figure 1:</b> Evolution of CALL.....	08
---	----

## Table of Contents

Dedication .....	VIII
Acknowledgments .....	VIII
Abstract .....	VIII
List of Abbreviations and Symbols.....	VIII
List of Tables.....	VIII
List of Figures.....	VIII
Table of Contents.....	VIII

## General Introduction

1. Background of the Study.....	.01
2. Statement of the Problem.....	.02
3. Aims of the Study.....	.02
4. Research Questions.....	.03
5. Research Hypothesis.....	.03
6. Research Tools.....	.03
7. Structure of the Study.....	.03

## Chapter One: Online Learning Process

Introduction.....	05
-------------------	----

### Section One: An Overview of Online Learning Process

1. The Use of Technologies in the Field of Education.....	05
1.1 Definition of Computer Assisted Language Learning.....	06
1.2 Computer Assisted Language Learning Development.....	06
1.2.1 The Behavioristic Era.....	07
1.2.2 The Communicative Era.....	07
1.2.3 The Interactive Era.....	08
2. Definition of Online Learning.....	09
3. Types of Online Learning .....	10
3.1 Synchronous Learning.....	10
3.2 Asynchronous Learning.....	11
4. Benefits of Online Learning.....	11
5. Challenges of Online Learning.....	13

### Section Two: Designing an Online Learning Environment

2.1 Developing Online Courses.....	15
2.1.1 Key Elements of Online Courses.....	16
2.1.2 Tools Used in Online Learning .....	17
2.1.2.1 Google Classroom .....	17
2.1.2.2 Zoom.....	18
2.1.2.3 Social Media.....	18
2.2 Teachers' and Students' Roles in the Online Learning Environment.....	19
2.2.1 Teachers' Roles.....	19

2.2.2	Students' Roles.....	21
2.3	Online Learning Assessment.....	22
2.3.1	Definition of Online Learning Assessment.....	22
2.3.2	Online Learning Assessment strategies.....	23
2.3.2.1	Formative Assessment.....	23
2.3.2.2	Summative Assessment.....	24
2.3.3	Online Learning Assessment Format.....	24
2.3.3.1	Rubrics .....	25
2.3.3.2	Online Quizzes.....	26
2.3.3.3	Essays.....	27
2.3.4	Advantages of Online Learning Assessment.....	27
2.3.5	Disadvantages of Online Learning Assessment.....	29
Conclusion .....		30
 <b>Chapter Two: Research Methodology, Data Analysis, and Discussion of the Results</b>		
Introduction.....		32
2.1	Population and Sampling.....	32
2.2	Description of the Questionnaire .....	32
2.3	Analysis of the Students Questionnaire .....	33
2.4	Discussion of the Results.....	48
2.5	Pedagogical Recommendations.....	50
2.6	Limitations of the Study.....	50

Conclusion.....	51
General Conclusion.....	52
References.....	54
Appendix	
Résumé	
ملخص	



## **General Introduction**

1. Background of the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Aims of the Study
4. Research Questions
5. Hypothesis
6. Research Tools
7. Structure of the Study



## **General Introduction**

### **1. Background of the Study**

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected many aspects in life including the educational system. Educational institutions were closed and there was a shift towards online learning. Researchers have provided several definitions of online learning such as Bates (2005) who stated that "online learning means using specifically the internet and the web"(p. 8). In the midst of March 2020, both teaching and learning processes have changed from offline to online classroom, which exposed everyone to a whole new world of online learning and remote instruction. Therefore, online education was applied as a solution to the Corona virus crisis in most of the academic officials. In addition to that, W & Hwang(2010) claimed that, "online classrooms have gained a lot of importance in educational system based on their financial, social, ideological, and pedagogical aspects in comparison to the traditional, physical classroom environments"(p.10).However, the unexpected closure of the educational institutions has caused many difficulties for both instructors and students. In this regard, Rehman (2020) declared that "the acquisition of this new technology from students to teachers has faced several challenges"(p. 1). Similarly, Vanhorn et al (2008) noted that "While online courses are not new, the challenges they create for communication educators remain significant"(p. 29).

In this regard, a number of studies focusing on online learning have been conducted in different countries to assess the students' perceptions towards the use of this learning method during Covid-19 pandemic. Ariyanti (2020) conducted an interview to 08 students at the Department of English of University (Widya Gama Mahakam Smarinda) to investigate the challenges that EFL students faced in learning English at home during Covid-19 outbreak. The study showed that students faced three major challenges including internet connection, healthy reason, and the use of certain online applications. Nambiar

(2020) concluded that quality and timely interaction between students and teachers, availability of technical support, as well as structured online class modules and modifications to accommodate conduction of practical classes are three important areas to achieve a successful online learning class. Other studies were analyzed to investigate the students' attitudes towards the use of different online learning tools including Serhan (2020) who made a study to investigate the students' attitudes and perceptions towards the use of zoom to reword learning with its effectiveness on their learning and engagement in comparison to face to face learning. The findings of this study demonstrated that students had a negative attitude towards the use of zoom which affected negatively their motivation to learn while flexibility was the main advantage mentioned by students.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

The use of online instruction at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University in general and the department of English in particular has been implemented as a result of the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic. According to informal discussions with the students of the department of English, it has been revealed that EFL learners have experienced difficulties and challenges during their learning process. In fact, the shift to online learning was unexpected and the students have not been prepared to this new way of learning.

## **3. Aims of the Study**

The major aim of this study is to pave the way for a better implementation of the online learning process by raising the awareness of using technologies as well as preparing both the teachers and students to this new way of learning. First, it aims at investigating the attitudes towards the use of online learning among undergraduate EFL learners at Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia University. Second, it seeks to explore the challenges and difficulties encountered by EFL learners during their online learning process.

#### **4. Research Questions**

The current study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. What are EFL learners' attitudes towards online learning during COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What are the challenges and obstacles EFL learners encounter during their online learning process?

#### **5. Research Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis has been suggested for this study:

Learners who are used to the use of online learning and have technology skills develop positive attitudes towards online learning.

#### **6. Research Tools**

One data instrument has been used to reach the aims of this study. In other words, a questionnaire was submitted online to all EFL undergraduate learners ( first, second, and third year)at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, but only 85 learners answered the questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire was to know about the challenges and perceptions towards online learning.

#### **7. Structure of the Study**

The present study consists of two chapters. The first chapter is a theoretical one which is divided into two sections: the first section deals with online learning definitions, types, and challenges. The second section, however; discusses the key elements of designing a successful online learning course as well as highlighting the tools used in online learning. The section ends with the online learning assessment techniques used in online learning environments. The second chapter is a practical one. It provides a

description of the research tool, the population, and the sampling used in this study. Moreover, this chapter analyses and discusses the results obtained from the questionnaire. The chapter ends with some pedagogical recommendations.

## **Chapter One: Online Learning Process**

Introduction

### **Section One: An Overview of Online Learning Process**

1. The Use of Technologies in the Field of Education
  - 1.1 Definition of Computer Assisted Language Learning
  - 1.2 Computer Assisted Language Learning Development
    - 1.2.1 The Behavioristic Era
    - 1.2.2 The Communicative Era
    - 1.2.3 The Interactive Era
2. Definition of Online Learning
3. Types of Online Learning
  - 3.3 Synchronous Learning
  - 3.4 Asynchronous Learning
4. Benefits of Online Learning
5. Challenges of Online Learning

### **Section Two: Designing an Online Learning Environment**

- 2.4 Developing Online Courses
  - 2.4.1 Key Elements of Online Courses
  - 2.4.2 Tools Used in Online Learning
    - 2.4.2.1 Google Classroom
    - 2.4.2.2 Zoom
    - 2.4.2.3 Social Media
- 2.5 Teachers' and Students' Roles in the Online Learning Environment
  - 2.5.1 Teachers' Roles

## 2.5.2 Students' Roles

## 2.6 Online Learning Assessment

### 2.6.1 Definition of Online Learning Assessment

### 2.6.2 Online Learning Assessment strategies

#### 2.6.2.1 Formative Assessment

#### 2.6.2.2 Summative Assessment

### 2.6.3 Online Learning Assessment Techniques

#### 2.6.3.1 Online Quizzes

#### 2.6.3.2 Essays

#### 2.6.3.3 Rubrics

### 2.6.4 Advantages of Online Learning Assessment

### 2.6.5 Disadvantages of Online Learning Assessment

## Conclusion

## **Chapter One: Online Learning Process**

### **Introduction**

This chapter is an overview about the importance of implementing online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. The chapter is divided into two sections. On the one hand, the first section discusses several definitions of online learning brought by different researchers along with its types. In addition to that, it highlights the different benefits of this method of learning with the common challenges that EFL students faced during their learning process. On the other hand, the second section is concerned with designing an online learning environment. It starts with the key elements of an online course. Then it introduces the most useful technological tools implemented in online learning. After that, it presents both students' and teachers' roles in an online learning environment. The section ends up with discussing online learning assessment, reviewing its strategies, advantages and disadvantages.

### **Section One: An Overview of Online Learning Process**

#### **6. The Use of Technologies in the Field of Education**

Media, multimedia, information technology (IT), interactive and information technologies (IIT), information and communication technologies (ICT), advanced learning technologies (ALT) are all used when dealing with technology education in addition to interactive devices and internet access. Bates (2005) declared that there are five main media which are direct human contact, video, audio, text, and digital multimedia. So, in education technology is used to deliver the knowledge. At the beginning of the 19 century, a new way of teaching and learning a foreign language has been emerged as an alternative to face to face learning such as; correspondence courses, supplemented in some cases almost from the beginning by audio recordings (Nedjah, 2010).

