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**Freshmen EFL Students' Perceptions of the Use of
Google Classroom as a Teaching and Learning Tool at
ENSB in Algiers**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

All my beloved family, my father 'Said' and my stepmother 'Malika'

My dear sister 'Kamelia', love of my life, for her support and love, you have been a great support for me in periods where I felt myself depressed and lost

My grandmother 'Ouardia', to who I wish a long life

My cousins 'Lynda' and 'Sabrina'

My dear friends 'Sarah', 'Kahina', 'Souhila', and to everyone who contributed to this work

Thank you so much, I really appreciate that

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Abstract

The current study investigates the students' perceptions of the use of Google Classroom as a learning tool. This research aims to raise awareness of the online teaching and learning by using different online platforms such as Google Classroom. The research is based on four main objectives. The first objective is to determine the students' perceptions while using Google Classroom as a learning tool. The second objective is to identify the teaching materials used by teachers in Google Classroom. The third objective is to explore the way the online platform fosters the students' engagement and interaction. As for the fourth and last objective, it aims to highlight the main limitations and obstacles encountered by teachers and students while participating in Google Classroom. It is conducted under the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989). The model consists of two variables: Perceives Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness in order to examine the users' acceptance of a given platform. To carry out the research, the mixed-methods research is adopted by combining both quantitative and qualitative data. In order to collect the relevant data, the research is based on two data collection tools. A questionnaire is delivered to fifty first-year students at the department of English at ENSB in Algiers and a structured interview is conducted with five teachers. As for analysing the data, the descriptive statistics through SPSS is used for analysing the quantitative data and the Qualitative Content Analysis is used to interpret the qualitative data. The obtained results show that the first-year students perceive Google Classroom as an effective tool which supports their learning of English. It allows them to access their online courses in a convenient and successful way. It increases their performance in terms of their engagement and interaction with their teachers during the online sessions. Moreover, the majority of the students are satisfied while adopting and participating in Google Classroom as a learning tool. The platform gives the teachers the opportunity to use a variety of different teaching materials for the aim of attracting and motivating the learners as well as creating a stimulating learning environment. Additionally, it is revealed that several limitations such as the weak Internet connection and the problem of contacting the teachers individually can negatively influence the process of implementing Google Classroom in the EFL classes.

Key words: *Google Classroom, students' interaction and engagement, students' perceptions, Technology Acceptance Model.*

List of Abbreviations

A: Attitude.

BI: Behavioural Intention.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ENSB: École Normale Supérieure de Bouzaréah.

Hp: Hypothesis.

PEOU: Perceived Ease of Use.

PU: Perceived Usefulness.

QCA: Qualitative Content Analysis.

SN: Subjective Norm.

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

TAM: Technology Acceptance Model.

TRA: Theory of Reasoned Action.

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General Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, the integration of Internet and different technological devices in the educational sector affects the teaching and learning process. They are introduced in order to support, facilitate and create a stimulating educational context where the students can become more creative and productive. Moreover, the different platforms allow the students to develop a sense of autonomy and self-confidence by taking control of their own learning and language acquisition.

The beginning of 2020 witnessed the deadly Corona Virus epidemic which has affected negatively all sectors of our lives. It is worth mentioning that the educational sector has also been affected by the COVID-19. In such a context, online teaching and learning has strongly become the only clue to ensure the continuity of the academic year in an appropriate way. In Algeria, like all the world countries, the Ministry of Higher Education has decided to move to the application of online teaching and learning by relying on online platforms that allow the learners to receive their lessons.

Online education is made possible by using different applications and facilities such as Google Docs, Google Scholar, Google Classroom, Google Meet, Gmail, and Zoom. These applications and platforms have significantly suited the current situation and have led to various changes in the roles of the teachers and learners. It allows the teachers to create and organize their lectures in a successful way. Moreover, they are extremely beneficial for the learners since they can stay in touch with both their teachers and classmates.

Various works have been conducted in relation to online teaching and the integration of technology in the teaching and learning process. The first study is entitled “E-Learning in the Algerian Universities during Covid-19 Pandemic: Is E-learning Restricted to the Mere Use of Moodle Platform?” which is conducted by Bouhezam in 2020/2021 at Larbi Ben M’Hidi University, Oum El Bouaghi. She aims at showing that E-learning is not appropriately

used in the Algerian universities and that it is not limited to the mere use of the Moodle platform. As a result, she finds that E-learning is not significantly employed in the Algerian educational context since the teachers focus only on the use of Moodle platform as the only medium which allows them to transfer the online courses to their students. She concludes that there are other alternatives like Zoom and Google Classroom which help the teachers and students in the process of online teaching and learning.

The second work is conducted by Benmansour in 2021 at the department of English at Mohammed Ben Ahmed University of Oran 2, Algeria. The work is entitled 'Zoom Sessions in Distant Learning: Algerian EFL Students' Perceptions and Attitudes'. The research aims to examine the Algerian EFL students' motivation about the use of Zoom as an asynchronous learning approach in order to cope with the changes they encounter while exploring online learning. As a result, she finds that the students have overall positive perspectives about using Zoom sessions with some limitations. Training students to use ICTs and developing positive perceptions about using online educational platforms and applications were the main recommendations for using zoom classes. Students are motivated to learn via Zoom classes and reveal positive attitudes and perspectives about Zoom's use of in the teaching and learning process. Indeed, Zoom classes intend to enhance the Learning process, engage students to learn, and reinforce the teacher-learner relationship.

The last research article about the use of online education in the teaching and learning process is conducted by Cherifi in 2018/2019 at the department of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. The study is entitled 'An Investigation into the Effects of Implementing a Web-Based Instructional Model in Promoting Learners' Autonomy'. This study attempts to investigate the effects of implementing a web-based instructional model of English learning and its effects on promoting EFL learners' autonomy. The study is conducted with fifty Master One EFL students. The findings reveal that the Web-based Instructional

model is an effective model of learning that positively contributes in promoting the learners' autonomy and independent learning in solving tasks, achieving objectives as well as improving their study skills. In particular, the students display positive attitudes and readiness in taking part of the web-based platform. More practically, they emphasize over the effectiveness of the implemented web-based tools as an active tools in developing their self-directed learning, decision-making skill, and self-evaluation skill.

It is worth mentioning that research works about using online education are increasingly conducted. However, due to the complexity of the problem, little information is available about the students' perceptions and satisfaction with Google Classroom as a learning tool for flexible English language teaching and learning. In particular, several universities and schools adopt online education by relying on Google Classroom. However, others universities such as Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou is one of the universities that does not rely on Google Classroom to sustain the online teaching and learning. The study attempts to investigate the students' perceptions as a way to promote the use and the adoption of Google Classroom in online teaching and learning.

The present investigation is conducted at the department of English at ENSB in Algiers. Recently, this school adopts the online teaching and learning by relying on Google Classroom in the EFL classes as a supplemental way of teaching and learning. Although different features of this application can create an interactive learning environment and improve the performance of the students, different barriers and obstacles can emerge in its implementation in the English Foreign Language courses which generally affect its effectiveness.

The study focuses on the use Google Classroom at ENSB and considers the EFL context and the first-year students as the case study. It attempts to explore the students' perceptions and their level of satisfaction while participating in Google Classroom as a way to

promote the adoption of the online platform in other universities and schools. It examines the efficacy of Google Classroom in promoting students' engagement and interaction and highlights the major difficulties that teachers and students likely encounter while using it.

Aims and Significance of the Study

The overall aim of this research is to investigate the first- year students' perceptions of the use of Google Classroom and its effectiveness as a learning tool, in addition to exploring their satisfaction of their learning and engagement using the platform. The objectives of the present research are: first, to identify the perceptions of the students regarding the use of Google Classroom as an effective learning tool. Second, to explore the teaching materials that are used in order to teach the basic skills of the English language via Google Classroom. The third objective is to consider the efficacy of Google Classroom in promoting the online form of interaction and engagement. As for the fourth and last objective, it is to determine the challenges faced by both the teachers and students in using Google Classroom.

Both teachers and students can benefit from the present study. Teachers can find this study useful in exploring new ways and tools of teaching the English language using Google Classroom. Furthermore, students of English in general and first-year students in particular can benefit from this study by learning more about this application and the different solutions that they can rely on to overcome the limitations and difficulties of using Google Classroom as a learning medium.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following questions are asked in order to reach the previously mentioned objectives:

1. Do students perceive Google Classroom as an effective learning tool?
2. What are the teaching materials used in Google Classroom in order to teach the basic skills of the English language?

3. Does Google Classroom foster the students' interaction and engagement?
4. What are the limitations encountered by the teachers and students in the implementation of Google Classroom in the EFL classes?

In order to answer these questions, the following hypotheses are advanced:

Hp 1- Students perceive Google Classroom as an effective tool for their learning.

Hp 2- The teaching materials that are used in Google Classroom in order to teach the basic skills of the English language are: texts, videos, pictures, and documents in the form of PDFs.

Hp 3- Google Classroom allows the students to interact with both their teachers and peers by trying a new form of interaction.

Hp 4- The difficulties that teachers and students can encounter when using Google Classroom are the lack of training, lack of participation and problems of Internet connection.

Research Techniques and Methodology

As a way to reach the aim of the present study, the mixed-methods research is adopted by using both the qualitative and the quantitative methods in the collection and the analysis of the data. The participants are the first-year students and the English language teachers of the department of English at ENSB in Algiers. The questionnaire and the structured interview are the instruments which are used in this investigation to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data. Fifty first-year students are asked to complete the questionnaire to know to what extent they are satisfied with the integration of Google Classroom in their learning. Concerning the structured interview, five EFL teachers are interviewed in order to enrich this research and better know the limitations and challenges of using Google Classroom and discover the teaching materials they generally adopt in their teaching of English. As for the analysis of the data, the present research uses the descriptive statistics through the SPSS for analysing the quantitative data, and the qualitative data are analysed through the Qualitative Content Analysis. The theoretical framework that is adopted

in the research is the ‘Technology Acceptance Model’ (TAM) by Davis (1989). It integrates two main components: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) in order to determine whether a given tool is accepted and adopted by its users. The model is used to assess the use of the technological means in the teaching and learning process. In particular, TAM is adopted in order to investigate the students’ perceptions and their level of satisfaction while using Google Classroom. It assesses the usefulness and accessibility of a given system to determine the extent to which its users accept to use it as a teaching and learning medium.

Structure of the Dissertation

The present dissertation follows the traditional simple model. It consists of four chapters, as well as, the General Introduction and the General Conclusion. The first chapter entitled ‘Review of the Literature’ is the theoretical part of our study. It reviews the previous studies and the main theoretical perspectives and concepts in literature related to our topic of investigation. The second chapter ‘Research Design and Methodology’ describes the different procedures and techniques of the data collection and the data analysis. The third chapter is named ‘Presentation of the Findings’ which displays the collected data from both the questionnaire and structured interview. The fourth and the last chapter is the ‘Discussion of the Findings’ which discusses and interprets the findings obtained from the research tools as a way to confirm or disconfirm the suggested hypotheses. Finally, the General conclusion provides the overall summary of the major points discussed all along the present research from the aims, methodology, methods, findings, and ends with recommendations for further studies

Chapter One: Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature that is related to our topic of investigation. It is divided into four sections. The first one deals with the concept of perception. It provides several definitions of perception. In the second section, different definitions of online education are provided. It reviews its origin and history in a general way. The third section focuses more on Google Classroom by defining it and determining how it works and its basic features. This section highlights the benefits and the limitations of the implementation of Google Classroom in the EFL classes. Then, it explores the way the online platform fosters the interaction between the teachers and students. The fourth section reviews and describes the theoretical framework upon which the present study is based.

1.1 Perception

1.1.1 Definition of Perception

The word ‘Perception’ is a Latin word which is defined by different authors and from different perspectives. In his chapter five entitled ‘Attitudes and Perceptions’, Pickens (2005) explains that “[...] a person is confronted with a situation or stimuli. The person interprets the stimuli into something meaningful to him or her based on prior experiences. However, what an individual interprets or perceives may be substantially different from reality” (p. 52). By this quotation, he means that individuals tend to interpret a situation or stimuli, which they face in their environment, and give it a meaning that can be distinct from reality. The quotation confirms that perception is a psychological process which can be far from reality. He adds that in the process of perception, individuals should accept and be aware of the stimuli since their awareness and acceptance play a significant role for a successful perception of the stimuli.

Aque (2007) asserts that the word perception is viewed as the information that the body obtains and perceives from the surroundings claiming that the human’s body is

responsible in the process of perception. Moreover, the concept of perception plays a significant role since it helps people to make sense of the world by means of their senses and the gathering of data from the surroundings.

