Research Paper   Open Access

Analysis of the Challenges face EFL Teachers and EFL Young Learners while Teaching English Speaking Skills During the Covid-19 Lockdown

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Abstract: Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, many second language learners have experienced difficulties in learning English. This is mainly due to the sudden closures of various learning institutions.One of the most important skills that an ESL student should learn is speaking. Unfortunately, many of them are still not able to improve their English speaking skills due to the COVID-19 lockdowns. Due to the implementation of e-learning, many students are now adjusting to the new learning environment.This study aims to focus on that the various challenges second language learners face when it comes to learning speaking skills. It also explores the use of video conferencing and social media tools to improve their skills. Some of the common factors that these learners face when it comes to learning speaking skills include fear, lack of motivation, and limited vocabulary.Due to the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects of this on the learning habits and abilities of second language learners have become a major issue. This study aims to analyze the various technology interventions that are used to help these students.Due to the increasing number of students and teachers participating in online learning, it has become more challenging for them to assess and implement effective strategies to help their students. This research aims to identify the various challenges that teachers face when it comes to implementing online learning in COVID-19.The study was conducted through an interview with 11 English language teachers. It revealed that the main challenges that the teachers face when it comes to conducting online learning are the time constraints and the design of the materials. Aside from these, the low level of interest and attention that the students have in learning English also contributed to the difficulties they face.

Keywords: Lockdown, young learners, English language skills, English language teachers, challenges

I.   Introduction

The rapid emergence and evolution of the modern world has created a need for people from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively. Language proficiency is therefore a lifelong commitment that can be carried out in various ways to meet the diverse needs of individuals[1].The English language is considered to be the world's most widely spoken language. Due to its importance and relevance, people around the world are constantly looking for ways to improve their English skills.Due to the increasing number of people who are looking to learn English as a second language, many efforts have been put into finding effective ways to improve their language proficiency. It will take a lot of effort and dedication from both the learners and the teachers to make it happen[2].

This strategy allows students to engage in class and improve their English skills in various areas such as speaking and listening. One of the most important skills that people need to learn is speaking. This is because it is one of the most common languages used in the world, and it is used in every type of communication[3]. Despite the importance of other skills such as reading and writing, speaking is still regarded as the most important skill that people need to improve.One of the most important components of the 21st century skills is communication. This is because the ability to communicate effectively is one of the main factors that people are looking for in their

education. As a result, the government of various nations has been working on developing an education policy that aims to provide the necessary resources and support to improve the skills of students[4].

The sudden emergence and spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused various traumas around the world. The pandemic has also affected the daily activities of people. To minimize the transmission of the virus, certain daily activities such as going outside and travelling have been temporarily restricted[5].Due to the emergence of COVID-19, many countries have implemented lockdowns and closed their educational institutions. These measures were taken to prevent the spread of the virus and to ensure that the learning environment is still safe. In order to prevent the transmission of the virus, all face-to-face learning activities have been suspended[6].

Due to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools and teachers have started to switch to e-learning models. This has caused both the students and the teachers to rethink about the use of online learning. To address the current issues with e-learning, various academic institutions have conducted studies to identify the best ways to implement the new technology[7], [8].Although many schools and universities have started using e-learning applications, many instructors and lecturers are still not yet proficient in using them for their teaching and learning processes. According to studies conducted by Rofiq, Marji, and Sudjimat, most students still have a negative attitude toward the technology. However, they believe that it is the best way to improve the learning environment during the pandemic[9].

Due to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools and teachers have started to switch to e-learning models. Some of the most popular e-learning platforms that are used in this process include Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and WebEx. Other learning management systems such as Google Classroom and Schoology are also commonly used[10].Due to the technological advancements that have occurred in e-learning, the learning process can continue even after the academic institution has closed. Some institutions have managed to improve their capabilities in providing course material online and engaging their students in learning[8].

Due to the sudden closures of schools and institutions, many ESL students have experienced a significant drop in their level of learning. This has caused them to develop various problems with their English language skills.In 2020, Yen and Mohamed noted that the decision to close schools and eliminate face-to-face learning has caused many students to adapt to the new normal. Most of these students are also trying to improve their speaking skills[11].

Aside from the technological advancements, many factors such as the instructor's technique and the culture of the students are also contributing to the increasing number of ESL students who are not able to use the target language. According to studies conducted by Idrus and Salleh, the high levels of anxiety that students experience when they are evaluated are also contributing factors to their learning difficulties.According to studies conducted by Yen & Mohamad, many ESL students have experienced various issues that prevent them from effectively speaking. These include a lack of confidence, shyness, and nervousness. It is therefore important that the educational institutions and teachers find effective ways to help their students to improve their speaking skills[12].