## **1.1 Definition of Computer Assisted Language Learning**

CALL is a category of CAL (Computer Aided Learning) which has a relation with language teaching. Computers have been used for language teaching and learning since 1960. However, the acronym CALL( Computer Assisted Language Learning) was coined for the first time in 1983 in Toronto, Canada. According to Nedjah (2010)," CALL is an approach to language teaching and learning in which computer technology is used as an aid to the presentation, reinforcement and assessment of material to be learned, usually including a substantial interactive element"(p 66). Beatty (2010) defined CALL as any process in which a learner uses a computer to improve his or her language. According to Levy(1997), CALL refers to searching for applications of the computer and studying them in language teaching and learning. This means that CALL is variety of activities connected with technology and language learning. It includes a broad range of information communications technology applications as well as approaches to teaching and learning foreign languages as internet, software and applications to facilitate the teaching and learning process (Brett and Gonzalez, 2009).

## **1.2 Computer Assisted Language Learning Development**

The history of CALL can be divided into three eras: the behaviouristic era, the communicative era, and interactive era. Through all these eras, the development of technology in the field of language teaching and learning started from mainframe computers to personal ones, and then net-based computers.

### **1.2.1 The Behaviouristic Era**

Behaviouristic CALL or Structural CALL was introduced in 1960s and 1970s (Al-Kahtani, 2001). There was an impact between the use of technology and behaviouristic learning as well as structural linguistics, the focus was on the language itself (vocabulary and grammar). At that time, the role of the computer consisted in providing learners with grammar and vocabulary exercises. PLATO ( Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations) and TICCIT( Time-shared, Interactive, Computer Controlled Information Television) projects were used in American universities in this era. The forms aimed to introduce the computer to education. This project utilized the mainframes as engines for learning environments while the second TICCIT used the minicomputers. TICCIT is thought to be the first computer system that integrated text, audio and video multimedia, but with remarkable difficulties in usage (Le Baron-Earle,2013, p.51). Some disadvantages were noticed within this phase as the lack of embodiment or contextualising the language learnt, the absence of the teacher, together with a failure in fulfilling learners' needs including speaking and listening(Jordan et.al,2008 p.228).

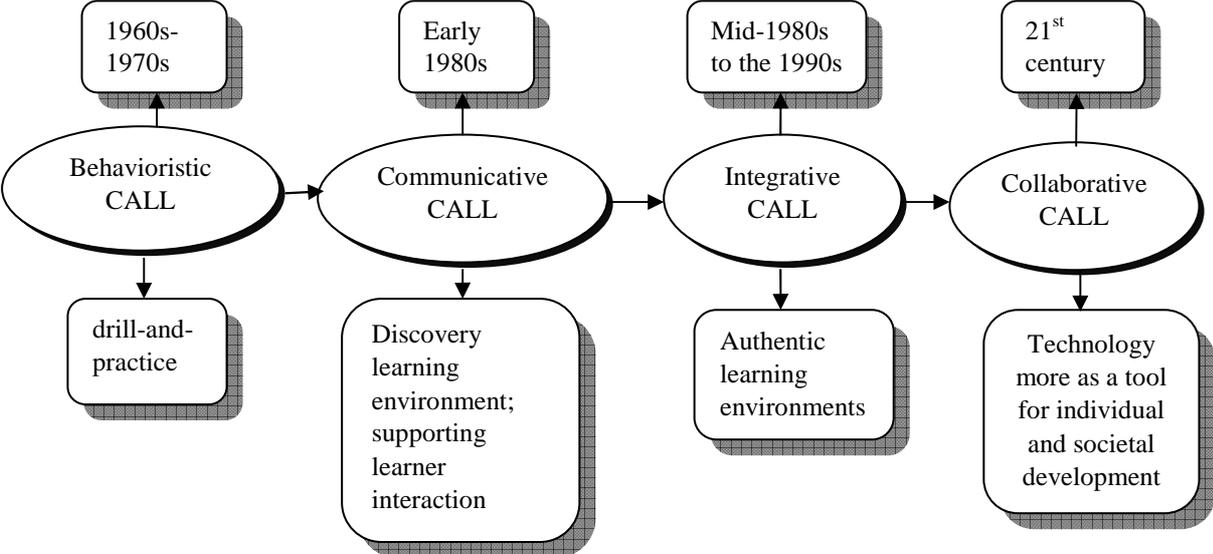
### **1.2.2 The Communicative Era**

In the 1970s and 1980s, mainframe computers were replaced by personal computers. The focus was on developing the communicative competence and the four skills. The guiding principles of teaching the target language was through interaction between the computer and the user, and computer was used as a medium for interaction. It didn't replace the teachers, but it assisted their work. At that period, three main projects were highlighted: The Athema Language Learning Project (ALLP), the Computer Assisted Multimedia Interactive Language Learning Environment (CAMILLE) Project , and the Minitel project. All these programs aimed to facilitate the process of learning on personal

computers, on the one hand, and to provide authentic materials, real life situations and characters on the other hand. However, the learning contexts and characters, were not authentic; they were artificial. So, in this phase CALL was beneficial on the linguistic level but not on the intercultural one as educationlists looked for actual authentic learning contexts rather than artificial communicative learning situations (Le Baron-Earle, 2013).

**1.2.3 The Interactive Era**

This era started in 1990s as a result of the emergence of the Internet. It emphasized the learning in an authentic social context. The later was reflected in Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) in which communication takes place between learners and teachers with the help of computers and the Internet (Le Baron-Earle, 2013). The International E-mail Tandem Network and the Cultra Project exemplify the learning in that era, which was characterized by the use of telecollaborative projects ( through the use of Internet communication tools) in language learning and teaching. Telecollaborative learning became one of the main pillars of CALL (O’ Dowd, 2011). The bellow figure represents the evolution of CALL introduces by Wang and Kaplan in 2004.



**Figure1:** Evolution of CALL (Wang & Kaplan (2004) (as cited in Nedjah, 2010, p. 67)

## **2. Definition of Online Learning**

Online learning has changed dramatically since the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic which has affected the educational sector. Online learning can be defined as the process of learning and teaching. It enables learners to conduct their learning fully or partly over the internet in order to present educational content as well as to engage learners in a virtual environment in which they can interact and communicate with them in order to master skills, learn languages and benefit from different cultural exchanges. The term online learning has various definitions according to different researchers. According to Shank & Sitze (2004), "Online learning involves the use of network technologies (such as the internet and business networks) for delivering, supporting, and assessing formal and informal instruction" (p. 2). This process of learning happens in various ways, as Shank & Sitze (2004) stated, "via online resources and materials, electronic libraries, learning materials and courses, real time and non-real-time discussions, chats, e-mail, conferencing, and knowledge sharing applications"(p. 2).

Online learning is also defined as learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices with internet access. In this environment, students can be anywhere independent to learn and interact with instructors and other students (Singh and Thurman, 2019). Online education is a form of distance education using computers and internet as the delivery mechanism. Online learning refers to any use of electronic technology and media to involve, support and enhance learning and teaching. Online learning provides students with easier and more effective access to a wider range and greater quantity of information.

Distance education, e-learning and blended learning are some terms which are usually used interchangeably with online learning. First, distance education is defined by

Bielefield & Cheesman(1997) as" teaching through the use of telecommunications technologies to transmit and receive various materials through voice, video and data"(p. 141). Second, distance education was defined by Jarvenpaa(1995) as transmitting a course from one place to another. According to Owston (2018), blended learning is "a mixing of online activities with face-to-face classes"(p. 66). Finally, blended learning is a learning modality that combines face-to-face training with online learning. In other words, it is a combination of information and communication technologies with face-to-face instruction.

### **3. Types of Online Learning**

Online learning has been divided differently according to different researchers. Two main types were highlighted, synchronous and asynchronous learning. Additionally, Rasmitadila et al (2020) claimed that "Online learning emphasizes Internet-based courses offered synchronously and asynchronously" (p. 91). Also, Huhtanen (2019) declared that students can either be required to participate at certain times or at a time of their choosing. In other words, online learning can be classified according to the person involved (collaborative and independent) and the communication type (synchronous and asynchronous).

#### **3.1 Synchronous Learning**

A combination of many characteristics is suggested by different researchers to characterize synchronous learning. Rahman (2020) stated that "The synchronous type requires a dynamic real-time communication between instructors and students or between the students and their peers through a live chat, streamed video, or a video conferencing"(p. 181). In other words, live chat and such communicating means are needed in synchronous learning. Negash.et al (2008) agreed that "incorporating synchronous learning demands the control of schedule, time, people, class size, video and

audio equipment and place" (p. 85). So, it is possible to reach a large number of students at any time and in any place.

### **3.2 Asynchronous Learning**

Asynchronous online learning is based on the constructivist theory which emphasizes peer-to-peer interactions. In other words, an asynchronous e-learning network occurs if there is a combination between learners' network and electronic network. Shahabadi & Uplane (2015) stated that asynchronous online learning is defined differently due to some components, yet these components are known by some characteristics. Moreover, Rahman (2020) declared that "Asynchronous communication is depicted by a one-way and non-interactive real time communication in which the instructors provide reading material, playable lecture videos, assigned tasks, and assessment in a manageable time frame"(p. 181). Alavi.et al (2005) pointed out that asynchronous learning networks refer to people networks for anytime and anywhere learning. Also, Negash.et al (2008) stated that "Online asynchronous training mediums range from Web pages, file download, e-mail, e-mail list, newsgroup, forum, chat, response pad, whiteboard and to screen sharing" (pp. 84-85). Asynchronous learning is concerned with learners' network and electronic network.