Aque (2007) tries to explain the process through which a given object can be perceivable, he states that:

To be perceivable, the object must be able to be understood by the mind through the interplay of sight, sound, taste, touch and smell. To be perceived, a sensation must pass through the body through one of sensory organ, that is, the eye, ear, nose, mouth, or skin. To interpret that sensation is what is known as perception. The perceivable is that which can be interpreted by the body. (p. 1)

By this quotation, it is meant that the five senses: touch, sight, sound, smell, and taste play a role in the process of perception since they allow the mind to understand and perceive a given object. Furthermore, the five organs that is: the eye, ear, nose, mouth, and skin permit the body to receive a sensation which will pass through it. Finally the interpretation of the sensation is called 'Perception'.

Mcdonald (2011) provides a brief definition of the word 'Perception' by stating that "Perception involves the way one sees the world" (p. 3). By this definition , she tries to relate the concept of perception to the sense of 'seeing' the world that surrounds us. More precisely, she advocates that "Perception is a uniquely individualized experience. One can only draw from what is known to oneself" (Mcdonald, 2011, p. 5). Perception is characterised by the notion of 'Individuality' which means that each individual and each group has a unique way of viewing and perceiving a given phenomenon, and this experience is specific and personal to himself or herself.

She makes it clear that the concept of perception is an individual way of viewing the world. Individuals process the sensory information and relate them to their past experiences;

as a consequence, they lead to various actions. In other words, the comprehension of the stimuli can lead to a response. Furthermore, she concludes that “Perception is never objective” (McDonald, 2011, p. 15). It is a subjective way of considering a given phenomenon which incorporates memories and experiences for understanding it in an appropriate way. To understand the perceptual process, an example is taken from the book of ‘Sensation and Perception’ by Goldstein and Brockmole (2015), the process is illustrated in the following figure:

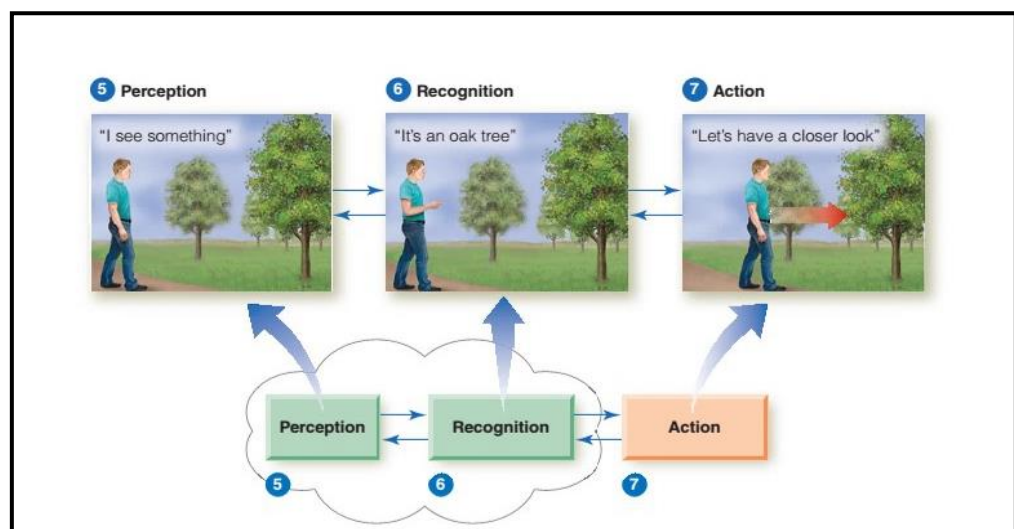


Figure 1: The Perceptual Process (Goldstein and Brockmole, 2015, p. 9)

The figure demonstrates that the process of perception follows three steps. It begins when the person sees something or an object with his eyes. Then, he tries to recognize it and understand that it is an oak tree. The last step is the action or the behaviour toward the perceived object. In this example, the person chooses to have a closer look. The example confirms that the process of perception leads to a specific behaviour.

Another significant definition of the word ‘Perception’ is given by Cherry (2020) who asserts that perception is related to the human senses by which they experience and perceive the world around them. It is considered as the recognition of the stimuli and the various actions that are encountered in the environment. Sensation and perception are considered as

interrelated concepts because one always results and plays a role in the other one. In addition to that, perception involves converting the stimuli which are found in the environment into various actions and responses. It is divided into many types including: vision, touch, sound, taste, and smell. Furthermore, another important type of perception is the ‘social perception’ which is regarded as the ability to consider and use social cues about people and relationships (Cherry, 2020). In short, individuals tend to have different perceptions of their surroundings according to their experiences.

1.1.2 Perception and Attitude

Although the two concepts of ‘Perception’ and ‘Attitude’ share some common points, they are considered as two distinct concepts.

Pickens (2005) mentions that “A simpler definition of attitude is a mindset or a tendency to act in a particular way due to both an individual’s experience and temperament” (p. 44). By this definition, he means that an attitude is a mental process which leads to various actions organised through the experiences of individuals. This definition highlights the idea that the common point between perception and attitude is the integration of humans’ experiences.

Attitudes play a role in explaining our behaviours. They cause us to behave in a specific way toward a person or given phenomenon. Pickens (2005) adds that:

Typically, when we refer to a person’s attitudes, we are trying to explain his or her behavior. Attitudes are a complex combination of things we tend to call personality, beliefs, values, behaviors, and motivations. As an example, we understand when someone says, “She has a positive attitude toward work” versus “She has a poor work attitude.” When we speak of someone’s attitude, we are referring to the person’s emotions and behaviors. (p. 44)

By this quotation, he means that attitudes are related to behaviours and emotions in the sense that they define and explain the way people act or behave toward a given object or situation. In addition to that, the individual's personality, beliefs, values, behaviours, and motivation are all incorporated for a whole understanding of the concept of attitude. An attitude is based on perception in the sense that it is a crucial element which allows people to have positive or negative attitudes toward a given object or situation.

Attitudes can be observed from a person's behaviours and actions. They are internal and external at the same time. There are two major characteristics of attitudes which are measurement and change. He says that "Attitudes come in different strengths, and like most things that are learned or influenced through experience, they can be measured and they can be changed" (Pickens, 2005, p. 48). Attitudes can be changed by convincing others to view a given object or situation in a different way. It can be done, but it requires much time and effort.

1.2 Online Education

1.2.1 Definition

Online education plays a crucial role in the educational sector during the last three years especially in the higher education. This is due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in which online learning has been the main concern and the only clue to ensure the continuity of the academic years. As a result, online teaching and learning has been widely integrated in the educational system in all parts of the world. Online education is defined differently by authors from different perspectives since the concept is wide and can be tackled from different angles.

Online education is regarded as a form of distance learning since both concepts are characterised by the separation in time and space between the instructor and the students. According to kiryakova (2009), "Distance education is a form of education in which the participants in educational process – teacher and learners are physically separated and

communicate by different means and at different times” (p. 29). This definition highlights that distance education involves an interaction between teachers and students. However, this kind of online interaction is realised through different media and technological devices. It allows both teachers and learners to work freely. Therefore, it encourages flexible teaching and learning in which a foreign language is taught and learned without considering the two notions of time and setting.

The participants in distance education are both teachers and learners who are obliged to communicate and interact with each other in order to achieve better learning outcomes. This communication is divided into two main types:

Communication between participants in distance learning is synchronous and asynchronous: Synchronous communication allows participants to take part in learning at the same time. Feedback is immediate. Synchronous communication is realized by telecourses, teleconference, chats, etc. Asynchronous communication gives an opportunity to learners to connect to the teacher or connect with each other at a convenient time and place. Asynchronous communication is realized by email, audio courses, discussion boards, etc. (kiryakova, 2009, p. 30)

By Synchronous communication, she means the type of distance learning which requires a timetable and a kind of organisation due to the fact that this learning is restricted to time and context. All the participants are required to be present and participate in a given lesson at the same moment by making use of online materials and devices. However, Asynchronous communication refers to the form of online learning which does not respect the two aspects of time and setting. Therefore, the instructor and the students are not required to meet together at the same time and the same setting, but they are free to access the courses whenever and wherever they want. This allows them to be flexible and free in the teaching and learning process.

Another definition is provided by Dhull and Arora (2017) who consider online education as the “learning that comprises a range of technologies such as the worldwide web, email, chat, new groups and texts, audio and video conferencing delivered over computer networks to impart education, it helps the learner to learn at their own pace, according to their own convenience” (p. 32). Based on this definition, the two authors assume that online teaching and learning is created basically through combining audio, video, computer, and other technologies. It is a form of teaching and learning that uses electronic means attempting to make autonomous and independent learners who can be more creative and productive and can rely on themselves to make their learning more effective.

Online teaching and learning plays a major role in improving the students’ performance in relation to their learning. It transfers the face of the traditional classrooms and provides online classes which make learning more accessible. The traditional and the online classes differ in terms of location, time, teaching strategies and materials. Online learning is regarded as a system which is characterised by the notion of flexibility allowing the learners to attend online classes either by presenting at a given moment and making an online interaction with the teacher or by accessing the learning materials and activities which are sent by the instructor.

1.2.2 Origins and History of Online Education

The online education becomes the major concern of various institutions and educational systems around the world. It has a remarkable and an interesting history that allows it to evolve to the current situation. It is claimed that the online education is not a recent concept despite the fact that the technological devices are new. The concept is over 170 years old and it is originated as a result of a correspondence course offered in Great Britain where the instructor has provided his students with lessons and they have completed the assignments and sent it back by means of mail (Tom, 2017). The technology which is used as

a medium of teaching and learning during these years is the correspondence via mail. The mail service is an inexpensive way of communicating between the teachers and the students. It is viewed as the root of the concept of online education. Teachers send their lectures, instructions and assignments to the learners via mail, and as a response the learners return completed works to their teachers.

Moreover, the objective of the correspondence education is to promote the quality of teaching and learning and provide a better learning experience as Kentnor (2015) who claims that “Whether it was to educate students for degrees, update professional knowledge and skills, or to train new soldiers, the goal of correspondence education was to provide a quality education and enable any and all to expand their intellect and knowledge” (p. 24).

According to Cohen (2021), online learning has dramatically developed since its emergence. Universities have been offering online courses thanks to the appearance of the Internet in the 1990s. With the explosion of the technological devices between 2006 and 2010, the concept of online learning has become common and accessible to everyone. All these technologies play a key role in the evolution of online education starting with the correspondence education, then the radio and the television which have allowed for the visualisation of education and making it more effective. The latest stage is the usage of the Internet which makes online learning more significant and accessible.

1.2.3 Tools of Online Education

Online education is made possible by using various teaching materials and resources as tools to ensure that learners have a stimulating learning atmosphere that can push them to achieve better learning outcomes. The different technologies make the content of the courses more interesting by including voice, pictures and videos. These materials are delivered to the learners by using Internet. Hence, technologies are used to support online education, and these include “correspondence courses, physical mail, and printed matter; telephone and/or audio

recordings; television and/or video recordings; computer-assisted instruction; group communications (asynchronous and synchronous); the Web and multimedia materials; simulation and gaming; collaborative learning [...]” (Hiltz & Turrof, 2005, p. 59). E-mail tends to be the most used tool in online education due to the fact that it establishes a link between the learners, their peers and the teaching staff. Even questions can be asked and answered via e-mails. The instructors can send documents which contain the course content that the students are required to access and learn.

Nowadays, online education is based on various applications and platforms that provide students with an enhanced learning experience and bring innovation into language teaching and learning. They facilitate the teaching and learning process by supporting the teachers and students and helping them to use their resources. Velarde (2021) lists some online teaching tools that can be used to enrich the online classes. Among these tools, there is ‘Visme’ which is an online design instrument which can be used to make presentations, reports and schedules. Teachers and students can use Visme to have a creative experience and also to interact with each other. The second tool is ‘Google Classroom’ by which teachers can post lessons, assessments, quizzes, and tests. The application is very useful and easy to tackle. It also fosters the interaction between the teachers and students via message boards or email. In 2020, Google Classroom was associated with Google Meet which makes it easier to conduct an online class. The third tool of online education is ‘Zoom’. It makes the process of online teaching and learning very simple and interesting. It allows students to be separated into different groups as in the traditional classrooms. Moreover, a ‘Web White board App’ is an online tool which is used to import PDFs and PowerPoint files. It is also integrated with Zoom which makes it easier to create online classes. Additionally, ‘Dialogad’ allows for the teachers and students to chat, meet, text, and interact online. It permits to send updates and announcements and check the completion of the

assignments. Hence, all these online tools share the same purpose in the process of online education that is to make a better teaching and learning experience for both teachers and learners.