There are various ways that can help ESL students improve their speaking and learning abilities. These include online courses, individual tutoring, and professional development.In addition to traditional classroom methods, the strategies and tactics that are used in online learning can also be utilized within the classroom. Some of these include using social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube[7], [13].

Unfortunately, many teachers do not have the necessary knowledge about the use of ICT tools in their classrooms. This issue can prevent them from effectively preparing the students for the learning process. Aside from the technical aspect of the learning process, there are also other factors that are involved in the learning process.There are many strategies and techniques that can be used by every student when it comes to learning a new language. However, learning a new language can be very different from one person to another. This is why it is important that the educational institutions and teachers use the appropriate language learning techniques[14].

One of the most effective ways to improve a student's language learning is through the use of language learning strategies. These include the development of a sense of autonomy, the use of cognitive theory, and the motivation of learners. According to the Wenden, these three points of view can help improve a student's language learning.The goal of this study is to analyze the various challenges that teachers face when it comes to implementing the strategies and methods used in online learning during pandemic 19 situations. The study will also provide a deeper understanding of how these teachers practice and teach online learning[14].

This study aims to explore the practice of EFL teachers in designing effective learning materials (LLS) for online courses. Through a case study, two teachers will be interviewed to collect data.The objective of this study is to help teachers design effective and efficient learning materials that will help their students become more independent and lifelong learners. In addition to the technical aspect of the learning process, the teachers also need to identify the needs of the students[4].

Through the study, the teachers will be able to identify the various factors that can help improve the effectiveness of their teaching. These include the students' motivation and affective state.According to the Stern taxonomy, there are various types of LLS that can be used in online learning. These include management and planning, cognitive, interpersonal, and communicative-experiential. Management and planning are related to the students' willingness to organize their learning, while cognitive is the way in which learning is conducted that requires direct analysis. On the other hand, interpersonal is the way in which learners monitor their progress and evaluate their performance. In affective strategies, the goal is to provide the students with the necessary tools to manage their feelings when they encounter the complexity of language learning[1], [14].

In order to effectively implement the learning process, the teachers need to have the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their duties. According to Woycheshin and Goffin, in 2006, competence refers to an individual's ability to perform their job in a way that is related to their knowledge, work attitudes, and personality.Although professional teachers are expected to have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide effective and efficient learning materials, they are also highly competent when it comes to making learning techniques and teaching. According to Siri and Cooper, in 2020, teachers who are able to develop their competencies are more effective than those who are not[15].

II.   Literature Review

2.1. E-Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic

The term e-learning refers to the use of technology to improve the quality of education. It can be used to refer to the use of new materials and methods to make learning more accessible. The 21st century skills and education are two terms that are commonly used by educators. These terms are used to refer to the development of skills that students need to succeed in the 21st century.According to the three authors of the report, ICT is used to improve the understanding of Generation Z learners in order to promote the 21st century learning. This is part of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025. The objective of the initiative is to leverage the various aspects of ICT to improve the learning experience for all students[16].

E-learning is a type of teaching and learning that uses the Internet to distribute, monitor, and execute courses. It is designed to encourage two-way interaction between educators and students. Various forms of learning materials can be used to facilitate effective and engaging discussions, such as online polls, discussion boards, and presentations[17].Most schools and colleges use various learning management systems such as Microsoft Teams, Google, and Zoom. They also use video conferencing software such as Adobe Link and WebEx. It is also inevitable for teachers and students to use technology during the pandemic[18].

One of the most common technologies used during the pandemic was the use of a central framework that allows teachers and students to manage their interactions during the instructional activities[19]. This type of learning is designed to make traditional learning more effective and efficient.According to the authors of the report, the use of e-learning can help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. It is also beneficial for the continuity of education since it allows teachers and students to interact with each other. In addition, e-learning can help facilitate the teaching and learning sessions of both teachers and students[20].

In addition to being able to manage the various aspects of the learning process, e-learning also involves the optimization of the web design. This can help maximize the availability of teaching materials[21].Due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, many schools decided to completely change their curriculum online. This has led to speculations about the extent to which teachers were accepting and displaying dissatisfaction with the new learning method. Despite the pandemic's impact on education, many teachers still prefer to use traditional methods of teaching[22].

A number of studies also revealed that the lack of preparation for the new learning method has affected the development of the curriculum. This has additionally led to the emergence of inefficient instructions in the online environment.Some studies also suggest that the use of online studies has decreased the content overload of teachers. However, other studies additionally suggest that the collaborative efforts between various groups in education can help improve the effectiveness of the new learning method.

2.2 . Challenges Faced by ESL Learners in the Learning of Speaking

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in the pressure on students to improve their English speaking skills. This is because many of them are not only encountering the usual challenges of learning English-language skills online, but they also have to deal with various barriers that prevent them from doing so.speaking a language as English is very important in order to improve a person's communication skills and develop their conservation ability. This is done through the use of various activities and role-plays. In addition to being able to communicate effectively, conservation ability also involves the use of a conversation class[23].