### **4. Benefits of Online Learning**

In the field of education, learning can occur either online or offline. The use of online learning during COVID-19 pandemic has become wider due to the exceptional and unexpected circumstances that affected all the educational institutions. In general, online education has many advantages. Also, the students' independent interaction with the printed course contents will be raised because of the communication capability of the internet (student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction and student-content

interaction). Shank & Sitze (2004,pp. 2-3) suggested the four following main reasons to use online learning:

#### **4.1 The Improvement of Access and Flexibility**

According to Shank & Sitze (2004), "people can log in at any computer terminal, at home or at work, at any time of day or night, to complete a lesson or refer to learning materials" (p. 2). Also, Simamora (2020) claimed that "Online offerings are able to reach more students at any place and at any time"(p. 90). So, the student can have the lesson wherever he/she is or whenever he/she wants.

#### **4.2 Faster Delivery and Cost Savings**

Financially, online learning is better than face-to-face classes. It is more saving for many parents and students. Shank & Sitze (2004) declared that online learning is faster and cheaper, students prefer to learn from their homes saving time and money rather than spending hours sitting in classrooms. In other words, students can get their materials almost immediately and in a cheaper way.

#### **4.3 Improving Control and Standardization**

Online learning improves both control and standardization as Shank & Sitze (2004) claimed that there are differences in individual trainers' knowledge and skills and they are getting a different quality of training. This type of learning presents a common and consistent message to a great number of students without taking into consideration their location.

#### **4.4 Enhancing Communication and Collaboration**

Students can interact and communicate with each other from their homes using technological tools such as social media applications as Shank & Sitze (2004) declared

"Certain software tools allow learners to communicate with each other, collaborate on projects, and share documents without the need for travel" (p. 3). During COVID-19 pandemic, most students use different platforms and applications such as Zoom, Moodle and e-mails and other technologies to communicate and connect with each other.

## **5. Challenges of Online Learning**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of teachers and students have been affected by the unexpected change in the educational systems and many online learning techniques such as Zoom, Google classroom and other e-learning platforms were presented and largely used to fulfill the educational goals. The shift to the digital world led to the appearance of various challenges in the learning environment including the way of evaluation and grading. Furthermore, teachers don't feel as they belong to a faculty or an institution since they teach from their homes; and since students study from their homes too using the same techniques and strategies make them feel as they are studying the same unit even though they change the unit which is confusing for them and thus leads to low enrollment. Courses challenges, time management and workload challenges, technology challenges, student challenges, communication challenges, support challenges, and teacher motivation challenges are other challenges to be mentioned by (Shannon .et al, 2008. pp. 31-33).

### **5.1 Course Challenges**

Among the main challenges encountered when dealing with online learning challenges are those related to the course itself. According to Vanhorn (2008), instructors faced a difficulty in transforming a face to face course to an online course. Also, it is impossible for them to apply group activities and role plays in online classes mentioning that the course is learner- centered . Another problem was stated by some instructors which is about the difficulty of making the online course interesting, and creative as it should be in

physical classes, the time was limited and they just pass the course. In addition to that, some specific courses such as writing and public speaking should not be taught online because students become disengaged and instructors must work hard to keep them involved. Yet, their improvement in the online course both in content and in writing ability is dramatic.

## **5.2 Time Management and Workload Challenges**

Many instructors are not experienced in the use of technology and they face many difficulties including responding to e-mails. Comparing to the time instructors spend on monitoring discussion boards and communication, it is more than they do in teaching; they spend more time in front of the computer. Additionally, students expected their instructors to be online at any time which mean most of work load issues are directed to the instructor (Vanhorn, 2008).

## **5.3 Technology Challenges**

Both teachers and students suffered from technological problems including students' technical skills, course management software, training, accessibility and software issues. In addition to that, Lestyanawati & Widyanoro (2020) stated that the first problem encountered by most teachers is the disability to access technology, although the majority of them had a great ability to take control of the technology.

## **5.4 Student Challenges**

Among the challenges students encountered are the lack of motivation in participating in the online course. Also, retention is another problem students suffer from; they often forget due dates and do not consult assignment specification properly. The disengagement rate is also high, and students drop out more easily than in traditional classes(Vanhorn et

al,2008). According to Simamora (2020),"Some students also complained that online lectures caused anxiety and were not focused while studying"(p. 94). Also, other students lack Interest to learn and they do not attend the classes; in other words, laziness spread among them.

### **5.5 Communication Challenges**

Some students are not good in writing and typing which means they will face a difficulty in doing their assignments and replying to their instructors. As the instructors also are supposed to reply and provide feedback to students each one individually, unlikely in physical classes; including the problem of names. In other words, instructors must remember the students' names to be able to communicate with them (Vanhorn et al, 2008). So, students need to master their communication skills to avoid these difficulties in the learning process.

### **5.6 Support and Teacher Motivation Challenges**

Instructors faced a difficulty with their superiors, and sometimes administration refused to provide adequate funding as well as the online teaching work is sometimes non-understood and unconvinced for other colleagues. Teachers were obliged to teach online if they want to remain teaching at an institution or they will lose their jobs (Vanhorn, 2008). They were under pressure which makes them unmotivated.

## **Section Two: Designing an Online Learning Course**

### **2.1 Developing Online Courses**

Online learning has known a wide use in the last years. Last year, online courses were chosen as a solution by the institutions to carry on learning during the lockdown. Classroom learning differs from online courses in various ways including course design,

management and assessment and other factors that should be taken into consideration when creating a course. Instructors had to create their virtual classrooms by creating a supportive environment to make students feel comfortable. Also, a successful online realm should be opened, sensitive and flexible.

According to MacDonald & al (2009), developing a traditional or an online course is not an easy task as it takes time in terms of research, designed and developed. Adrian(2002) declared that course development and implementation process go through three steps. The first step is determining the course objectives and also the principle objectives concerning course design. The second step is designing the course structure which depends primarily upon an adequate incorporation of synchronous and asynchronous teaching. The last step is transferring the quality philosophy to the classroom. In terms of coaching or training, teaching and mentoring, language learning and course design are four essential elements of support for learning (as cited in Nedjah, 2010,p. 72). Additionally, "the designed course should mirror the pedagogical orientations and philosophies of the faculty" ( Nedjah, 2010, p. 72). Online learning is an educational task which facilitates teaching and learning. In this regard, Schuemer (1993) declared his worries concerning highly structured learning packages which may affect the students' independence.

### **2.1.1 Key Elements of Online Courses**

Building a successful online learning environment or creating an online course is related to the key elements that should be included. According to Draves (2004), the essential elements of an online course are:

- 1- Opportunity for the students to learn individually, at any time and in a faster way.
- 2- Students' ability to set their pace for learning.

- 3- Personal interaction with greater frequency occurs with both the teacher and other students.
- 4- Online learning gives more access to several and various topics (subjects).
- 5- Classroom participants and interaction with different students from all over the world is a kind of culture exchange between individuals.
- 6- Online courses are considered less expensive and more accessible.
- 7- More information resources can be found online.
- 8- Online classes offer the opportunity to create virtual communities.

### **2.1.2 Tools Used in Online Learning**

Online Management Learning Systems (OMLS) or Course Management Systems (CMS) refer to the educational platforms that facilitate the language learning process. During Covid-19 Pandemic, Ghounane (2020) stated that "Many companies competed to create applications and software both for Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)"(p.29). During COVID-19 crisis, the light was shed on the most useful applications and software which serve as a refuge for many institutions and universities; including Google Classroom, Zoom, Social Media or Social Networks (SNS) and other alternatives for virtual learning.

#### **2.1.2.1 Google Classroom**

Google Classroom (GC) is a self-learning application. It has a great deal in creating an interaction between the teacher and the students. Some researchers such as Halverson, et al(2017) highlighted that GC is better than other platforms since it promotes face-to face interaction (as cited in Ghounane, 2020, p. 29). This online learning platform provides flexibility and can be reached out at any place and at any time. Some researchers claimed that teachers could benefit more than the students from the use of GC. Kasula (2016) stated

that GC permits teachers "to display class objectives, activities, and assignments in an orderly, focused, a productive and transparent manner for students, teachers, and administrators"(p. 11).

### **2.1.2.2 Zoom**

Zoom technology is one of the new original software-based conference room. According to Guzacheva (2020) " Zoom is a cloud based service which offers meetings and webinars and provides content sharing and video conferencing capability"(p.458).Moreover, Ghounane (2020) reported that " Zoom is a new and creative way to create virtual classrooms, it can be useful in the EFL classroom through designing activities that suit the students' needs for virtual learning"(p. 30). This means that zoom is an online distance learning tool used by many teachers for its beneficial features. Guzacheva (2020) claimed that "Zoom is the leader in modern enterprise video communications, with an easy, reliable cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, collaboration, chat, and webinars across mobile devices, desktops, telephones and room systems" (p. 458). This audio visual technology has the capability of hosting 100 participants at a time, enhances positive learning outcomes for diverse groups, as well as encourages pair work or group work.

### **2.1.2.3 Social Media**

Many studies show that the use of technology and social media for educational purposes has become an integral issue in today's students' and teachers' daily lives. "many scholars make a difference between social networks, social media, and social networking sites"(Ghounane, 2020, p. 24). The most useful social networks tools at universities and institutions are: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIN, Whats App and Instagram. They offer many opportunities; they can promote communication between instructors, teachers, and

students. According to Nadia Ghounane "SNS can help learners to use both synchronous and asynchronous learning strategies" which can increase the students' motivation.