Athuraliya (2021) asserts that the different online platforms allow for the submission of homeworks which are considered as an essential part in the teaching and learning process. There exist various forms of homeworks such as essays, tests, speeches, etc. Each platform can serve a specific role in completing and submitting the homeworks. Among them, there is 'Google Docs' that can be used for essays and the written assignments. 'Zoom, Skype, and other video conferencing applications' that can be used for verbal assignments. Additionally, there is 'Google Classroom' that allows to distribute assignments, grades and make feedbacks.

1.3 Google Classroom

1.3.1 Definition of Google Classroom

Nowadays, Google Classroom is considered to be a worldwide used application for the new form of education that is the online teaching and learning. According to McGinnis (2021), Google Classroom is a specific platform that has been announced by Google to meet the needs of both teachers and learners. It establishes a link between the teachers and students as it allows assignments to be created and distributed. Gmail is considered to be the most attached application to Google Classroom since it permits classroom communication between the various participants.

According to Edwards (2022), Google Classroom is an online platform that is used by teachers to set assignments, receive work completed by their learners and to return graded papers. It is offered by Google in order to make the digital teaching and learning less complicated and more interesting and enjoyable at the same time.

As many schools in the world favor online education, Google Classroom becomes a widely used online tool by teachers and students since it can be attached to various applications such as: Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, Sites, Earth, Calendar, and Gmail. Google Classroom can be used along with Google Hangouts and Google Meet that allow for face-to-face teaching and questions as well as a real online interaction (Edwards, 2022). All these services are combined to create a stimulating learning environment and facilitate the online teaching and learning by allowing the participants to build an efficient learning context where they can share information and assignments.

1.3.2 Functions of Google Classroom

Google Classroom is an online tool that allows the teachers and students to collaborate with each other in order to achieve better learning outcomes. It simplifies the classroom organisation, as well as, the distribution of resources and assignments as DiMaria (2016) who asserts that the platform saves time and paper and facilitates the creation of classes. Both teachers and students use Google Classroom differently as they are assigned divergent roles in it. The instructor can create a class and invite the students to join by email.

According to McGinnis (2021), “Google Classroom integrates with Google Meet, and teachers can set up video meetings from within Google Classroom for live, or “synchronous,” instruction” (p. 1). It allows the instructor to make oral discussions and debates about the learning contents and the various issues that the students encounter while studying online. Furthermore, the application is not that difficult to access. It is an easy-to-use platform as the participants can set up quickly and access it from computers, mobile phones or tablets. Hence, it is characterised by its simplicity to log in and receive assignments.

Google Classroom is a free-to-use application and all the services attached to it are also for free. McGinnis (2021) adds that “An education institution will need to sign-up for the service in order to add all its students and teachers. This is to make sure security is as tight as

possible so no outsiders can access the information of the students involved” (p. 1). This quotation confirms that the users of the platform can ensure that their personal information are highly secured. Since Google Classroom is used for educational purposes, it does not show any advertisement, nor does it use the data of the participants for advertising or commercial purposes.

1.3.3 Features of Google Classroom

Online education is mediated by the use of technology and various applications like Google Classroom. According to Guemide and Maouche (2020), “Online learning meets the needs of an overgrowing population of students who cannot/ or prefer not to participate in traditional classroom settings” (p. 495). Some students prefer to attend online classes which are characterised by individuality and independence in learning. It satisfies the needs of those who face challenges in learning as being living in remote places or working the whole day or week and cannot study only after finishing their work. In such a case, learning online is the suitable option for them.

Kumar (2020) specifies some interesting features of online education. Online education encourages flexible and independent learning by eliminating the two notions of time and location. He argues that the online courses are considered to be of a high-quality interaction between students and teachers. In addition to that, online teaching and learning is characterised by an unlimited number of audience as one online course can be attended by a great number of the students. Another noticeable feature is the lower costs of learning online. It is stated that the feature of lower costs is not associated with a lower quality, but it increases the students’ interests to access the various online courses. Finally, online education helps to achieve higher retention rates since it reduces pressures which can affect negatively the students.

Different activities can be done within Google Classroom. Firstly, the teachers can create and upload assignments for the students relying on YouTube videos, articles, documents, and PDFs from the Drive. They can also add a deadline for the submission of the assignments. Students receive an email notification of the assignment and when a given task is completed, they can send it back to be graded by their teacher. Secondly, teachers can create and post announcements about the update of the class which are notices that inform the students about any class session, deadlines or tests. Thirdly, live classes are considered to be one of the visible and recently added features to Google Classroom. Teachers can create a virtual class using Google Meet and add an unlimited number of the participants to join. They meet to make debates and discussions of various topics and lectures and this option allows the recording of the meetings for the students who are absent (Mukundan, 2022).

1.3.4 Benefits and Limitations of Google Classroom

- **Benefits of Google Classroom**

Google Classroom is a teaching and learning medium which benefits both teachers and students as it offers a variety of options which can be used to create an effective learning atmosphere. The application can be downloaded for free for anyone. According to Shaharane, Jamil, and Rodzi (2016), “Google classroom can be elevated to become a pedagogical/cognitive tool to help in changing the focus of the classroom from one that is teacher-centered and controlled to one that is learner-centered and open to inquiry, dialogue, and creative thinking on the part of learners as active participants” (pp. 5-6). It focuses more on the learners and their interests by creating a context where they can participate, interact, and negotiate the learning materials with the instructor. Furthermore, it allows them to develop the higher-order thinking skills and the problem-solving skills.

Additionally, online learning plays a significant role in developing the learners' cognitive abilities as it is assumed that "The student can take such a course online which can be helpful for the development of his cognitive abilities" (Dhull & Arora, 2017, p. 32). The learners also have the chance to learn and gain the experience and skills which will be useful for their personal and professional life as "Both on and off campus students who choose to study online have an opportunity to gain technical skills in using Information Communication Technology (ICT)" (Dhull & Arora, 2017, p. 33).

Another benefit of Google Classroom is its accessibility as Guemide and Maouche (2020) who claim that the online education "is easily accessible and can even reach to rural and remote areas" (p. 498). It tries to get rid of the limitations which can reduce its effectiveness by integrating different groups of learners such as those living in remote places. Online teaching and learning provided by the platform is not restricted to a specific geographical area as students can learn from anywhere in the world.

Based on Mukundan (2022), "With all files saved in one place, teachers have time to focus on lesson plans and assessments rather than spend time on redundant administrative work" (p. 1). Google Classroom helps the teachers to make a more convenient classroom management and digitally organise, create, distribute, and collect different assignments and learning materials. Thus, it makes the teaching and learning process more focused and organised. It is time-saving and paperless which gives the teachers the opportunity to assess and grade the students' work more quickly. The users of the platform can access and check the learning content on a variety of devices as long as the Internet connection is available.

- **Limitations of Google Classroom**

Although Google Classroom offers various benefits for its users, it has also some limitations which reduce its effectiveness. Pappas (2015) mentions some of these drawbacks as limited integration options, too googlish, editing problems, and difficult learner sharing.

Since Google Classroom is not connected with Google Calender, teachers face problems as they find it difficult to organise the teaching materials and the deadlines of the assignments. The platform is described as too 'googlish' due to the fact that it causes confusion. The users of the application find themselves strangers with the various bottons available in it. This makes things more complicated for both teachers and students who need to get trained for an effective use of Google Classroom. Also, the learners are not given the opportunity to share their works with others since they are obliged to own the documents themselves. They can cause problems when editing a document or deleting some sections of the assignments.

Furthermore, Dhull and Arora (2017) claim that "Studies show that feeling of isolation was a huge stress factor that prompted students to drop out" (p. 33). The online classes lack the eye contact and the real interaction due to the fact that the teachers and students are separated from each other. Learners face many obstacles especially when the content is challenging and problematic and which requires a special support and motivation from the teacher since motivation is a key concept in education and the lack of motivation brings negative results.

The technologies which are used online lead to a number of difficulties as "[...] downloading errors, issues with installation, login problems, problems with audio and video" (Guemide & Maouche, 2020, p. 499) as well as problems of the Internet connection. These technical problems reduce the quality of online education and make its planning and implementation more complicated. Moreover, they clearly mention that practice is considered to be the only clue for a successful outcome in the teaching and learning process. However, the content of the online courses is viewed to be more theoretical than practical and this does not allow for the students to practice the skills and knowledge that are acquired.

1.3.5 Google Classroom and Interaction

The two methods of teaching, the traditional and the online, differ in various points especially from the angle of interaction. In contrast to the face-to-face interaction in the traditional classrooms, the online courses can be done without a real interaction between the teachers and the students. This interaction is made possible by using different technologies and devices such as emails. Individuals tend to assume that the new way of teaching and learning is more suitable and favorable than the traditional way, as Hiltz and Turrof (2005) who point out that “In viewing the current and future impact of computing in higher education, we must assume the technology of online learning will produce learning systems of a blended nature that are far better than the prior “gold standard” of the face-to-face class” (p. 59).

The student-teacher interaction is made easy with Google Classroom as the creation of announcements is as easy as possible. In addition to the video conferencing tools which permit a virtual communication between teachers and learners. Teachers can make learning more engaging and interactive using the online platform. McGinnis (2021) announces that:

To make learning with digital content more dynamic for students, consider mixing up the types of resources you share with them in Google Classroom. In addition to Google Workspace tools like Docs and Slides, teachers and students can share other types of media, including images, links to websites, YouTube videos, and screen casts. Some teachers even give students a variety of options for submitting their work within Google Classroom. For example, you might offer students the choice to respond to a reading assignment with a comment, video clip, or drawing that shows their thinking. (p. 1)

The quotation confirms that Google Classroom gives the teachers a variety of options to stimulate the students' engagement and interaction and create active and dynamic learners. They should mix different learning materials either authentic or contrived to fit their students' interests.

For Mukundan (2022), Google Classroom is integrated with various applications and websites which give the teachers the opportunity to organise their lessons in an interactive and engaging way. One significant application that fosters communication between the different participants is Gmail. It enables the teachers to provide announcements and ask questions that are supposed to be answered by the students.

As a part of interaction, teachers can make announcements and reminders about the assignments when using Google Classroom. They can also check the completion of the students' works as well as communicating with individual students privately by answering their questions and motivating them. Moreover, they can offer effective, corrective and immediate feedback for the learners as a response to their works. Since students differ in their learning preferences, the instructor should work to fit their needs as some may prefer to read articles and others may favor to watch and listen to a video or a recording. Google Classroom offers the teachers the possibility to upload documents, videos, and audio files, and share the resources in order to satisfy their students.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

1.4.1 The Technology Acceptance Model

The present investigation seeks to determine the students' perceptions of the use of Google Classroom as an educational tool in the teaching and learning process. It is based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which is developed by Davis (1989). It serves as an interesting model that assesses the usage and the adoption of technology in the context of

teaching and learning. “The technology acceptance model (TAM) specifies the causal relationships between system design features, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude toward using, and actual usage behavior” (Davis, 1993, p. 475). These are the variables which are used in determining a user’s intention to use a given system.

In the case of Google Classroom, TAM can be used as a guide to explore the users’ satisfaction. The model incorporates two major factors which are: **1- Perceived Usefulness (PU)** and **2- Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)** in order to determine whether a given tool is accepted by its users. TAM focuses on its potential users, it believes that Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness determine the extent to which the users of a given platform accept to use and adopt it.

Lee, Kozar, and Larsen (2003) claim that “Of all the theories, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is considered the most influential and commonly employed theory for describing an individual’s acceptance of information systems” (p. 752). The Technology Acceptance Model is viewed as the commonly used model for explaining the reasons behind a specific group of users adopts a certain technological device or platform.

According to Chuttur (2009), “Although many models have been proposed to explain and predict the use of a system, the Technology Acceptance Model has been the only one which has captured the most attention of the Information Systems community” (p. 1). This quotation once again confirms the reliability and the effectiveness of TAM in explaining the users’ acceptance of a given system. He adds that “The attitude of the user, in turn, was considered to be influenced by two major beliefs: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, with perceived ease of use having a direct influence on perceived usefulness” (Chuttur, 2009, p. 2). He explains that the model incorporates two major variables which influence the attitudes of the users. These variables are Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use.