Aside from the usual factors that prevent students from improving their English-language skills, such as the availability of resources and the cost of training, online learners also have to deal with various other factors such as the environment and technological changes[24]. In 2008, Anderson identified eight kinds of challenges that can be encountered when it comes to learning English-language skills online.Aside from the usual factors such as the availability of resources and the teacher's technical knowledge, the various factors that affect a person's learning process also include their academic and technological confidence. This is why it is very important that the multiple aspects of learning are thoroughly analyzed in order to develop a comprehensive and effective learning strategy. Some of the other factors that can affect a person's learning include the availability of resources, the cost of tuition, the quality of the materials, and the institutional financial background.During the COVID-19 pandemic, online learners experienced a positive perception of their learning process. They also believed that the various aspects of their learning were more effective than usual[1].

The good points that were made about online learning were not excluded. One of the main advantages of this type of learning is that it allows students to maintain their academic achievements and graduate from university without having to deal with various issues such as the financial situation and internet access. It also allows them to complete their tasks without the need for physical education. In addition to being able to complete their tasks efficiently, online learners additionally help improve their English ability by providing them with the necessary tools and resources.Both teachers and learners were positive about the potential of ICT development in remote settings in English training. However, many Arabian learners expressed their doubts about the effectiveness of virtual education. They noted that it did not attract them compared to the BlackBoard in campus[25].

Unfortunately, there are some disadvantages that can be encountered when it comes to learning through online learning. One of these is the lack of social interaction with the other students and teachers. According to some students, this type of learning can make them lose interest in the learning process and become lazy. They also feel that they are less effective at completing their assignments due to the lack of guidance and control over their learning.One of the main factors that prevented online learners from achieving their goals was the lack of sufficient and stable Wi-Fi connectivity. This issue caused them to spend more time listening to the lecturer and using various devices, such as tablets and computers. Aside from this, other factors such as poor posture and eye fatigue can also affect their learning process[9].

Besides these, other factors such as low-quality sound and inadequate internet connection can also prevent online learners from engaging in their studies. Despite the various disadvantages of this type of learning, most of the time, students prefer to meet in person to learn English.One of the most important advantages of online learning is that it allows learners to make conversations with the other students and teachers in the language classroom. It also allows them to develop their oral communicative skills. This can be done through the use of various dialogues that encourage meaningful discussion[8].

Compared to their face-to-face counterparts, online learners are more likely to face various issues when it comes to their English language learning. These include the lack of effective communication skills, cultural and social rules, and the cost of doing business.Due to the continuous impact of the Covid-19 legislation and the closure of universities, many students are forced to enroll in online classes. To ensure that their studies are conducted effectively, there are various steps that can be taken to improve their internet connection.[6], [7], [26]

III.   Methodology

Participants were selected through a purposeful sampling process on march 2020 . Initially, 30 teachers were approached, but 11 of them participated in the interview. The teachers had taught throughout the pandemic and were experts in the field of English language learning.

Table 1. demographics of study participants

	number	percentage
experience		
<1 year	1	9%
1-5 years	4	36%
6-10 years	3	27%
>10 years	3	27%
educational level		

bachelors	4	36%
diploma	4	36%
master/ PHD	3	27%
method of online education		
zoom	6	55%
google team	4	36%
other	1	9%

Majority of the participants were with average experience between one to five years with 36% of the total participants. While most of the participants holding bachelors and diploma with 36 percentage each. While the minority were holding a higher degree of master or PhD with only 27%. When asked about their method of online education, the majority will be using zoom meeting as a tool with 55% followed by 36% using Google team application.

IV.   Results

After analyzing the data collected during the interview, it was revealed that there were various challenges that teachers faced when it came to conducting online learning. One of these is the design of the material. According to participant I, the design of the material is the most challenging aspect of conducting online learning.In order to make their learning more interesting and innovative, teachers shifted their method of teaching from face-to-face to online. According to participant III, the teachers wanted to create an engaging and unique material that will keep their students engaged during the learning process. However, designing such a material can be very time-consuming and challenging.

Besides the time-consuming process of creating the material, participant III also noted that it takes a lot of effort to prepare it.Online learning is different from offline learning in that it requires the teachers to prepare various materials and methods. In offline learning, the students are taught directly. However, in online learning, the teachers are expected to create multiple learning content and materials.

Besides the time-consuming process of creating the material, participant II also noted that it takes a lot of effort to prepare it. According to her, the main reason why the online learning process is not as successful as it should be is the students' and parents' ICT skills.The students also need help from their parents when it comes to using the various tools and methods that are used in online learning. This is because parents play a vital role in their children's education. According to participant V, the lack of knowledge about ICT skills is one of the main factors that prevent the students from being successful.