In Algeria, teachers' perceptions toward Facebook shows that they do not widely use it just because they think it is not a formal setting. Hence, Facebook is still one of the useful applications by both institutions and educators to announce or post lectures. YouTube is another platform which is effective in language teaching and learning. It is a source of motivation. "Some studies agreed that YouTube helps EFL students to study spoken English in both formal and informal settings by exposing the learners to the language and the phonological level" (Ghasemi, 2011; Derewianka, 2008 in Alwehaibi, 2015).(as cited in Ghounane, 2020, p. 28). To sum up, most technology tools have become a part in the learning and teaching processes during Covid-19 pandemic.

## **2.2 Teachers' and Students' Roles in the Online Learning Course**

The use of Information Communication Technology (ICT), Interactive Information Technology (IIT), and Interactive Technology (IT) has a great contribution in changing the structure of the educational organizations. Nedjah (2010) noticed that there was a radical change of teachers' and students' roles along with a shift toward learner-centred paradigm. Both instructors and learners play crucial roles in the online class. They are both a part of establishing a learning community.

### **2.2.1 Teachers' Roles**

In any learning environment, the teacher plays an important role to make his/her course successful. Nedjah (2010) stated that "The role of teachers has changed and continues to change from being an instructor to becoming a constructor, facilitator, coach, and creator of learning environments"(p. 74). Teachers' role in an online environment has continued to change according to their level of training, starting from being an instructor who directs

and encourages learners to use internet technology, to being a coach who facilitates the process of learning, and finally, a creator of the learning environments.

The instructor should be knowledgeable concerning technology use in order to teach and develop courses that make use of interactive conferencing videos. In this regard, Palloff and Pratt (2007) argued that "The technical function depends on the instructor first becoming comfortable and proficient with the technology used and then being able to transfer that level of comfort to the learners"(p. 108). The teacher can have different roles in the online learning process. The role of a tutor is widely recognized. He facilitates the learning process and activities, solves students' problems, and updates the contents of the online courses. His role involves many other roles, including an educational facilitator.

In this regard Palloff (2007) claimed that "in the online environment, the role of the instructor becomes that of an educational facilitator. As a facilitator, the instructor provides gentle guidance and a framework as a "container" for the course, thus allowing students to explore the course material, as well as related materials, without restriction (p. 110)". This researcher also reported that "as facilitators, teachers provide rich learning environments, experiences, and activities; they create opportunities for students to work collaboratively, to solve problems, do authentic tasks, and share knowledge and responsibility"(p. 110). In other words, the facilitator creates a rich learning environment with opportunities for students to collaborate and be responsible for sharing knowledge, course material, and doing their tasks. A tutor in the online environment is also an administrator. Palloff (2007) pointed out that "the instructor in an online course is also the course administrator, who posts a syllabus for the course, including assignments and some initial guidelines for the group to discuss and adopt or adapt. The instructor then gently facilitates the flow of the course and evaluates the outcomes"(p. 115). Also the teacher can be a developer who is

responsible for developing learning materials, especially in electronic format, and providing input to professional developers.

### **2.2.2 Students' Roles**

Online learning represents the learning experience that serves students who are unable to attend face to face classrooms which means that students must be responsible for their own learning to direct their online learning environment, and thus through constructing knowledge rather than consuming it. Therefore, students still need the direction and guidance of their teacher. In this regard, Loughlin and Oliver stated that (2000) "if students are studying online for the first time, the need for support, conversation and direction may be great at the initial stages of the course"(p. 68). In other words, they should become self-reliant and active searchers for more relevant information concerning the courses. The role of a self-reliant student is the corollary to the less directed role of teachers and this will improve the level of the students. Furthermore, students have to be responsible for their learning as well as confident in their abilities to do well in online courses. Loughlin and Oliver (2000) reported that "learners should have control over their own learning goals, the topic they choose to research and the pace and sequence in which they assess the resources"(p. 68). Also students have to develop their time management skills. To illustrate, they have to set their priorities and give importance to some works over other works. Nedjah (2010) stated that "Students are responsible for managing their learning process (the time and the place to learn, the number of courses undertaken, the rest time, the frequency of revision and practice sessions)"(p. 76). In brief, organizing and planning their best time for learning in front of the computer.

## **2.3 Online Learning Assessment**

Online learning assessment is a crucial component of the online educational process. The main goal of online assessment is not different from the major aim of traditional assessments. For students, this may include achieving the learning outcomes, getting a grade, or receiving a feedback and encouragement.

### **2.3.1 Definition of Online Learning Assessment**

Assessment has several definitions according to different researchers among them: Rocco (2007) who defined assessment in his book about teaching strategies in the online environment as "the ability to judge the learning of students in process; that is, it allows the online instructor to see how learners are responding during a lesson and adjust accordingly"(p. 76). In addition and according to Audet (2011), "Assessment is central to learning and teaching. What is assessed defines what is taught and how it is learnt. The process of assessment, in turn, shapes institutional practice and affects a learner's view of the value of engaging in learning"(p. 6). Moreover, Joshi et al (2020) mentioned that assessment is recognized from the most important and powerful elements of an educational experience, and it also provides observable evidence of learning and determines student progress and understanding of the curriculum. In addition assessment also forms the basis for student independence and aids in development of the necessary skills for autonomous and self-directed learning (p. 79). Features in available online assessments include multiple choice, collaborative projects, online debates, team case studies and self assessment. Feedback is either instantly available or is given later by the course administrator"(p. 7).

To conclude, online learning assessment is the process by the use of empirical data to assess students' knowledge, skills and attitudes to improve their learning.

### **2.3.2 Online Learning Assessment Strategies**

Assessment is often used as a synonym for evaluation. They are used interchangeably, in which assessment is referred to as a formative assessment while evaluation is considered as a summative assessment. In this regard, Popham (2011) defined assessment strategies as the process which involves decisions about when to test and what to test, selection or construction of suitable assessment procedures, judgments about whether assessment-elicited evidence should lead to adjustments, and choices about the nature of any adjustments. Additionally, when selecting online assessment strategies, some key factors should be taken into consideration. In this context Ragan (1999) reported that " Online assessment strategies should be employed as integral parts of the learning experience - enabling learners to assess their progress, to identify areas for review, and to re-establish immediate learning or lesson goals"(as cited in Şanlı, 2003, p. 28). In other words, online assessment strategies should accommodate the special characteristics, situations and needs of the distance learners.

#### **2.3.2.1 Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment is a kind of assessment that is used to provide students with convenient feedback. It does not include a score and is used to improve students' motivation. Additionally, it provides easy feedback for material designers. It takes place while the course is in process, which implies that it occurs throughout the learning sequence. In this regard Koç et al (2015) stated that formative assessment can be thought of as a process that happens throughout the learning sequence(p. 4). Moreover, Biggs (1999) argued that for formative assessment, students must feel free to reveal their ignorance and their errors in their thinking, and if the results are to be used for grading, they will be highly motivated to conceal possible weaknesses. To sum up, information on

students' accomplishments, how well they are doing, what they need to improve on, and how well the course is fulfilling their needs is provided in formative.

### **2.3.2.2 Summative Assessment**

This is a graded evaluation. It provides a result that may be used to evaluate the results and success of the students. Koç et al (2015) stated that "summative assessment happens at the end of a learning sequence and typically consists of culminating projects or standardized tests"(p. 4). This kind of assessment can be done at the end of a course, sequence, or unit of teaching. It contains standardized tests that provide information about the students' overall effectiveness of the course to know how pupils accomplished their learning objectives and to summarize what they grasped. Additionally, Westhuizen (2016) claimed that "summative assessments, which assess "learning," fail to provide educators with timely information on how to adapt their teaching or what content to re-teach"(p. 17). Furthermore Rocco (2007) pointed out that "evaluation will refer to a more formal mode of assessment. Sometimes referred to as summative assessment, this is the basis for judging the skills or knowledge of the students as well as the effectiveness of a unit or activity" (p. 75). In summary, summative assessment is made at the completion of a program, aims in providing information on whole of activity.

### **2.3.3 Online Learning Assessment Format**

The use of online assessment in the academic online environment should not be seen as a purely incremental activity; rather, its implementation should be supported by an academic rationale and show how it contributes to the curriculum with techniques that can help students study more effectively. There are several online techniques of assessment available for online instructors to use in order to measure different components and assist

them in improving the online learning and teaching processes. To assess their learners online, teachers can use rubrics as a tool to create different assessment types.

### **2.3.3.1 Rubrics**

Rubrics are considered as useful online assessment learning tools as well as guidelines for effective online teaching and learning. In this regard, Boston (2002) defined rubrics as "guides that spell out the criteria for evaluating a task or performance and define levels of quality"(as cited in Rocco, 2007, p. 80). Instructors use rubrics to provide feedback about students' assignments and work. Moreover, individual and group assessment provide multiple learning benefits for learners when using rubrics like electronic applications and online marking tools to offer comments, create and apply rubrics. In this sense, Kearns (2012) claimed that self-assessments can be employed to deliver useful, personalized feedback while not adversely affecting the instructor's workload. Also, peer assessment can accomplish this as well. One approach to peer assessment is to have students present portions of a field assignment for critique by one or two peers who have been equipped with a rubric to guide their review (p. 204). In other words, online rubric development tools can be used to include specific learning objectives for an activity or assignment, which are essential in formative assessments. They enable students to meet grade criteria and understand learning objectives. Such as the use of learning software Moodle and Zoom, which allow online instructors to assess students quickly and easily. These learning management applications can provide many ways to imply learning content, material discussion tools that can be used to assess whether or not learning is taking place, creating and delivering exams and quizzes, and offering assignments in the application to provide instructors with a measurement of students' learning with an easy way to provide feedback to learners.