1.4.2 The Technology Acceptance Model and Theory of Reasoned Action

Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw (1989) assert that before the adaptation of the Technology Acceptance Model, there is a previous theory named 'Theory of Reasoned Action' (TRA). It is a model employed in predicting the behaviours of users across a variety of domains. However, it is very general since it does not specify the beliefs that are operative for a particular behaviour. The Technology Acceptance Model was developed by Davis as an adaptation of TRA in order to explain the computer usage behaviour. Davis et al. (1989) precise that "TAM uses TRA as a theoretical basis for specifying the causal linkages between two key beliefs: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, and users' attitudes, intentions and actual computer adoption behavior" (p. 983). TAM and TRA are associated to each other in the sense that TAM uses TRA for explaining the relation between Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use and the person's use of a particular system.

TRA explains the behaviour of a person toward a given system by considering his or her Behavioural Intention (**BI**). This Behavioural Intention can be determined by two factors: the Person's Attitude (**A**) and Subjective Norm (**SN**): $BI = A + SN$.

In an attempt to specify the goal of the Technology Acceptance Model, Davis et al. (1989) report that:

The goal of TAM is to provide an explanation of the determinants of computer acceptance that is general, capable of explaining user behavior across a broad range of end-user computing technologies and user populations, while at the same time being both parsimonious and theoretically justified. Ideally one would like a model that is helpful not only for prediction but also for explanation, so that researchers and practitioners can identify why a particular system may be unacceptable, and

pursue appropriate corrective steps. A key purpose of TAM, therefore, is to provide a basis for tracing the impact of external factors on internal beliefs, attitudes, and intentions. (p. 985)

In their research paper, Davis et al. (1989) compare the performance of TAM with TRA for predicting the intention of 107 students in using a Word Processing System. They conduct two main studies: one after a one-hour exposure with the system and another study after 14 weeks. They state that the beliefs variables of both TAM and TRA provide significant results in determining the intention of the participants to use the Word Processor. They conclude that TAM is simple and less expensive compared to TRA.

TAM is a model which is based on two particular beliefs: Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use for explaining the computer acceptance behaviours. “Perceived usefulness (U) is defined as the prospective user's subjective probability that using a specific application system will increase his or her job performance within an organizational context. Perceived ease of use (EOU) refers to the degree to which the prospective user expects the target system to be free of effort” (Davis et al., 1989, p. 985). Perceived Usefulness has to do with the extent to which a given system is useful to its users while Perceived Ease of Use is related to the easiness in navigating that system. As TAM is linked to TRA, it tries to explain the computer usage by determining **BI**. On the other hand, **BI** is determined by joining the Person's Attitude toward using the system (**A**) and Perceived Usefulness (**U**): $BI = A + U$ (Davis et al., 1989). The following figure shows the relationships between the different elements in TAM:

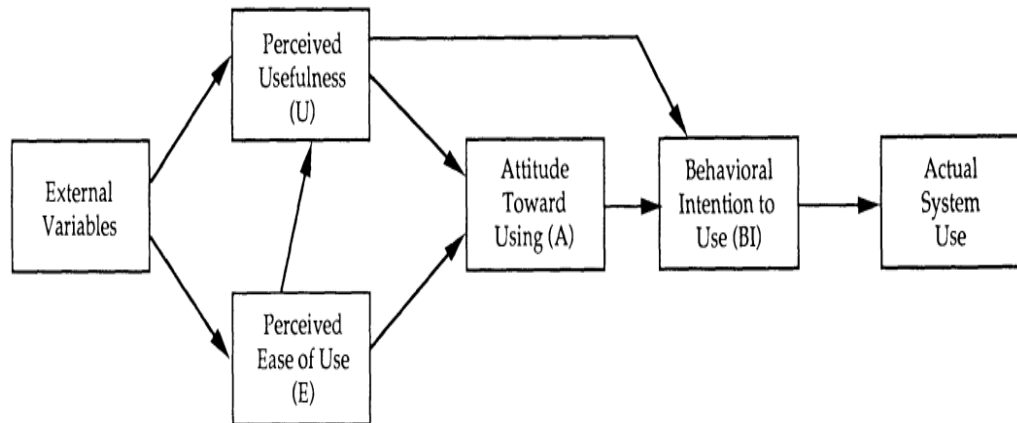


Figure2: Variables of the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis et al., 1989, p. 985)

The figure above displays that **A** is jointly determined by **U** and **EAU**: $A = U + EOU$ (Davis et al., 1989, p. 986). Perceived Ease of Use affects directly Perceived Usefulness. Perceived Usefulness affects directly Behavioural Intention to Use. The external variables like the features of the system design affect directly Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use. Finally, external variables indirectly influence attitude through their direct effect on Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use. Davis et al. (1989, p. 987) provide the following equations as a way to explain TAM.

$$U = EOU + \text{External Variables.... Equation (1)}$$

$$EOU = \text{External Variables..... Equation (2)}$$

Equation (1) displays that **U** is jointly determined by **EOU** and the **external variables**. While equation (2) shows that **EOU** is also theorized by **external variables**.

Davis et al. (1989) argue that TAM is self-reported which is viewed as its unique limitation. It is considered as being subjective in reporting its findings. They conclude that Perceived Usefulness is a major determinant of users' intentions and that Perceived Ease of

Use is considered to be a significant secondary determinant. In addition to that, it is confirmed that Perceived Usefulness is a major determinant of BI in both TRA and TAM.

1.4.3 Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use

The Technology Acceptance Model is determined by two main variables to measure the extent to which a given system is accepted by its users as stated by Davis (1989):

Among the many variables that may influence system use, previous research suggests two determinants that are especially important. First, people tend to use or not use an application to the extent they believe it will help them perform their job better. We refer to this first variable as perceived usefulness. Second, even if potential users believe that a given application is useful, they may, at the same time, believe that the systems is too hard to use and that the performance benefits of usage are out-weighed by the effort of using the application. That is, in addition to usefulness, usage is theorized to be influenced by perceived ease of use. (p. 320)

By this quotation, it is determined that TAM consists of two main variables which help to measure the extent to which the users of a given system are satisfied while using it. These two variables are:

- **Perceived Usefulness**: is defined as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” (Davis, 1989, p. 320).
- **Perceived Ease of Use**: refers to “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort. This follows from the definition of ease: freedom from difficulty or great effort” (Davis, 1989, p. 320). It should be noted that Perceived Usefulness is prominent over Perceived Ease of Use.

Davis (1989) argues that Perceived Usefulness should be taken into consideration by designers for designing successful systems. In addition to that, the two variables of TAM are considered to be subjective items of performance and effort of users of a given system and they do not reflect objective reality. Furthermore, Davis (1993) reports that “Perceived ease of use is hypothesized to have a significant direct effect on perceived usefulness. Between two systems that perform the identical set of function, a user should find the one that is easier to use more useful” (p. 477). The quotation confirms that Perceived Ease of Use directly affects Perceived Usefulness. However, Perceived Usefulness does not have an impact on Perceived Ease of Use.

The present research also integrates the work of Shaharane et al. (2016) who claim that “The users (teachers or students) must have perceptions that Google classroom is useful in helping in the teaching and learning process, as its ease of use they will intend to use it when needs arise” (p. 5). They argue that students can be satisfied with the online platform when they perceive it as an active learning tool. The current research relies on their questionnaire as a reference in order to determine the users’ satisfaction with Google Classroom as a teaching and learning tool.

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to explain the basic concepts related to online teaching and learning in general, and more specifically the use of Google Classroom in the educational context. It has attempted to put emphasis on the effectiveness of using the online platform in promoting the interaction, engagement and communication between the teachers and learners by relying on the Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis (1989).

Chapter Two: Research Design

Introduction

This chapter deals with the research design which is adopted in the present study and the appropriate methodology that is used. It describes the tools and the procedures of the data collection and data analysis. The chapter is divided into two major parts. The first part deals with the procedures of the data collection. It determines the research method and the sample population in addition to the description and the justification of the data collection tools used in this research. The second part explains and justifies the procedures of the data analysis and also highlights the methods that are employed for analysing the data obtained from the tools used in the investigation.

2.1 Procedures of Data Collection

2.1.1 Research Method

As a way to reach the aim of the present study, answer the questions, test the hypotheses, and obtain valid and reliable data, the research needs to be based on an appropriate methodology as well as reliable techniques and data collection and analysis tools. The present study adopts the mixed-methods research by using both the qualitative and quantitative methods for an effective collection of data which are relevant for our study.

The mixed-methods research combines the benefits of the quantitative and qualitative methods in one single research in order to gain a more complete picture of a given phenomenon as Dawadi, Shrestha, and Giri (2021) who claim that “Mixing two methods might be superior to a single method as it is likely to provide rich insights into the research phenomena that cannot be fully understood by using only qualitative or quantitative methods” (p. 27). The reason behind selecting the mixed-methods research is the objectives and the research questions which necessitate the integration of both the quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the questions and have a full understanding of the research theme.

2.1.2 The Context and Sample Population

The present research is carried out at the department of English at ENSB in Algiers during the academic year 2021-2022. The representative population of the study is the first-year students. The reason behind selecting such a population is the fact that the first-year students are not familiar with the online education by using Google Classroom and this is considered to be their first experience. From the whole population of the first-year students that is 224 students, the sample consists of fifty students who are chosen randomly to be given the questionnaire in order to represent the whole population. Another tool of research that is adopted is the structured interview. Five teachers are chosen randomly to be interviewed at the department of English at ENSB to know to what extent they are satisfied while using Google Classroom as a teaching tool.

2.1.3 Research Tools

The main techniques that are adopted in our research to collect the data that are relevant to our study are both the questionnaire and structured interview. Both tools allow the research to be a mixed-methods research in the collection and analysis of data and this make our study more reliable and valid.

- **Students' Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a data collection tool that is used to gather data about a given topic and from a given population. According to Mathers, Fox, and Hunn (2007), "A questionnaire is a very convenient way of collecting useful comparable data from a large number of individuals" (p. 19). It is a research instrument that allows the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data from an unlimited number of the participants. According to the definition, a questionnaire permits to collect data that can be easily compared with each other and easily analysed. It consists of a set of items including both the close-ended and open-ended

questions to be answered by the participants. The questionnaire is addressed to the first-year students who are required to complete them either by selecting the right answer (s) among the existing ones or by writing out their own responses.

This research adopts a questionnaire that consists of seventeen items addressed to fifty students. It is divided into three main sections. The first section contains the background information about the students. The second section deals with the students' perceptions of the use of Google Classroom as a learning tool. The last section is designed to gather information about the students' learning experience of Google Classroom.

Most of the items of our questionnaire are closed-ended items that allow the students to choose from a set of answers in order to get quantitative data. We make a variation of closed-ended items by mixing yes/no questions, multiple choice questions and likert-scale as a way to gather numerical data for our research. In addition, the questionnaire incorporates some open-ended items in the form of clarification items to make our instrument more reliable.

In order to make the questionnaire more reliable, it has been piloted with ten students of the department of English at ENSB. They have been provided with the online form of the questionnaire to know to what extent the items of the instrument have been understood. The questions have been clear and understood for the piloted sample and the questionnaire has been distributed right after.

- **Teachers' Interview**

The interview is the second tool that is used in our research to obtain qualitative data. According to Biggam (2011), "Interviews are an appropriate means of collecting qualitative data, and commonly used in case studies" (p. 281). It is an instrument of data collection used to gather information by asking a series of questions. It represents a meeting or dialogue with

a given number of participants where personal and social interaction occur, and where the interviewer has the opportunity to clarify and explain more precisely the aim of the study and the interview for the interviewees.

An interview “[...] provides the opportunity to obtain qualitative data in a manner that has the benefit of providing an overall question framework and focus for the interviewer yet also providing the opportunity for the interviewee to express their views” (Biggam, 2011, p. 281). That is to say, the interview is a remarkable source of qualitative data that benefits the researcher in order to enrich their research and also the interviewees to express themselves more freely and provide an accurate amount of information about a given phenomenon. Another advantage of this technique is that it allows the researcher to ask for more clarifications and explanations from the respondents as “[...] the interview is not restricted to the questions that the interviewer initially intends to pose: in other words, if issues arise during the interview process, and are deemed relevant to the research issues, then these issues will be pursued” (Biggam, 2011, p. 281). This quotation affirms that the interviews are not limited and prepared at 100 % in terms of questions, but they are open to changes and elaborations if a given issue is encountered during the interview and the researcher perceives that it is relevant for the research paper.

The use of the interview is therefore suitable for the present research because it allows for in-depth discussion with a given number of teachers. In the research at hand, a structured form of the interview is adopted which consists of eleven direct questions related to the use of Google Classroom as a tool of teaching English to ensure that the interview has a clear direction and turns around the topic of investigation. The questions are addressed to five teachers who used Google Classroom during the academic year 2021-2022. Most of the

questions of the interview turn around training, teaching materials, accessibility, and some problems related to the use of Google Classroom.