Although parents are expected to help their children when it comes to using ICT tools, many parents still lack the necessary skills to operate these tools. This is because many of them did not use a computer or a handphone due to their age.Despite the lack of knowledge about ICT skills, many parents still have the necessary skills to operate these tools. According to participant IV, she has a good knowledge about computers and software, and she is eager to help her children use it. Participant VI also noted that being young and having multiple ICT skills makes it easier for her to learn.

Having the necessary ICT skills is also beneficial for the students as it allows them to improve their English language skills. Another issue that the teachers face is the lack of attention from the students. According to participant A, the lack of attention during online learning prevents the teachers from delivering the lessons.According to participant X, the lack of attention from the students is also one of the main reasons why they feel free and uncontrolled when it comes to learning English. She said that some of them struggled when it comes to learning English due to their low motivation.

Almost half of the teachers who participated in the interview group said that they were not affected by the pandemic. However, the remaining half of the group noted that their experience was significantly impacted by various factors such as the lack of resources, decreased student participation, and lack of face-to-face interaction.
The biggest challenge that faced the school was the inability to fairly measure the progress of students. This issue was caused by the unethical behavior of some students during assessments. This led to the emergence of cheating and highlighted the incompatibility between the use of technology and the assessment of student learning.

In response to the pandemic, teachers have identified an additional challenge that can affect the effective teaching of English language learning (EFL). One of the most common factors that has affected the teaching process is the increase in stress and anxiety.

V. Discussion

The goal of this study is to investigate the various obstacles that ESL learners face when it comes to learning speaking skills. It is also related to the use of interventions that were designed to help them improve their skills during the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue is mainly due to the fact that many English learners around the world are still not able to build their speaking skills.

Due to the rise of social media and the increasing number of people communicating in English, it is very important that students develop speaking skills in order to successfully communicate with others. Unfortunately, many learners face obstacles when it comes to learning English as a Second Language. Some of these include anxiety, lack of confidence, and motivation.

In previous studies, it has been shown that English language teachers can help improve the speaking skills of their students during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is why it is important to analyze the various strategies that they used during the course of the study.

One of the most effective strategies that teachers can use is by incorporating videoconferencing and social media into their lessons. This can help their students overcome their various obstacles and improve their speaking skills. According to the previous research, there are numerous effective interventions that can help improve the skills of their students.One of the most effective ways that teachers can use is by incorporating social media into their lessons. This can help their students improve their speaking skills.

Aside from incorporating social media into their lessons, teachers also need to be aware of the various obstacles that their students face when it comes to learning English as a Second Language. This is why they can use effective interventions that are designed to help address these issues.

In response to the pandemic, various institutions, such as universities and government agencies, have to take the necessary precautions to ensure that the safety and welfare of their ESL students are protected. Doing so will allow them to use online learning methods and improve their motivation and success.

Besides being aware of the various obstacles that their students face when it comes to learning English as a Second Language, teachers also need to be mentally prepared to adapt to the new learning process.The findings of this study should also be discussed with policymakers and other relevant authorities, such as school administrators and teachers, to ensure that the importance of speaking skills is properly addressed.

This is done to ensure that their students are equipped with the necessary skills to successfully use online learning methods. The goal of the study was to analyze the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic affected the perceptions of teachers about the effectiveness of their teaching methods. It was conducted through a qualitative analysis that took into account the various factors that affected the teaching of English as a Second Language in Jordan.

The results of the study revealed that the increasing number of students affected by the pandemic had a negative impact on the teaching efficiency of teachers. Aside from this, the study also covered various aspects of the English language that had not been previously recorded in literature.

VI. Conclusion

Due to the spread of Covid-19, it has a significant impact on various sectors, such as education. One of the biggest changes that has occurred in the educational system is the closure of schools and universities.Due to the increasing number of people infected with Covid-19, it has become more challenging for teachers to design effective language learning programs for students. This study aims to provide a comprehensive view of the various challenges that face the teachers when it comes to implementing online learning strategies.

The findings of this study revealed that the teachers' time is very limited when it comes to designing and implementing online learning programs due to the changes in the educational system. Also, the low level of students' ICT skills and the lack of attention and motivation to learn English are some of the factors that have negatively affected the development of online learning courses.Although both teachers and participants have their own strategies that they can customize to meet the needs of their students, the quality of the instructors' competence is still not enough to support their students' learning goals. To improve their skills, they should regularly attend training courses and seminars.

The study was conducted during the initial phase of the outbreak. It aims to provide a comprehensive view of the various challenges that face the teachers when it comes to implementing online learning strategies. The researcher is hoping that this research will help improve the quality of language learning programs in the classroom.

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