### **2.3.3.2 Online Quizzes**

Online quizzes are considered as a part of self-evaluation which enhance students' self-development and assess their knowledge about the course content. Online quizzes can take one of these forms:

#### **Multiple-choice Tests**

In an online assessment environment, multiple-choice tests are a fundamental technique in online assessment by which the respondents are provided with a multiple answer. Westhuizen (2016) pointed out that "a great advantage of online multiple-choice tests is that they are easy to administer. In addition, item analysis enables the test-setter to eliminate poorly written items"(p. 9). In other words, multiple choice tests can help respondents to know how they should answer. However, they are time-consuming to develop.

#### **True False Items**

True false items can be used online to evaluate and record responses as either true or false. In this regard, Nimmer (2010) noted that multiple true-false format of tests is an accurate form of assessment to the extent that learners knowledge can be obtained from their responses must be evaluated rather than selecting the single best response.

#### **Short Answer Questions**

Short answer questions are one of the online assessment tasks. They can be used in different forms that require a range of responses from few words to a paragraph; for instance, fill in the blanks, match or label items, enter a text, order a text. Codone (2011) mentioned that short answer question offers a big chance to measure students' composition of facts, concepts, and attitudes in a paragraph or less. In all, short answer questions reveal

learners' ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesise and give them opportunities to elucidate their knowledge.

### **2.3.3.3 Essays**

Essays are another technique used in online assessment to test how well students do understand a subject. Westhuizen (2016) argued that "essays are flexible and can assess higher-order learning skills. However, they are time-consuming for educators to score. If essays are submitted online, it may become easier to mark them using online rubrics, or by having an online marking scheme with prepared comments or other anticipated responses"(p. 10). To conclude, essays are among the best methods used to assess students for its validity in the online assessment.

### **2.3.4 Advantages of Online Learning Assessment**

The use of an online system for assessing and evaluating students during COVID-19 Pandemic shows many positive aspects and usefulness in facilitating the learning process, which makes the online learning environment as effective as learning in traditional classrooms. Online assessment offers many advantages in terms of enhancing both students' and teachers' online learning experiences.

The first point, online assessment is increasing communication skills and interactivity through collaborative work by the use of internet technologies and software applications which promote students' ability to control and manage their own education. This is measured via online learning assessments. They are constantly on the lookout for new ways to learn on their own. They set objectives and have a great level of initiative and higher flexibility due to the simple and quick way of using them. Assessments may often be done in less time than anticipated. Students are able to complete their tests in class or at

home, using their own electronic devices. In this sense, Williams et al (2006) list the following advantages of online assessment "time savings, flexibility, quantity and quality of written comments, timelier reporting, and overall cost savings"(p. 62).

In addition to that, online collaborative learning tools provide different levels of feedback for students in which they can see feedback and comments of their peers. Moreover, Travares, Chu, and Weng (2011) studies mentioned some advantages noted by students about online assessment they said if we use Google Sites as the collaborative platform, we read the writings from other classes and comment on our classmates' work in order to exchange views. If we write it on paper, we can just read a few pieces of writings. In addition to that the technology used in online exams is reliable. Shraim (2018) stated that "online examinations improve the reliability of scoring and the robustness of test results, supporting deeper analysis. They also provide immediate feedback, thus quickly correcting misconceptions" (p. 186). Also, online learning assessment provides the use of audio feedback that can be created in less time than written feedback, which makes students more connected with the teacher because it requires the use of the teacher's voice in synchronous learning to have a better understanding of its comments. Koç et al(2015) concluded that "The process of recording the audio feedback was easy and fun to do. Sometimes providing feedback on student work can be an arduous task, but recording the feedback was not difficult". As well as, Koç et al(2015) mentioned that "the ability to track, monitor, and document students' activities automatically; unlimited and self-paced access to course materials; and an increased emphasis on student thoughts and reflections"(p. 78). Furthermore, online exams are more effective in terms of effort, time and money spent, and they can lower stress and examination anxiety because they make learners feel more comfortable while doing online tests and exams.

### **2.3.5 Disadvantages of Online Learning Assessment**

Online assessment also has some disadvantages. Starting with cheating and plagiarism which are big challenges to deal with in online assessment tests and assignments, especially in summative assessment. Because students are not face to-face with teachers, it is difficult to control them during the assessment process. Rahayu & Wirza(2020) stated that "it is difficult to control or regulate sinful activities like cheating in the test for assessment, misled to piracy and plagiarism, deteriorate the role of instructor "(p. 394). Moreover, Pallof and Pratt mentioned that the use of tests and quizzes raises concern about the increased potential for cheating, particularly in the online environment, which does not allow instructors to easily monitor students taking tests. Therefore, instructors should give an extra attention to online assessment tests to prevent this problem from happening like monitoring students through video calls, and monitoring particular login ID. In this regard Pallof and Pratt (2009) pointed out that cheating on online exams has promoted the practice of using proctored exams. Generally, these are set up by asking students at a distance to find a proctored site or by asking groups assessing the online learner of students to come to campus to take the final exam (p. 41).

Moving to Technological Problems and hacks, several students lack technological skills when using their computers. Today, students are entering online classes with a minimal level of technical skills. Because of that, they should engage in the use of applications and cites that promote social networking and technical skills. From this point of view, Rahayu&Wirza (2020) reported that "they also found some obstacles during e-learning, such as the lack of technical skills, infrastructure and facilities, teachers' teaching strategy, and economic problems"(p. 394). In addition to that Joshi et al (2020) pointed out that "The biggest challenge in online assessments is safety from hackers and viruses. This can

be overcome by investing in good licensed anti-viral software and anti-hacking system"(p. 87). This means that online assessment sites should be safe from hackers and viruses through the use of anti-hacker systems and anti-virus software.

## **Conclusion**

In the online learning process, the use of technologies has an important role in achieving the learning objectives. During COVID-19 pandemic, online learning was the only solution to continue with the learning process. Hence, throughout this chapter some definitions of online learning were provided along with its types and its benefits and challenges. It also highlighted the key elements of a successful online course and its characteristics. Additionally, this chapter dealt with online learning assessment, its techniques, format and its advantages and disadvantages.

## **Chapter Two: Field Work**

### **Introduction**

2.1 Population and Sampling

2.2 Description of the Students' Questionnaire

2.3 Analysis of the Students Questionnaire

2.4 Discussion of the Results

2.5 Pedagogical Recommendations

2.6 Limitations of the Study

### **Conclusion**

## **Chapter Two: Field Work**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapter was devoted to the theoretical framework of the research. This chapter however, is concerned with the practical part of the study which aims at answering the research questions of the study. The chapter introduces, analyses the data and discusses the results.

### **2.1 Population and Sampling**

The population selected for this study is EFL undergraduate students (first, second, and third year) at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University. It consists of 779 students, but only 85 participated in answering the online questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire is to investigate the EFL learners' attitudes towards the use of online learning during COVID-19 pandemic as well as identifying the challenges and difficulties encountered by EFL students during their online learning process.

### **2.2 Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is one of the most useful tools for collecting data. It consists of a series of questions that enables the researcher to gather information concerning peoples' attitudes and perceptions, analysis and interpret the results obtained.

The questionnaire used in this study was made up of nineteen (19) questions divided into two sections. The first section aims at providing general information about the students. It consists of five (5) questions (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, and Q5). The second section; however, consists of fourteen (14) questions (Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, and Q14) which aims at investigating the EFL learners' attitudes towards the use of online

learning during COVID-19 pandemic as well as identifying some of the challenges and difficulties encountered by EFL students during their online learning process. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the questionnaire was submitted online on the official page of the department of English and also on different Facebook groups.

### 2.3 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

#### Section One: General Information

##### Question 1: Specify your level of instruction

- a- First Year
- b- Second Year
- c- Third Year

**Table 2.1:** *Level of Instruction of the Subjects*

Options	N	%
A	28	32,9
B	20	23,5
C	37	43,5
Total	85	100

The first question was addressed to learners to identify their level of instruction. The above table presents the participants' total number, which is 85 students at the University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia. It shows that the majority of students (43,5%) are studying in their third year, while (32,9%) of them are studying in their first year. The remaining percentage of students (23,5%) reported that they studied in their second year.

**Question 2: Did your teachers implement online learning before the COVID-19 pandemic?**

- a- Yes
- b- No

**Table 2.2:** *Teachers' Implementation of Online Learning before COVID-19 Pandemic*

Options	N	%
A	22	25,9
B	63	74,1
Total	85	100

The aim of the second question is to find out about the implementation of online learning before COVID-19 at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University. According to the results, (74,1%) of the students reported that their teachers had not been using online learning before the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Question 3: Have you been prepared to the use of online learning?**

- a- Yes
- b- No

If yes, explain how ? .....

**Table 2.3:** *Student's Preparation to the Use of Online Learning*

Options	N	%
---------	---	---

A	22	25,9
B	63	74,1
Total	85	100

The aim of this question is to know how well students have been prepared to the use of online learning. The table 2.3 displays that the majority of the participants (74,1%) have not been prepared for the use of online learning; however, the minority of them (25,9%) reported that they have been prepared for this new method of learning. Regarding the second part of the question, some students said that they relied on YouTube channels to look for information while others declared sharing others' experiences.

**Question 4: Which impact does online learning have on your learning experience?**

a- Positive

b- Negative

Justify your answer.....