2.2 Procedures of Data Analysis

This part provides a detailed description of the main methods that are used in the analysis of the data. The research tools that are adopted allow obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data. Thus, the data are analysed by using two main procedures of data analysis: the Descriptive Statistics through SPSS and the Qualitative Content Analysis.

2.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

The Descriptive Statistics analyses and interprets the quantitative data which are obtained from the closed-ended items that are embedded in the questionnaire. It transforms and interprets the numerical data in the form of tables, charts, figures, and diagrams. It is done through the computer program SPSS which deals with the numerical data. According to Landau and Everitt (2004), the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is a software package of programs that is used in the analysis and presentation of numerical data. It is generally integrated in the fields of social and behavioral sciences.

2.2.2 Qualitative Content Analysis

The qualitative data are analysed and interpreted by using the Qualitative Content Analysis. It is defined by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) as a method of research which allows to interpret the content of a text by using a systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. This method is used to practically transform the qualitative data that are in the form of large texts and passages into fewer content categories. In this technique, the content of a given document is analysed by the frequency with particular categories of meaning that are created. It is used in the present investigation by categorising

the answers of the participants that are obtained from the open-ended items of the questionnaire and the interview. Different categories of meaning are created in order to interpret the results in a convenient way through the Qualitative Content Analysis.

Conclusion

The chapter has provided a description and justification of the research design and methodology that is adopted in the present study. First, it has presented the research method, the context and the sample population involved in the research. The next part has been devoted to the explanation of the data collection tools adopted which are the questionnaire and the structured interview. Finally, the chapter has described the methods used to analyse the collected data and which are the Descriptive Statistics and the Qualitative Content Analysis.

Chapter Three:

Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is designed to describe the findings of the two instruments: the questionnaire and the interview. It includes two main parts. The first part presents the results obtained from the students' questionnaire while the second part is devoted to the findings of the teachers' interview. The results of the research are displayed in the form of tables, pie charts and diagrams.

3.1 Presentation of the Results of the Questionnaire

3.1.1 Background Information

This section is about the background information of the students. It is designed to collect general and personal information about the participants.

Q1: How difficult is the learning of English at ENSB?

This question is asked in order to determine to what extent the study of English is difficult at ENSB.

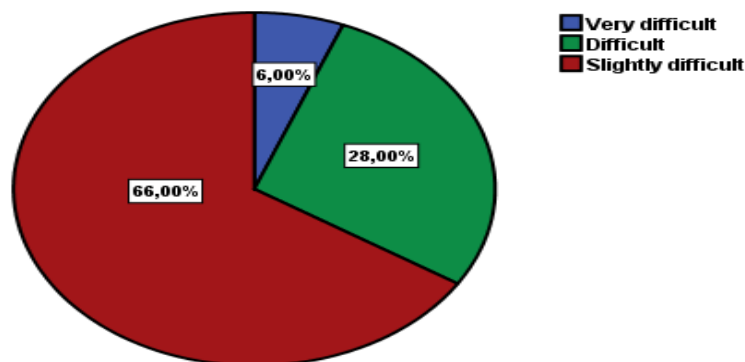


Diagram 1: Difficulty of Learning English at ENSB

The results displayed in diagram (1) show that the majority of the first-year students (66%) state that the learning of English at ENSB is slightly difficult while (28%) of them find it difficult. The other participants (6%) say that English at ENSB is very difficult.

Q2: How often do you use Google Classroom to access the courses of English?

This question is asked to check whether the students access and use Google Classroom to get the English courses sent by their teachers.

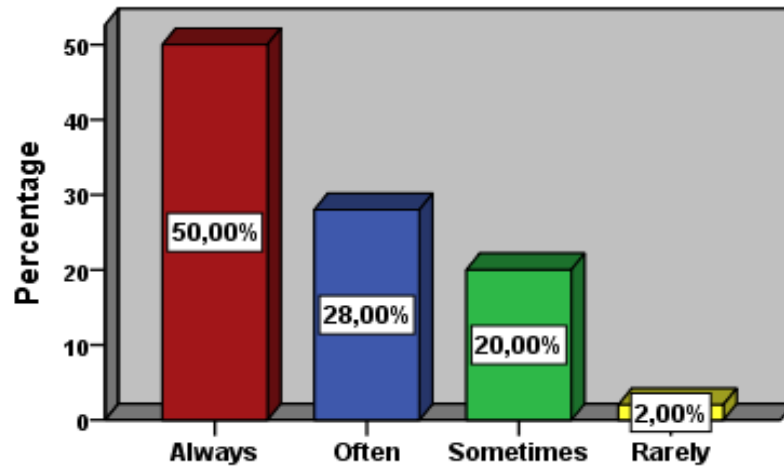


Diagram 2: Students' Use of Google Classroom to Access the English Courses

As highlighted in diagram (2), half of the students (50%) state that they always access the courses of English using Google Classroom while (28%) of the participants mention that they often get the English courses from Google Classroom. An average of (20%) of the students give the answer of 'sometimes' and the minority of participants (2%) say that they rarely use the online platform to access the lectures of English sent by their teachers.

Q3: Have you ever used Google Classroom before arriving at ENSB?

The purpose of this question is to determine the students' familiarity with Google Classroom before starting their study at ENSB and whether they have already used it.

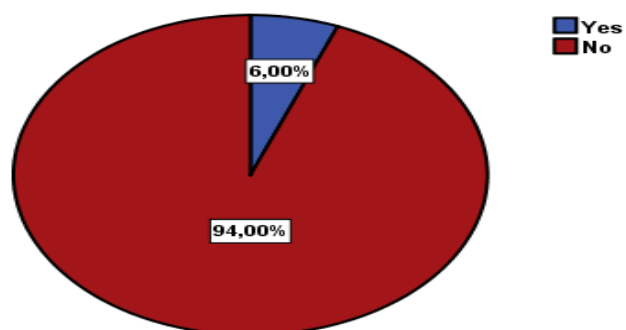


Diagram 3: Students' Familiarity with Google Classroom

Diagram (3) shows that the majority of the first-year students (94%) are not familiar with Google Classroom and have not used it before arriving at ENSB. However, a minority of the students (6%) say that they have used the online platform before.

Q4: Have you ever received any training before participating in Google Classroom?

By this question, we intend to check whether the participants have received any kind of training for using Google Classroom.

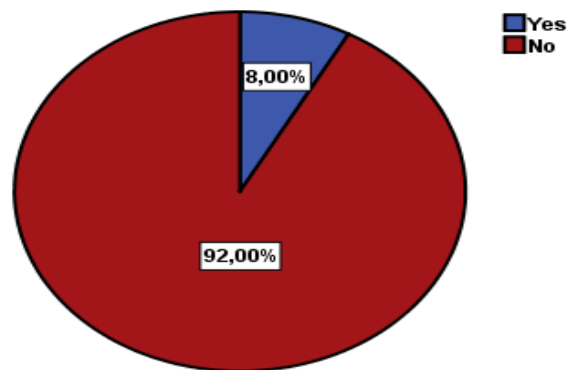


Diagram 4: Students' Training in Using Google Classroom

Diagram (4) displays that a percentage of (92%) of the first-year students have not received any kind of training before participating in Google Classroom while a minority of the participants (8%) say that they have been trained to use the online platform before participating in it.

Q5: How important is getting trained for an effective use of Google Classroom?

This question is asked in order to identify the students' opinions about the importance of training for using Google Classroom in an effective way.

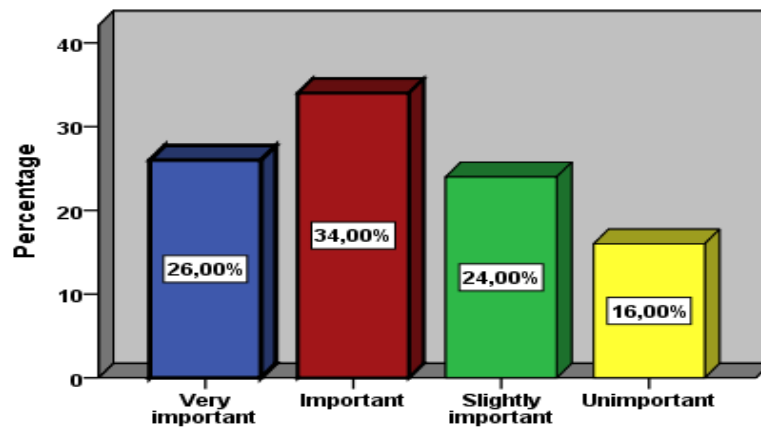


Diagram 5: Importance of Training in Using Google Classroom

According to the results revealed in diagram (5), we understand that (34% + 26%) of the first-year students perceive that training in using Google Classroom is important and significant. A percentage of (24%) of the respondents see that the concept of training is slightly important while a minority of them (16%) perceive that it is not important to get trained in order to use Google Classroom.

3.1.2 Students’ Perceptions of the Use of Google Classroom

This section is devoted to answer some questions related to the students’ perceptions and views about their use of Google Classroom. The section is divided into two main parts and each part includes a given number of questions/statements.

- **Perceived Ease of Use**

S1: It is easy to sign on to Google Classroom.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	19	38,0
Agree	25	50,0
Neutral	3	6,0
Disagree	3	6,0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100,0

Table 1: Easiness to Sign On to Google Classroom

Presentation of the Findings

As we observe in table (01), the great majority of the participants (50% + 38%) advocate that it is easy to sign on to Google Classroom. A percentage of (6%) of the students state that they are neutral concerning the process of signing on while a minority of the participants (6%) disagree with the statement by saying that it is not easy to sign on to the online platform. None of the students strongly disagree with the statement.

S2: It is easy to access the courses.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	15	30,0
Agree	28	56,0
Neutral	4	8,0
Disagree	3	6,0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100,0

Table 2: Easiness of Accessing the Courses

Table (02) displays that partly half of the first-year students (56%) agree that it easy to access their lessons using Google Classroom. A percentage of (30%) of them strongly agree with the statement while the other students (8%) are neutral concerning the access of the online courses. A minority of the participants (6%) find that it is difficult to access their courses using Google Classroom.

S3: It enables to send and receive assignments.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	14	28,0
Agree	28	56,0
Neutral	6	12,0
Disagree	2	4,0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100,0

Table 3: Sending and Receiving Assignments via Google Classroom

Presentation of the Findings

Table (3) shows that most of the respondents (56% + 28%) find that Google Classroom enables them to send and receive assignments. An average of (12%) of the participants are neutral regarding the use of the platform. However, only (4%) of the students disagree with the use of Google Classroom for sending and receiving assignments and the option 'Strongly disagree' is not selected by the participants.

S4: It is easy to submit the assignments.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	8	16,0
Agree	27	54,0
Neutral	10	20,0
Disagree	3	6,0
Strongly disagree	2	4,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 4: Submission of the Assignments Using Google Classroom

From table (04), we observe that the great percentage of the students (54%) state that it is easy to submit their assignments using Google Classroom. A percentage of (16%) of the participants give the option of 'Strongly agree' and (20%) of them are neutral regarding the statement. An average of (6%) of the respondents disagree by saying that it is not easy to submit the assignments via the platform while (4%) of them strongly disagree with the statement.

S5: It is easy to navigate and understand the system.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	7	14,0
Agree	22	44,0
Neutral	10	20,0
Disagree	9	18,0
Strongly disagree	2	4,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 5: Easiness of Understanding the System

Presentation of the Findings

Table (05) displays that half of the students (44% + 14%) say that it is easy to understand the system. A percentage of (20%) of the participants are neutral concerning the statement while (18%) of them find that it is difficult to understand and navigate in Google Classroom. However, only (4%) of the students strongly disagree with the previous statement as they find it very difficult to understand the way the online platform functions.

S6: I can save the lectures for the future use.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	9	18,0
Agree	23	46,0
Neutral	8	16,0
Disagree	9	18,0
Strongly disagree	1	2,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 6: Ability to Save the Lectures in Google Classroom

Table (06) shows that a great number of the students (46% + 18%) find that they can save their lectures for the future use in Google Classroom. (16%) of them are neutral regarding the statement. However, a percentage of (18%) disagree with the statement as they advocate that they do not use the online platform for saving their lectures. A minority of the participants (2%) strongly disagree with the statement.

- **Perceived Usefulness**

S7: The quality of the learning activity is excellent.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	7	14,0
Agree	19	38,0
Neutral	11	22,0
Disagree	9	18,0
Strongly disagree	4	8,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 7: Quality of Learning Activity in Google Classroom

Presentation of the Findings

Table (07) displays that half of the participants (38% + 14%) advocate that the quality of the activities in Google Classroom is excellent. (22%) of the students are neutral regarding the statement. However, an average of (18%) of the respondents find that the activities in Google Classroom are not excellent while (8%) of them strongly disagree with the statement.

S8: Google Classroom enables us to interact with the teachers and peers.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	10	20,0
Agree	22	44,0
Neutral	10	20,0
Disagree	4	8,0
Strongly disagree	4	8,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 8: Interaction with the Teachers and Peers Using Google Classroom

Table (8) shows that the great percentage of the respondents (44%+ 20%) assert that they interact with their teachers and peers via Google Classroom. (20%) of the students are neutral regarding the previous statement. However, a minority of the participants (8%) disagree as they believe that the platform does not allow them to interact with their teachers and peers. The other percentage of the students (8%) strongly disagree with the statement.

S9: The course activities help me to apply and practice what I have learned.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	9	18,0
Agree	22	44,0
Neutral	16	32,0
Disagree	2	4,0
Strongly disagree	1	2,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 9: Quality of Practice in Google Classroom

Table (9) illustrates that a great percentage of the participants (44% + 18%) find that Google Classroom enables them to practice what they have learned. (32%) of them are neutral

regarding this statement. However, only (4% + 2%) of the students assert that the online platform does not allow them to practice their acquired knowledge.

S10: The feedbacks provided by the teachers are useful.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	9	18,0
Agree	28	56,0
Neutral	8	16,0
Disagree	4	8,0
Strongly disagree	1	2,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 10: Teachers' Feedback in Google Classroom

Table (10) shows that (56% + 18%) of the first-year students find that the feedback provided by their teachers via Google Classroom is useful. An average of (16%) of the participants are neutral concerning the previous statement. Whereas, a minority of the students (8%) advocate that the teachers' feedback is useless via the platform. Only (2%) of the respondents strongly disagree with the statement.

S11: The content, objective and assessment are consistent and complementary while using Google Classroom.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	5	10,0
Agree	29	58,0
Neutral	13	26,0
Disagree	1	2,0
Strongly disagree	2	4,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 11: Content, Objective and Assessment in Google Classroom

From table (11), we understand that the great percentage of the participants (58% + 10%) believe that the content, objective and assessment are consistent while using Google

Classroom. (26%) of them give the answer 'Neutral' regarding the relation between the previous elements. However, only a minority of the participants (2% + 4%) find that the three elements are not consistent while using the online platform.

S12: I use Google Classroom to send my work to the teachers.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	20	40,0
Agree	26	52,0
Neutral	3	6,0
Disagree	1	2,0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100,0

Table 12: Utility of Google Classroom in Sending Students' Works

Table (12) illustrates that the majority of the participants (52% + 40%) agree that they use Google Classroom to send their works to the teachers. (6%) of the respondents are neutral regarding the previous statement. Only (2%) of them disagree as they do not use the online platform to send the works to their teachers.

3.1.3 Students' Learning Experience of Google Classroom

This section is designed to gather precise information about the learning experience of the participants while participating in Google Classroom and the main difficulties they likely encounter.

Q7: Do you feel at ease when interacting with the teachers and peers using Google Classroom?

This question is asked to check whether the students feel comfortable and satisfied when interacting with their teachers and peers via Google Classroom.

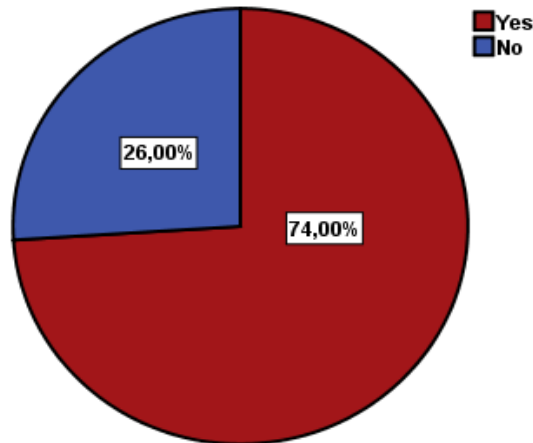


Diagram 6: Students' Comfort when Interacting in Google Classroom

Diagram (6) shows that (74%) of the participants respond that they feel at ease when interacting with their teachers and peers using Google Classroom while only (26%) of them are not comfortable with this kind of interaction.

If no, say why?

From the outcomes, the majority of the students who do not feel at ease when interacting with their teachers and peers using Google Classroom claim that the interaction is more effective when the teachers and peers are in front of them. Some participants justify their answers by saying that the lack of the Internet connection and organisation affect negatively this kind of interaction while others mention that there is too much noise when studying online. One participant states that “I do not feel close to my teachers when interacting with them using Google Classroom”. Some others prefer the face-to-face interaction with their teachers and peers in the traditional classrooms.

Q8: How far do you agree with the following statement?

“Using Google Classroom makes me more confident, more autonomous, more focused, and more motivated.”

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	5	10,0
Agree	20	40,0
Neutral	15	30,0
Disagree	7	14,0
Strongly disagree	3	6,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 13: Students' Learning Experience of Google Classroom

Table (13) illustrates that half of the participants (40% + 10%) find themselves more confident, autonomous, focused, and motivated when using Google Classroom. (30%) of the students are neutral regarding the previous statement. However, (14%) of them disagree as they believe that the platform does not foster their confidence, motivation and autonomy. Only (6%) of the respondents answer by ‘Strongly disagree’.

Q9: How important is the teachers’ motivation for an effective participation in Google Classroom?

This question is advanced to know the importance of the teachers’ motivation for the students to participate in Google Classroom in an effective way.

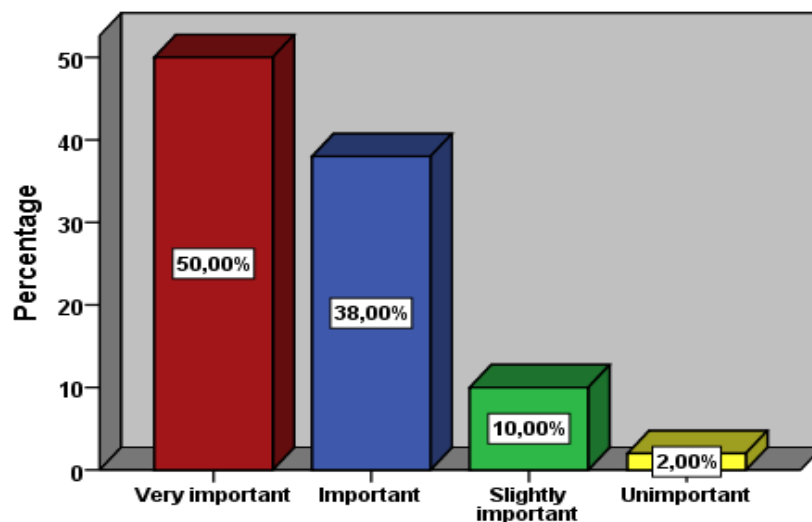


Diagram 7: Importance of the Teachers' Motivation in Using Google Classroom

Presentation of the Findings

From diagram (7), we understand that half of the students (50%) advocate that the teachers' motivation is of a great importance in order to use Google Classroom effectively. An average of (38%) of the participants find that it is important while only (10%) of them think that it is slightly important. A minority of the students (2%) perceive that the motivation of their teachers is unimportant for participating in Google Classroom.

Q10: How often do the teachers explain and provide effective examples via Google Classroom?

This question is asked to determine the extent to which the teachers explain and provide effective examples via Google Classroom.

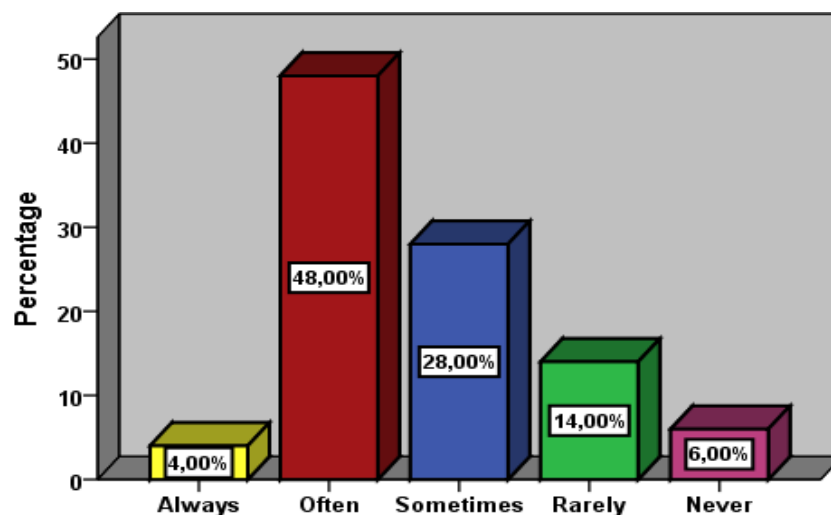


Diagram 8: Teachers' Explanation via Google Classroom

Diagram (8) shows that nearly half of the participants (48%) assert that their teachers often explain and provide effective examples when using Google Classroom. (28%) of the students answer by 'sometimes' while (14%) of them say that their teachers rarely explain and provide effective examples when using the platform. An average of (6%) of the respondents believe that their teachers never explain or give illustrations. Only a minority of the

participants (4%) say that their teachers always explain and provide examples via Google Classroom.

Q11: What are the teaching materials sent by the teachers via Google Classroom: Documents in the form of PDFs, pictures, videos, books, or articles?

This kind of question is asked to identify the main teaching materials that the teachers generally send to their students when using Google Classroom.

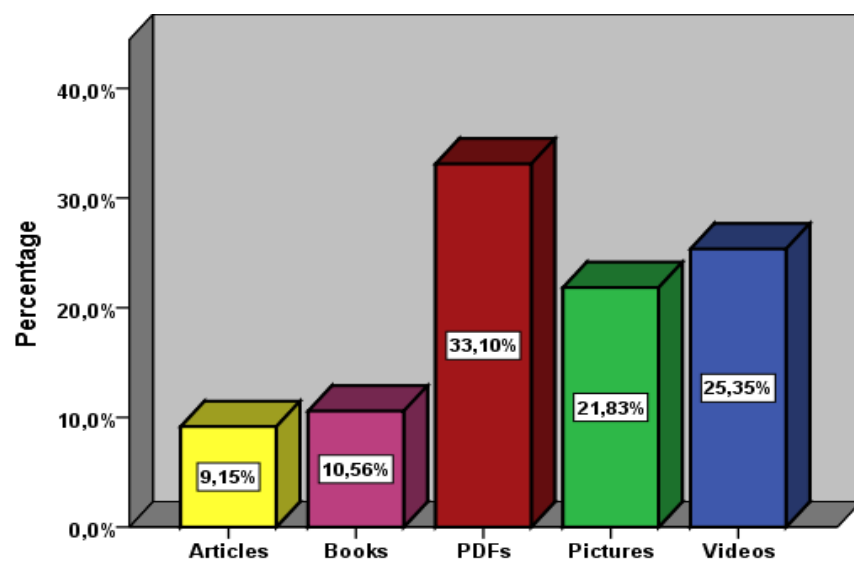


Diagram 9: kinds of Teaching Materials Sent via Google Classroom

Diagram (9) reveals that documents in the form of PDFs are the main teaching materials that are sent by the teachers via Google Classroom with a percentage of (33. 10%). Videos are sent with a percentage of (25. 35%) while pictures occupy (21. 83%) of the teaching materials. Books have a percentage of (10. 56%) and articles are viewed as the fewest teaching materials (9.15%) sent by the teachers to their students when participating in Google Classroom.

Q12: Does Google Classroom allow you to study anywhere and anytime?

The question is designed to determine whether Google Classroom provides the students with the opportunity to study anywhere and anytime.

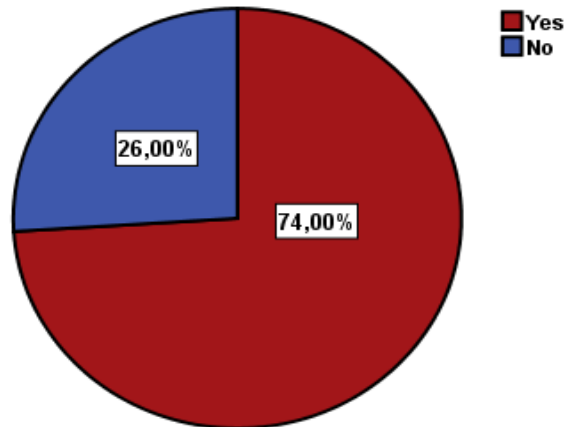


Diagram 10: Google Classroom's Opportunity to Study Anywhere and Anytime

From diagram (10), we find that the majority of the participants (74%) believe that Google Classroom allows them to study anywhere and anytime while only a minority of the students (26%) find that it does not provide them with this opportunity.