**Table 2.4:** *Online Learning Impact on the Student's Learning Experience*

Options	N	%
A	32	37,6
B	53	62,4
Total	85	100

The results obtained in the above table show that online learning had a negative impact on the majority of students (62.4%). They justify their choice by a lack of motivation, and the lack of teachers/learners interaction as well as technical problems and the bad learning conditions at home. In contrast, (37,6%) claim that online learning brought them a positive

impact. For them, learning online is easier and more comfortable and low cost; besides, they believe that this type of learning requires training in technology and good learning environment to make the learning process successful.

**Question 5: Which type of learning do you prefer?**

- a- Online learning
- b- Classroom learning

Justify your answer .....

**Table 2.5:** *Students' Preferred Type of Learning*

Options	N	%
A	16	18,8
B	69	81,2
Total	85	100

The question at hand was asked for a better understanding of the students' opinions about which type of learning they prefer. The above results show that almost the whole sampled population (81,2%) prefer classroom learning while only (18,8%) of the population prefer online learning. However, some students reported that both of types were useful and complete each other mainly for those who have a job.

## Section two: EFL Learners' Attitudes Towards the Use of Online Learning

### Question 6: Do you have internet access at home?

a- Yes

b- No

**Table 2.6:** *Internet Access*

Options	N	%
A	76	89,4
B	9	10,6
Total	85	100

This question intended to explore whether students have internet connection at their homes or not. The majority of the students (89,4%) stated that their homes were equipped with the internet , while (10,6%) of them do not have access to internet.

### Question7: Which device do you use most in your online learning?

a- Desktop

b- Laptop

c- Smartphone

d- Tablet

Others.....

**Table 2.7:** *Most Used Devices in Online Learning*

Options	N	%
---------	---	---

A	5	5,9
B	5	5,8
C	69	81,2
D	6	7,1
Total	85	100

Question seven is a multiple-choice question that allows students to select more than one option. Students were asked this question to identify the most devices used by students to learn online. The results in the respondents' diagram indicate that the majority of the students (81,2%) have been using smartphones and (5,8%) of them use laptops. In addition, (7,1%) use tablets while only (5,9%) of them have been using desktop computers.

**Question 8: Which types of materials are posted online by your teacher?**

- a- Printed materials
- b- Recorded materials
- Others .....

**Table 2.8:** *Types of Materials Posted Online*

Options	N	%
A	68	80
B	17	20
Total	85	100

First, this question aims at investigating the types of materials posted by teachers online. As it is clearly displayed in the above table almost all the students (80%) indicated that printed materials are the most posted by teachers online, while the remaining

percentage (80%) stated recorded materials, which means online teachers rely more on printed materials rather than explaining and recording lessons and thus maybe due to do fact of the absence of a good learning environment.

**Question 9: What do you think about the materials delivered online?**

a- Easy to understand

b- Difficult to understand

Others.....

**Table 2.9: Students' Opinions about the Materials Delivered Online**

Options	N	%
A	59	69,4
B	26	30,6
Total	85	100

This question asked learners to indicate their opinions about whether the materials delivered online are easy or difficult to understand. As it can be seen in the above table, (65,9%) of students reported that the materials posted online are difficult to understand for them, while the remaining percentage (30,6%) pointed out that materials are easy to understand, which means that online learners generally face difficulties during their online learning.

**Question 10: Does your teacher interact with you online?**

a. Yes

b. No

**Table 2.10: Teacher's Online Interaction with Students**

Options	N	%
A	59	69,4
B	26	30,6
Total	85	100

59 participants reported that most of their teachers interact with them online in order to explain the online lectures for them or to provide them with clarifications and feedback on the online assignments, whereas 26 participants do not, as it is indicated in the table above.

**Question 11: If yes, which internet applications do you use to interact together?**

a. Zoom

b. Google meet

c. Social media

Others .....

**Table 2.11: The Use of Internet Applications**

Options	N	%
A	48	56,5
B	20	23,5
C	17	20
Total	85	100

When asked about the different internet applications used for interaction between students and teachers, the results indicate that (56,5%) of the students do use social media, while, 23,5 % of the respondents do use Zoom and (20%) do use Google meet. In addition, four students mentioned that they use emails to interact with their teachers and only one

student indicated that Moodle platform was one of the application used between students and teachers. The table below describes the results:

**Question 12: How often does your teacher interact with you?**

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

**Table 2.12:** *Frequency of Teachers' and Students' Interaction*

Options	N	%
A	5	5,9
B	66	77,6
C	15	16,5
Total	85	100

It was revealed from the above table that the majority of the student (77,6%) indicated that sometimes teachers interact with them. Meanwhile, (16,5%) of the student reported that there was no interaction between students and teachers their teachers never interact with them. While the minority of students (5,9%) pointed out that their teachers always interact with them.

**Question 13: For which purposes does your teacher interact with you?**

- a. To explain the online lectures
- b. To provide you with clarifications on assignments
- c. To provide you with feedback on your online assignments

Others .....

**Table 2.13: Purposes of Teacher's Interaction**

Options	N	%
A	11	14,9
B	38	44,7
C	36	42,4
Total	85	100

In this question, the participants were asked to indicate the purpose (s) behind teachers' interaction with them. The majority of the responds (44,7%) answered that teachers interact with students to provide them with clarification on assignments. While, the minority of them (14,9%) said that teachers interact with them in order to explain the online lectures. Moreover, 24.4% of students stated that teachers interact with their students to provide them with feedback on the online assignments.

**Question 14: Have you been assessed online?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**Table 2.14: Online Assessment**

Options	N	%
---------	---	---

A	70	82,4
B	15	17,6
Total	85	100

Table 2.14 shows that (82.4%) of the students have been assessed online while (17,6%) of the students have not been assessed online maybe because not all the modules can be assessed online.

**Question 15: Which type of assessment does your teacher implement?**

- a. Pen and pencil
- b. Online

Justify your answer .....

**Table 2.15: Types of Assessment**

Options	N	%
A	58	68,8
B	27	31,8
Total	85	100

As shown in the table number 2.15, the majority of students (68,8%) prefer pen and pencil assessment, this option refers to the fact that they get good results when they assessed by pen and pencil comparing to the other method. Most students argue that pen and pencil more valid. In contrast, (31.8%) of the students prefer the online assessment. Generally those students are lazy ones who can cheat easily when they assessed online.

**Question 16: According to you, what are the challenges you encountered during online learning? Please rank the following challenges from the most encountered to the least one.**

- a. Technical problems (Downloading, internet connection, low quality of sound and picture ...etc)
- b. Lack of support / Interaction with the teachers
- c. Lack of training with technology
- d. Bad learning conditions at home
- e. Difficulty of the materials

Others, please specify .....

**Table 2.16:** *The Challenges Encountered by Students during Online Learning*

Options	N	P%
A	37	43,9
B	33	39
C	3	3,5
D	8	9,8
E	4	3,8

This question was asked to students in order to indicate the difficulties that they may face during online learning. It is observed from the above table that interestingly, (43,5%) considered technical problems as the most encountered challenge especially; the internet connection, downloading and low quality of sound and picture which may refers to the fact that students prefer traditional learning. The second difficulty is the lack of support and interaction with teachers reported by (39%) of the students.

**Question 17: What benefits did online learning have brought to you as learners?**

**Please rank the following benefits from the most beneficial to the least one.**

- a. Online learning has offered me the possibility to better manage my time.

- b. Online learning is low cost (handouts, .....).
  - c. Online learning provides a good interaction environment between students and instructors.
  - d. Online learning has encouraged collaborative activities and group work through social media application
  - e. Online learning has improved my technology skills.
- Others, please specify .....

**Table 2.17: Benefits of Online Learning on EFL Learners**

Options	N	P%
A	22	25,3
B	18	21,1
C	13	15,6
D	15	17,7
E	17	20,3

As it is noticed from the table 2.17, (21,1%) of students said that online learning is low cost and less expensive than handouts, it is considered as the most beneficial thing concerning online learning. (25,3%) of students said that online learning offers a possibility for a better time management, they considered it as a secondary benefit. Then, the third choice which was the improvement of technological skills, online learning had a great role in achieving that. 17 students had chosen this option. Whereas, (17,7%) of the students agreed that the most beneficial issue about online learning is the support of collaborative activities and group work through social media applications. Only 6 students (15,6%) ticked the third option which is providing good interaction environment between students and instructors as the most beneficial one.

**Question 18: Please give us your opinion about the following statements concerning online learning, and say whether you agree or disagree**

The Statement	Agree	Disagree
a. Online learning makes learning interesting.		
b. Online learning is difficult without teacher's guidance.		
c. Online learning requires more work.		
d. Online learning makes me more autonomous and responsible for my learning.		
e. Online learning increased the size of assignments and the studying hours.		
f. It is difficult to complete the tasks online.		
g. Online lectures encouraged some students not to attend classes.		
h. Online learning needs training in technology.		
i. Some teachers do not have the necessary skills to deal with online learning.		
j. Online assessment is better than paper-and-pencil assessment.		
k. It is easy to have high grades when passing online exams		
l. Online assessment is a very stressful experience.		
m. Cheating is easy in online exams.		
n. Online learning is the appropriate solution to complete the learning process during the COVID-19.		

**Table 2.18: Students' Opinions Concerning Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic**

Options	Agree		Disagree	
	N	P%	N	P%
A	38	44,5	47	55,5
B	78	91,8	7	8,2
C	64	75,3	21	24,7
D	68	80	17	20

E	52	61,2	30	38,8
F	55	64,7	30	35,3
G	73	85,9	12	14,1
H	76	89,4	6	10,6
I	76	89,4	6	10,6
J	19	22,4	66	77,6
K	47	55,3	38	44,7
L	60	70,6	25	29,4
M	73	85,9	12	14,1
N	64	75,3	21	24,7

This question aims at collecting students' opinions concerning online learning. The table 2.18 shows that (75,3%) of students argued that online learning is the appropriate solution to complete the learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (80%) of them confirmed that online learning makes them more autonomous and responsible for their learning. In contrast, (91,8%) of the students reported that online learning is also a difficult method of learning without teacher's guidance. The above table shows that 44,5% of the students do not enjoy online learning and 85,9% of the participants are discouraged from attending classes and they agreed that cheating in online exams is easy. 89,4% of the participants concluded that online learning needs training in technology, but teachers do not have the necessary skills to deal with this new method of teaching as they declared. Furthermore, 77,6% of the respondents assumed that paper- and- pen assessment is better than online assessment which is according to 70,6% of the students a very stressful experience.

**Question 19: What do you suggest for a better implementation of online learning in your institution?**

Some students suggested some recommendation of online learning in the Department of English at Jijel University.

- A good online learning environment should be provided first (good connection and technical problems should be fixed).
- Since technology has become a necessity nowadays, institutions should include classes concerning computer science and technologies to facilitate the learning process.
- For a better implementation of online learning, both students and teachers should improve their technological skills through trainings.
- For further explanations and better results, materials posted online should not be printed only but also recorded.
- The use of some online platforms and applications such as social media is advised to enhance interaction between the teacher and the students.

#### **2.4 Discussion of the Results**

The data obtained from the questionnaire has revealed interesting points concerning online learning. In fact, the data has revealed some positive and some negative aspects concerning the online learning. It has also identified some challenges encountered by students during their online learning process.

First, the data has revealed that online learning has been implemented for the first time at the department of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel University. Although, the majority of the students reported that classroom learning is preferable than online learning, EFL students have found that online learning is very interesting as a new way of

learning; moreover, and according to students, it is the appropriate solution to complete their learning during COVID-19 pandemic. In seeking to highlight students' attitudes towards online learning, students have highlighted the importance of this new method of learning in making them more responsible and more autonomous for their learning. For them, online learning is low cost and has offered them the possibility to better manage their time. It has also encouraged group work through social media applications. Furthermore, online learning seems to be as an opportunity for the students to improve their technology skills.

Concerning the main challenges faced by students during their online learning process, the results mentioned different difficulties. First, it seems that the absence of teachers' guidance is the first obstacle that can be hinder the online learning process. Secondly, the results show that most of the students complained from the lack of technical support. In this context, the institutions should prepare the students to this new way of learning and equip them with technology skills. Students without technology skills and training will result in waste of time and a decrease in motivation.

Concerning the materials posted online, students complained about the difficulty in understanding them. This is due to the lack of the interaction between teachers and students which is limited; according to students, teachers interact with them just to provide them with explanations or feedback concerning the online assignments.

As far as the assessment is concerned, students prefer paper and pencil assessment as they consider online assessment as a very stressful experience caused by the different technical problems that may occur during the assessment session. More than that, the possibility of cheating during the assessment session may render the exam not reliable.

## **2.5 Pedagogical Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings obtained from the students, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Students should be aware about the importance of using online learning tools in their learning process.
- The institution should prepare both the students to this new way of learning by training them to the use of technology.
- Since the situation of the country is not stable, students should be motivated and adapted to any change in the educational system.
- All institutions should apply online learning on their learning processes by this will effect positively on students' performance.
- It is recommended that teachers must vary online teaching techniques in order to catch the students' attention, lessons should be online (audio visual) and not only printed materials which will create teacher-students' interaction.

## **2.6 Limitations of the Study**

This piece of research has been carried out at the department of English language at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel University. One of the most significant challenges was the virus (COVID- 19) pandemic resulting in the following sub-limitations:

- The submission of the questionnaire was online, and waiting for the participants to fill in the questionnaire was time consuming.
- The number of the participants in this study was very limited (only 85 students responded out of 779).

## **Conclusion**

This research is descriptive in nature. It seeks to investigate the students' attitudes towards online learning. This chapter deals with the analysis and discussion of the data collected from the students' questionnaire. The findings were organized in tables, then analysed and discussed. Students reported on their perceptions towards online learning as well as their challenges they faced when learning online. The last part of the chapter ends with a list of recommendations that should be taken into consideration for a better implementation of online learning.

## **General Conclusion**

The implementation of the online learning during COVID-19 pandemic was the appropriate solution brought by the institutions to complete the learning process. The major aim of this study is to pave the way for a better implementation of the online learning process. First, it aims at assessing the attitudes towards the use of online learning among undergraduate EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University. Second, it seeks to investigate the challenges and difficulties encountered by EFL learners and if they develop positive attitudes towards their online learning.

This piece of research is divided into two chapters. The first chapter consists of two sections: on the one hand, the first section provides some definitions about online learning, indicates its types and its benefits as well as the most encountered challenges by EFL students during their online learning process. The second section, on the other hand, reviews the key elements of designing a successful online learning environment, discussing some online learning tools used during COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the teacher's and student's roles, and dealing with online learning assessment formats. This section ends with the benefits and disadvantages of online learning assessment.

The second chapter is devoted to the practical part which reports the main results obtained from the questionnaire, analyses, and interprets them. From the findings of this research, it was found that EFL undergraduate students are aware about the benefits of online learning. In fact, and according to the students, online learning has helped them to better manage their time. In addition, students considered online learning as low cost, and an effective way to develop their collaborative activities and group work. At the same time, students reported that online learning had a negative impact on their learning experience. This may be justified by the different challenges encountered during their online learning

such as the lack of training with technology, the lack of support and the lack of interaction between the students and the teacher.

In the light of the results obtained in this study, some pedagogical recommendations were suggested as the need for both teachers and students to be prepared to this new method of teaching and learning. In other words, and for a better achievement in both teaching and learning processes in general, good learning conditions should be provided starting from the organizational and technical support to pedagogical support along with teachers and students training.

## References

- Aboagye, E., Yawson, J. A., & Appiah, K. N. (2020). COVID-19 and E-Learning: The Challenges of Students in Tertiary Institutions. *Social Education Research, 2(1)*, 109-115.
- Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, E. (2020). Covid-19 pandemic and online learning: The challenges and opportunities. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1-13.
- Adnan, M. (2020). Online learning amid the COVID-19 pandemic: Students perspectives. *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology, 1(2)*, 45-51.
- Allen, M. W. (2007). *Designing successful E-Learning: Forget what you know about instructional design and do something interesting*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer.
- Ally, M., Ambrock, V., Anderson, T., Annand, D., Cao, Y., ... Woudstra, A. (2008) *The theory and practice of online learning*. Edmonton: AU Press.
- Alqahtani, A. Y., & Rajkhan, A. A. (2020). E-Learning Critical Success Factors during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Comprehensive Analysis of E-Learning Managerial Perspectives. *Education Sciences, 10(9)*, 216.
- Anderson, T. (2011). *The theory and practice of online learning*. Edmonton, Alberta: AU Press.
- Audet, L. (2011), Les pratiques et défis de l'évaluation en ligne. Réseau d'enseignement francophone à distance du Canada. [www.refad.ca](http://www.refad.ca)
- Bach, S., Haynes, P., & Smith, J. L. (2007). *Online learning and teaching in higher education*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Carliner, S. (2004). *An overview of online learning*. Amherst, MA: HRD Press.

- Choi, B.(2016). How people learn in an asynchronous online learning environment: The relationships between graduate students' learning strategies and learning satisfaction Comment apprennent les gens dans un environnement d' apprentissage en ligne asynchrone. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology/ La Revue Canadienne De L' apprentissage Et De La Technologie*, 42(1), 1-2
- Conceição, S. C. (2007). *Teaching strategies in the online environment*. Published online in Wiley InterScience (www.interscience.wiley.com). doi:10.1002/ace.249
- Daniel, S. J. (2020)Education and the COVID-19 pandemic. *Prospects*, 49(1-2), 91-96.
- Farrah, M. & Al-Bakry, G. H. (2020). Online learning for EFL students in Palestinian universities during corona pandemic: Advantages, challenges and solutions. *Indonesian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 3(2), 65-78.
- Ghounane, N. (2020). Moodle or Social Networks: What Alternative Refuge is Appropriate to Algerian EFL Students to Learn during Covid-19 Pandemic. *Arab World English Journal*, 11(3), 21-41.
- Gikandi, J., Morrow, D., & Davis, N. (2011). Online formative assessment in higher education: A review of the literature. *Computers & Education*, 57(4), 2333-2351. doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2011.06.004
- Howard, C., Schenk, K., & Discenza, R. (2004). *Distance learning and university effectiveness: Changing educational paradigms for online learning*. Hershey, PA: Information Science.
- Kebritchi, M., Lipschuetz, A., & Santiago, L. (2017). Issues and Challenges for Teaching Successful Online Courses in Higher Education. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*,46(1), 4-29.