Q13: Put a tick (✓) on the limitations you likely find when using Google Classroom.

By this question, we intend to identify the main limitations and difficulties that the students generally encounter when participating in Google Classroom.

- 1- I am not familiar with the online technology.
- 2- I have problems with the Internet connection.
- 3- There is a lack of organisation.
- 4- I cannot ask and answer the questions freely.
- 5- It is difficult to contact to the teachers individually.
- 6- During the online courses, I cannot concentrate since all the students talk at the same time.

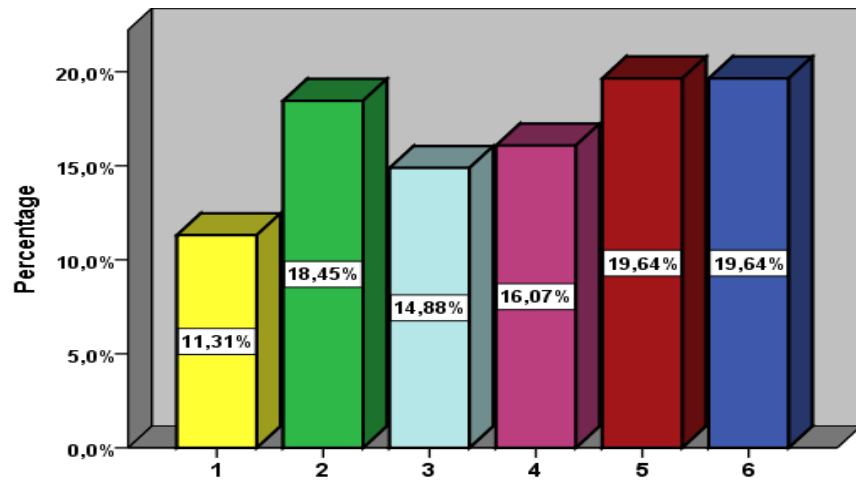


Diagram 11: Limitations of Google Classroom

Diagram (11) reveals that the percentage of (19. 64%) is related to the difficulty of contacting the teachers individually, as well as, talking at the same time during the online courses and this affects the students’ concentration. Problems with the Internet connection occupy (18. 45%) of the students’ views while the limitation of asking and answering questions has only (16. 07%). A percentage of (14. 88%) is related to the lack of organisation. Only a percentage of (11. 31%) is related to the lack of familiarity with the online technology.

Q14: How difficult is learning English using Google Classroom?

This question is asked to know to what extent the learning English is difficult when using Google Classroom according to the first-year students.

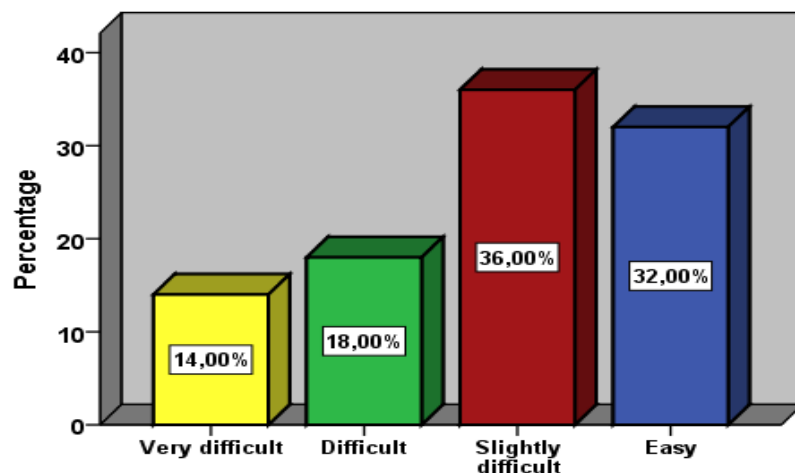


Diagram 12: Difficulty of Learning English Using Google Classroom

Diagram (12) illustrates that (36%) of the participants state that it is slightly difficult to learn English via Google Classroom while (32%) of them perceive that it is easy. An average of (18%) of the students find that it is difficult to study English via the platform. Only a minority of the students (14%) answer that it is very difficult to learn English when using Google Classroom.

Explain?

From the gathered data, the great majority of the students assert that they find learning English via Google Classroom is slightly difficult because they have a problem of the Internet connection which does not allow them to participate and attend all their online courses. One participant justifies the previous point by saying that the problems of Internet make them more confused and late. Others claim that they prefer attending traditional classes since they allow them to participate in an effective way. One student mentions the issue of timing because of the fact that the time allocated to study online is not sufficient to acquire and understand the English lessons or ask and answer the questions. Others state that studying online via Google Classroom does not allow them to hear the word pronunciation effectively. One student advocates that “Some subjects need to be studied face-to-face so that to hear the teachers and speak well”.

A great number of respondents have different views as they claim that it is easy to use Google Classroom since it allows them to study and ask their questions while they are at home. The participants justify their choice by saying that it is easy to participate and join the online platform. One student states that “It is easy to use because teachers provide us with effective examples and exercises this is why I feel at ease when learning English via Google Classroom”.

Q15: Which subjects do you find easy to study via Google Classroom?

The results of the questionnaire display that the majority of the participants believe that the subjects of English that they perceive easy to study via Google Classroom are Linguistics, Literature and Reading. Some participants state that all the subjects of English are easy to study while using Google Classroom.

Q16: Which subjects do you find complicated to study via Google Classroom?

From the gathered data, the majority of the participants advocate that Listening and Speaking is the most difficult subject to study via Google Classroom since it requires much practice and effort from both the teachers and the students. Other students claim that Civilisation is also complicated to learn using the online platform. Some others mention the subjects of Phonetics and Grammar since they are complicated and require practice to master them.

Q17: How far do you agree with the following statement?

“By using Google Classroom my interest in learning English becomes bigger.”

This question is asked to check whether Google Classroom fosters the students' interest to learn English.

Items	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	5	10,0
Agree	20	40,0
Neutral	12	24,0
Disagree	9	18,0
Strongly disagree	4	8,0
Total	50	100,0

Table 14: Students' Interest in Learning English when Using Google Classroom

From table (14), we understand that half of the participants (40% + 10%) agree that Google Classroom increases their interest to learn English. An average of (24%) of the students are neutral regarding their interest in learning English when using the platform.

(18%) of the respondents claim that Google Classroom does not increase their interest while only a minority of them (8%) strongly disagree with the previous statement.

3.2 Presentation of the Results of the Interview

The second data collection tool used in this research is the interview. The results of this part are mainly obtained from the structured interview conducted with five teachers at the department of English at ENSB in Algiers. It aims at gathering more in-depth information about the topic of investigation. It was conducted from July 14 to July 18, 2022 and lasted from 12 to 25 minutes for each participant. The results are interpreted using the Qualitative Content Analysis.

Q1: What subject do you teach via Google Classroom?

The aim of this question is to gather some background information about the interviewees and to identify the subjects that they used to teach via Google Classroom. Among them, one teacher uses Google Classroom to teach Linguistics while another one teaches Reading Techniques. The third participant teaches two main subjects which are Phonetics and Listening and Speaking. One teacher uses the online platform for teaching Grammar to the first-year students while the last one teaches Listening and Speaking.

Q2: What do you think about teaching your subject using Google Classroom?

The purpose of this question is to know the attitudes and the experiences of the interviewees while participating in Google Classroom to teach their subjects. The findings show that the first teacher claims that it is really hard to teach Linguistics and introduce the new technical words to the first-year students via the platform. She adds that:

Since we have two weeks face-to-face and the other two weeks online, I present the lesson during the face-to-face class. Then, in Google Classroom, I just send them activities like writing paragraphs about the lessons. For example, in the lesson of Syntax, I explained all the new concepts and methods during the real-classroom

sessions and then sent them the activities of dividing sentences and making tree diagrams using Google Classroom.

Thus, she uses Google Classroom mainly for practice. The teacher of Reading Techniques thinks that using the online platform to teach her subject is not like the face-to-face classes since students face some problems of the Internet connection. In such a case, she always invites her students to ask their questions and for more clarifications during the face-to-face sessions. Additionally, one teacher has another view concerning this point. She believes that she does not like teaching Grammar via Google Classroom by saying that “I did it even if it is not the way I would like to do it”. She adds that “It is not appropriate to teach a practical subject like Grammar via Google Classroom”. Another teacher shares her own experience and strategy while teaching her two subjects using the online application. She reports that:

We have two weeks online and the other two weeks face-to-face and since I teach my two subjects to the same group. Therefore, during the face-to-face sessions, I teach Phonetics and Speaking and I let Listening Comprehension to teach it via Google Classroom by asking the students some questions and then sending them the audio attached with the exercises, and at the end giving my feedback. In fact, it is really hard for me to teach Phonetics and Speaking via the platform since students need a lot of examples, practice and even appropriate pronunciations.

Another teacher of Listening claims that it is useful when teaching Listening via the online platform since she has the opportunity to send her students the audio files so that they will have the opportunity to listen as much as they can. For Speaking, she says that “I used Google Meet since Google Classroom offers no option of speaking.” She adds that when she sends her students a specific homework or task to do it online, she uploads it into Google Classroom and asks them to download and at the end they discuss it together.

Q3: Have you ever received any training before using Google Classroom?

This question is asked for the aim of determining whether the teachers have received any kind of training for using the online platform. One teacher out of five claims that she has received the appropriate training in order to participate in Google Classroom. She states that “When the Covid-19 started, all teachers resisted online teaching since it was hard for us and we had no idea how to do it. Thus, they just send us a short video explaining how to use Google Classroom and the different steps to follow in order to put our lectures there”. She adds that she used the platform first to teach via comments which were much organised like sending an exercise and the students responded and gave their answers via comments.

On the other hand, the four other participants assert that they have not received any training for using Google Classroom. One of them claims that “It was something new particularly at the beginning of the COVID-19. It was not easy for us suffering from the virus and learning how to use it, but at the end we need just to use it to get familiar with it”. Another teacher says that they were obliged to use it directly during the COVID-19 which was her first experience. One of the interviewees advocates that “I find a problem with training since I am from the old generation and I am not familiar with online technology”. The last participant states that she relied on YouTube to learn the way of using the platform more effectively.

Q4: How important is getting trained for an effective use of Google Classroom?

The purpose of this question is to find out to what extent training is important for using Google Classroom. All the interviewees have said that they think that it is significant to receive some kind of training before teaching their subjects via Google Classroom. One of them says that “It is very important mainly for us as we are from the old generation and we are not really mastering the new technologies, thus, we need at least the basis. So, training is important to avoid trying again and again”. Another teacher advocates that “Everything needs

training since it is the key for using anything”. Furthermore, the teacher of Reading Techniques explains that it was not difficult to use the platform since she is familiar with the online technology and the social media, and Google Classroom is just more professional. She adds that “The old generation of teachers might face some problems”. One participant argues that the process of training saves time to master any platform. The last interviewee claims that “Google Classroom is an easy-to-use Platform. I think those teachers, particularly novice and those who have never used the platform before, need just two sessions of training”.

Q5: From your own experience, would you enlighten us about the difficulty or easiness of getting access to Google Classroom?

This question is asked to know how the teachers perceive the process of getting access to Google Classroom. All the interviewed teachers of the Department of English perceive that it is easy to get access and use Google Classroom for teaching their subjects. The first participant says that “It is very easy and something practical I guess because the platform offers so many options that I can use to send the lectures and assignments in few seconds”.

Additionally, another teacher states that “It is easy especially when they require us to use professional emails. It is easy even for the students who can get access directly to the lessons, complete the assignments and ask their questions”. She adds that the platform also offers the option of putting a link where you invite the students for Google Meet in Google Classroom and where there is more opportunity to clarify some points or any misunderstanding. One participant explains that “At the beginning, it was a little bit difficult, but once they sent us the video explaining the steps to follow, it was no more difficult”. One of the participants says that the low Internet connection affects this access as it becomes difficult for the teachers or students to get in touch with each other.

Q6: What teaching materials do you use to teach your subject via Google Classroom?