- Ko, S. S., & Rossen, S. (2017). *Teaching online: A practical guide*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Koç, S. (2015). *Assessment in online and blended learning environments*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publ.
- Lu, J., & Law, N. (2011). Online peer assessment: Effects of cognitive and affective feedback. *Instructional Science*, 40(2), 257-275. doi:10.1007/s11251-011-9177-2
- Macdonald, J. (2003). Assessing online collaborative learning: Process and product. *Computers & Education*, 40(4), 377-391. doi:10.1016/s0360-1315(02)00168-9
- Mazzolini, M. (2000). Assessment Techniques in an Online Astronomy Course. *Publications of the Astronomical Society of Australia*, 17(2), 141-144. doi:10.1071/as00141
- Mukhtar, K., Javed, K., Arooj, M., & Sethi, A. (2020). Advantages, Limitations and Recommendations for online learning during COVID-19 pandemic era. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*, 36(COVID 19-S4).
- Nartiningrum, N., & Nugroho, A. (2020). Online Learning amidst Global Pandemic: EFL Students' Challenges, Suggestions, and Needed Materials. *ENGLISH FRANCA: Academic Journal of English Language and Education*, 4(2), 115.
- Nedjah, H. (2010). EFL teachers attitudes and beliefs toward the implementation of e-learning. Unpublished thesis Mentouri University.
- Offir, B., Lev, Y., & Bezalel, R (2008). Surface and deep learning processes in distance education: *Synchronous versus asynchronous systems*. *Computers & Education*, 51(3), 1172-1183.

- Palloff, R. M. (2008). *Building online learning communities*. Place of publication not identified: John Wiley.
- Palloff, R. M., & Pratt, K. (2009). *Assessing the online learner: Resources and strategies for faculty*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Rehman, A. U. (n.d.). Challenges to Online Education in Pakistan During COVID-19 & the Way Forward. Retrieved from <https://preprints.aijr.org/index.php/ap/preprint/view/241>
- Şanlı, R. (2003), Students' Perceptions about Online Assessment : A CASE STUDY THE Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences of the Middle East Technical University.
- Schneider, S. L., & Council, M. L. (2020). Distance learning in the era of COVID-19. *Archives of Dermatological Research*, 313(5), 389-390.
- Shahabadi, M. M., & Uplane, M. (2015). Synchronous and Asynchronous e-learning Styles and Academic Performance of e-learners. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 176, 129-138.
- Shank, P. (2007). *The online learning idea book*. San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer.
- Shank, P., & Sitze, A. (2004). *Making sense of online learning: A guide for beginners and the truly skeptical*. San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer, a Wiley imprint.
- Shraim, K. (2019). Online Examination Practices in Higher Education Institutions: Learners' Perspectives. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 20(4), 12th ser., 185-196. doi:10.17718/tojde.640588
- Smith, R. M. (2014). *Conquering the Content* (2 nd ed.). Hoboken: Wiley.

- Vai, M., & Sosulski, K. (2011). *Essentials of online course design a standards-based guide* (Vol. 35). New York: Routledge.
- Vanhorn, S., Pearson, J. C., & Child, J. T. (2008). The Online Communication Course: The Challenges. *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, 9(1), 29-36.
- Wang, C., & Reeves, T. C. (2007). Synchronous Online Experiences: The perspectives of international students from Taiwan. *Educational Media International*, 44(4), 339-356.
- Wen, M. L., & Tsai, C. (2006). University Students' Perceptions of and Attitudes Toward (Online) Peer Assessment. *Higher Education*, 51(1), 27-44. doi:10.1007/s10734-004-6375-8
- Williams, D. D., Howell, S. L., & Hricko, M. (2006). *Online assessment, measurement, and evaluation: Emerging practices*. Hershey: Information Science.



## Appendix

**Dear Students,**

This questionnaire is a part of a Master dissertation that aims at investigating EFL undergraduate learners' attitudes towards online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. We would be very thankful if you take the following questionnaire seriously and accept completing it. You are kindly requested to fill this questionnaire either by putting a cross (\*) in the corresponding box or by writing the suitable answer.

### Section One: General Information

**Q1.** Specify your level of Instruction

a. First Year

b. Second Year

c. Third Year

**Q2.** Did your teachers implement online learning before the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Q3.** Have you been prepared to the use of online learning?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, explain how? .....

.....

**Q4.** Which impact does the use of online learning have on your learning experience?

a. Positive

b. Negative

Justify your answer.....

**Q5.** Which type of learning do you prefer?

a. Online learning

b. Classroom learning

Justify your answer.....

**Section Two: EFL Learners' Attitudes towards the Use of Online Learning**

**Q6:** Do you have internet access at home?

a. Yes

b. No

**Q7.** Which device do you use most in your online learning?

a . Desktop

b. Laptop

c. Smartphone

d. Tablet

Others.....

**Q8.**Which types of materials are posted online by your teachers?

a. Printed materials

b. Recorded materials

Others .....

**Q9.**What do you think about the materials delivered online?

a. Easy to understand

b. Difficult to understand

Others .....

**Q10.**Does your teacher interact with you online?

a. Yes

b. No

**Q11.** If yes, which internet applications do you use to interact together?

a. Zoom

b. Google meet

c. Social media

Others .....

**Q12.** How often does your teacher interact with you?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Never

**Q13.** For which purposes does your teacher interact with you?

a. To explain the online lectures

b. To provide you with clarifications on assignments

c. To provide you with feedback on your online assignments

Others .....

**Q14.** Have you been assessed online?

a. Yes

b. No

**Q15.** Which type of assessment does your institution implement?

a. Pen and pencil

b. Online

Justify your answer .....

**Q16.** According to you, what are the challenges you encountered during online learning?

Please rank the following challenges from the most encountered to the least one.

a. Technical problems (Downloading, internet connection, low quality of sound and picture ...etc)

b. Lack of support / Interaction with the teachers

c. Lack of training with technology

d. Bad learning conditions at home

- e. Difficulty of the materials

Others, please specify .....

**Q17.**What benefits did online learning have brought to you as learners? Please rank the following benefits from the most beneficial to the least one.

- a. Online learning has offered me the possibility to better manage my time.
- b. Online learning is low cost (handouts, .....).
- c. Online learning provides a good interaction environment between students and instructors.
- d. Online learning has encouraged collaborative activities and group work through social media application
- e. Online learning has improved my technology skills.

Others, please specify .....

**Q18.**Please give us your opinion about the following statements concerning online learning, and say whether you agree or disagree

The Statement	Agree	Disagree
a. Online learning makes learning interesting.		
b. Online learning is difficult without teacher's guidance.		
c. Online learning requires more work.		
d. Online learning makes me more autonomous and responsible for my learning.		
e. Online learning increased the size of assignments and the studying hours.		
f. It is difficult to complete the tasks online.		
g. Online lectures encouraged some students not to attend classes.		
h. Online learning needs training in technology.		
i. Some teachers do not have the necessary skills to deal with online learning.		

j. Online assessment is better than paper-and-pencil assessment.		
k. It is easy to have high grades when passing online exams		
l. Online assessment is a very stressful experience.		
m. Cheating is easy in online exams.		
n. Online learning is the appropriate solution to complete the learning process during the corona pandemic		

**Q19.** What do you suggest for a better implementation of online learning in your institution?

.....

.....

.....

***Thank you for your cooperation***

## Résumé

L'une des principales conséquences de la pandémie COVID 19 a été le passage de l'apprentissage en classe à l'apprentissage en ligne. Cette nouvelle méthode d'apprentissage peut affecter positivement ou négativement le processus de l'apprentissage. Cette recherche a pour objectif d'enquêter sur les attitudes des étudiants de l'anglais en premier cycle à l'Université de Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/Jijelet d'identifier les difficultés que peuvent rencontrer les étudiants durant leur apprentissage en ligne. Afin d'atteindre les objectifs de cette étude, un questionnaire a été conçu et soumis en ligne à 779 étudiants du département d'anglais. Sur la base des résultats obtenus auprès de 85 étudiants, il s'est avéré que les étudiants sont bien conscients des avantages de l'apprentissage en ligne, car cela les rend plus responsable et autonome. Cependant, les étudiants préfèrent l'apprentissage en présentiel en raison des difficultés rencontrées lors de leur apprentissage comme le manque des compétences technologiques, le manque de soutien et d'interaction avec les enseignants en plus des problèmes techniques qu'ils peuvent affronter. En se basant sur les résultats de cette recherche, quelques recommandations pédagogiques sont suggérées pour une meilleure mise en œuvre de l'apprentissage en ligne.

## ملخص

كان التحول من التعلم في الفصول الدراسية إلى التعلم عبر الأنترنت إحدى النتائج الرئيسية المترتبة عن جائحة كوفيد-19، أسلوب التعلم الجديد هذا قد يؤثر سلباً أو إيجاباً على عملية تعلم الطلاب. تسعى هذه الدراسة و التي أجريت على طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في المرحلة الجامعية الأولى في جامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى/جيجل إلى معرفة مواقف الطلاب تجاه التعلم عبر الأنترنت أثناء جائحة كوفيد-19، بالإضافة إلى التحديات التي قد يواجهونها خلال عملية التعلم. من أجل تحقيق أهداف هذه الدراسة الوصفية، تم إعداد استبيان و إرساله عبر الأنترنت إلى 779 طالباً في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. و بناء على النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من 85 طالباً، تم الكشف على أن الطلاب على دراية بمزايا التعلم عبر الأنترنت مم يجعلهم أكثر مسؤولية و استقلالية؛ و مع ذلك فإنهم يفضلون التعلم في الفصول الدراسية بسبب الصعوبات التي يواجهونها عند التعلم كالافتقار إلى المهارات التقنية و كذلك نقص الدعم و التفاعل من الأساتذة، فضلاً عن المشكلات الفنية التي قد يواجهونها. بناء على النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من هذا البحث، تم اقتراح بعض التوصيات التربوية لتمهيد الطريق من أجل التحسين من عملية تنفيذ التعلم عبر الأنترنت.