This question is part of our interview to identify the main teaching materials that the teachers use to teach relying on Google Classroom. The teacher of Linguistics states that she generally sends texts related to the lessons, PDFs and activities. Another interviewee answers that “I use a variety of teaching materials like PDFs, videos, texts, articles, and letters. In Google Classroom, I also put links to some videos before the sessions, so that the students will be able to access and watch the short videos. Then, when I send them the lecture or the text, they try to relate the information in the video with the text available”.

Furthermore, the teacher of Grammar claims that she relies more on grammar books to send the lectures in the form of PDFs. She also sends her students activities that will be corrected and explained more precisely during the face-to-face sessions. Another interviewee says that “I generally tape my lessons. For the subject of Listening, I use audio, short videos, long videos, and educational videos. But for the subject of Phonetics, I send videos, audio, recordings, and also PDFs”. The last participant adds that:

I use audio files taken either from the Net or CDs and YouTube videos. In Speaking, we discuss the topics of Listening or we tackle new topics. I used to send my students the questions in advance in order to read and think about the topic. After giving them enough time to think about the answers of the questions, I start to guide the discussion in Google Meet by sending them a link in Google Classroom to join. Thus, I use Google Classroom and Google Meet at the same time.

Q7: Based on your experience as a teacher, how do you perceive you students' performance while using Google Classroom?

The aim of this question is to know how the teachers perceive and find their students' performance while participating in Google Classroom. The first interviewee believes that the students who attend their lectures do not hesitate to participate and interact like in the face-to-face sessions. Students fix the activities through Google Classroom and send them back to

their teachers. She adds that “Because only half of the group attends, I decided not to use Google Meet”.

Another teacher states that their students do not participate appropriately when using Google Classroom because they find that the Internet connection is an obstacle for doing that. Moreover, one of the teachers says that “Brilliant students participate very well, especially during the subject of Listening, and this interaction depends on the teachers and their techniques”. The last participant argues that the participation in Google Classroom is really tiring since she cannot read all the comments of the students, that is why she adds that “I prefer talking with them via Google Meet rather than reading all their comments”.

Q8: How can you explain the fact that Google Classroom allows you to interact and explain the content more effectively?

The purpose of this question is to know how Google Classroom gives the teachers the opportunity to explain their lessons appropriately. Among the participants, the first one claims that “I use Google Classroom mainly to sustain my lessons since I find it something practical. Although the students are at home, they can get access to the activities and also receive my feedback. Thus, it is interesting and important as well”. She adds “Instead of wasting time doing the activities in class, I explain the lesson during the real class and make them practise at home since they are at ease. They can even revise their lessons and do the activities and this stimulates more learning”. She shares her own method of teaching via the platform by saying that “If I ask my students to write paragraphs, I generally read all of them in order to have an idea of the most important mistakes and I take notes. Then, I send them my feedback based on those errors in general so that they will be able to correct their paragraphs by themselves”.

Another interviewee finds that the option of including links, videos and a variety of teaching materials might improve the interaction between the teachers and students since they satisfy the interest and style of the first-year students. She adds “Google Classroom is useful

because of the fact that our students are more open to using technology”. The next participant advocates that “The process of participation and interaction depends on the subject. It is apt for the teacher to find a way to make effective explanations. For example, teachers can choose a text and ask their students to conduct some online research via Google Classroom”. She adds that there can be a live interaction between the teachers and students by discussing some points or ideas and the instructor can invite them to some sites or YouTube videos to learn more. She states that “Teaching Listening was more successful using Google Classroom than teaching Speaking and Phonetics”. This means that the online teaching depends on the subject and the teacher's techniques to find out a way to satisfy and attract the attention of the learners.

One teacher has a divergent view. She always waits to meet her students face-to-face since Google Classroom does not allow her to interact with them effectively. Adding to that, she argues that “Many students cannot be present online, especially those living in remote places where there is a weak Internet connection, and they cannot even be alone to study via Google Classroom”. The last interviewee believes that the platform is a kind of tool to transmit the lessons to the students. She adds that “Google Classroom is a useful software, but there are some missing options. For instance, when we test our students in the subject of Listening, we cannot insert the audio file attached with the test or the questions”.

Q9: How do you motivate your students to participate during the online courses?

The aim of this question is to know the way the teachers motivate their learners during the online courses. Among the participants, the first one highlights an important strategy to motivate her students to study online via the platform by saying that “At the beginning, they were not motivated at all to read especially when they were relaxing at home, they got lazy. I told them that from the activities that I gave through Google Classroom, I would select two and include them in the exam. In fact, they started working and doing their activities”. The

teacher of Reading Techniques tends to motivate their learners by asking them more questions by saying that “Asking more and more questions during and after the session is the solution. Students are required to answer to show their understanding and that they have read the texts”. Another interviewee states that they proceed the same way of motivation as in the face-to-face sessions. She says “I use authentic and concrete situations adding to those real examples from my own experience. This is the way to motivate and make them interested”.

Moreover, one teacher claims that they spend hours explaining every concept to their students for a better understanding. She adds “During Ramadan, I used to teach my students at 1 a.m. for three hours just to satisfy them. They asked me to do it and I did it and they enjoyed it since it was a live show and I explained everything point by point”. She concludes by saying that motivation is not only from the teacher's side, but also from the learner's and that all this depends on the subject, context and the way the teachers explain. The last participant states that “I motivate my students through the nature of the tasks I prepare. Generally, I opt for challenging tasks and topics that may draw their attention”.

Q10: Would you cite some of the main problems you encountered while using Google Classroom?

The purpose of the question is to find out the main problems that the teachers face while participating in Google Classroom. Among the participants, three teachers report that they do not face any kind of problems when working with Google Classroom. One of them believes that:

Personally, I do not have any problem with Google Classroom, but the problem I found is in the use of Google Meet since it is not practical for me. For example, I start the lesson and the students interrupt, so I spend all the time repeating and turning around the same point. Since only a minority of the students attends, I am

obliged to do it again in the real classroom. That is why I stopped using Google Meet.

Another teacher adds that the students suffer from the lack of materials and the weak Internet connection to study via the platform. One of the interviewees claims that “My students reported having a lot of problems concerning the Internet connection”. She adds that her colleagues face a problem of absentees as “From 30 students, they find themselves teaching 10 students, and this makes them demotivated”. One teacher believes that the problem of the Internet makes her learners fail to join the online sessions. The last interviewee finds that the problems are related to the absence of the option of speaking or making a video conference on the platform since she can talk with the learners only through comments.

Q11: How is teaching English using Google Classroom: effective, demanding, boring, or complicated?

This question is asked to know the teachers' views when teaching English via Google Classroom. One of the participants says that “It is very effective and complementary. I will still keep using it even though we will get back to normal since it is an interesting platform which can help the teacher”. She adds that “Instead of wasting time doing photocopies and the activities in class, I can use the platform to sustain and do them online”. For her, Google Classroom complements and this is the most interesting thing that she has learned and benefited from the platform. Another teacher shares the same view since she finds that it is interesting to teach English via Google Classroom.

Furthermore, one interviewee claims that “Nothing is complicated and nothing is easy. It is the interest you bring to it. If you are interested in teaching via Google Classroom, it will be effective”. One of the teachers states that “From now on, we need online teaching. In fact, we cannot replace the face-to-face teaching with the online teaching, but it can be an additional tool. For example, if I want to share extra exercises or some books with my

students, I can send them via Google Classroom. It is hard but helpful”. She adds that she gets more and more used to it and that she loves teaching online since it is an interesting experience. She concludes by saying that “I will ask my students to have Google Classroom and I will keep using it in order to communicate with them since it makes me feel that I am near to my students. I can rely on it to post examples and communicate the date of exams”.

The last participant believes that Google Classroom is an easy application to send documents to the students, so it is useful and free of charge. However, she argues that the application does not allow them to talk with their learners through a webcam.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research findings gathered from both the questionnaire and the structured interview. It has been divided into two main parts. The first part has introduced and explained the results obtained from the students’ questionnaire in the form of tables and diagrams. As for the second part, it has displayed the results collected from the teachers’ interview. The next chapter is devoted to the discussion and interpretation of those findings.

Chapter Four:

Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings displayed in the previous chapter. It seeks to analyse and discuss the results for answering the research questions and confirming or refuting the suggested hypotheses presented in the general introduction. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section is concerned with the first-year students' perceptions of Google Classroom as a teaching and learning tool. The second section deals with the teaching materials used in Google Classroom in order to teach the basic skills of English. The third section discusses the students' interaction and engagement while using the online platform. The fourth and last section ends up with the discussion of the main difficulties faced by the teachers and students while participating in Google Classroom.

4.1 Students' Perceptions of the Use of Google Classroom as a Teaching and Learning Tool

The results of the second question in the questionnaire regarding the access of the English courses using Google Classroom reveal that half of the first-year students (50%) always use the online platform to access their courses of English sent by their teachers. The percentage demonstrates the ability of Google Classroom in providing the learners with their courses. Moreover, it shows that most of the participants are satisfied while using and participating in the platform to learn and access their lessons. Google Classroom is characterised by the notion of accessibility making it possible and easier for the students to access their online courses.

The outcome of the questionnaire shows that a significant number of the participants perceive that the process of training is of a strategic importance for using Google Classroom in an effective way. Out of fifty participants who participated in the present research, the majority of the students (94%) indicate that they are not familiar with the online platform

since they have not already used it before starting their studies at ENSB. This absolutely demonstrates the significance of training for mastering a given system or platform such as Google Classroom. This result is similar with the research of Iftakhar (2016) entitled ‘Google Classroom: What Works and How?’ which aims to report the overall view of Google Classroom adopted in different classes. He finds that eleven students feel that they need training on Google Classroom and its effective features so that they feel motivated to use it.

4.1.1 Perceived Ease of Use

In fact, by relying on the theoretical framework advanced in the first chapter, that is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the first variable of TAM: ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ consists of six questions. The findings reveal that the majority of the first-year students at the department of English at ENSB perceive that it is easy to sign on to Google Classroom. The interpretation that we can make is that the design of the online platform allows its users to sign on and join easily. Thus, this finding is associated with what Davis et al. (1989) state that the design of a given system directly affects the variable of ease of use allowing the users to feel at ease when joining it. This means that the participants have the ability to join Google Classroom in an effective way from various sources such as computer, phones and tablets in order to access their online courses.

The results of the present investigation show that the majority of the students agree that Google Classroom enables them to send and receive assignments. The platform allows the distribution of resources, courses, assignments, and various activities between the teachers and learners. It seeks to create a stimulating learning atmosphere where the users can participate and interact with each other to achieve better learning outcomes. The first-year students view Google Classroom as an effective and useful tool for sending and receiving

various assignments. Furthermore, it gives them the opportunity to submit their assignments and send them back to the teachers for a feedback.

The finding of the students' questionnaire demonstrates that the majority of the learners (70%) agree with the statement which states that it is easy to submit the assignments via Google Classroom. This finding confirms what Davis (1989) says about Perceived Ease of Use as it is related to the degree to which the users believe that using a particular system or platform would be free of effort. It is the amount of effort spent in using and navigating the system. In the case of Google Classroom, students perceive that the platform is free of efforts and easy to use due to the fact that its design satisfies the interest of the users.

In addition, the results demonstrate that the first-year students perceive that Google Classroom is easy for navigating and understanding the way it functions. This once again shows that the design and the external variables, like documentations, colours and shapes, play a significant role in making the platform easy to use. Students find that Google Classroom is a stimulating online platform which allows them to use it as a teaching and learning tool for supporting their learning and achieving their learning outcomes. Therefore, the first hypothesis which claims that the students perceive Google Classroom as an effective tool for their learning is supported by our data.

To sum up, the findings of ease of use demonstrate that the majority of the respondents believe that it is easy to adopt and use Google Classroom as a learning tool. This result is similar with the research of Iftakhar (2016) who arrives to the result that eighteen students agree that Google Classroom is effective and easy to use because it incorporates a great number of features which enable them to study in a relevant way to improve their performance.

4.1.2 Perceived Usefulness

The second variable ‘Perceived Usefulness’ consists of six questions. The findings of the questionnaire show that a great number of the participants agree that the quality of the learning activity is excellent while using Google Classroom. It allows them to apply and practice what they have previously acquired. Teachers can send various activities to their students via the platform since practice is a key component in a successful teaching and learning. Ur (1996) mentions that practice is “the activity through which language skills and knowledge are consolidated and thoroughly mastered. As such, it is arguably the most important of all the stages of learning; hence the most important classroom activity of the teacher is to initiate and manage activities that provide students with opportunities for effective practice” (p. 20). This means that practice is an essential concept in the teaching and learning process which requires the integration of various exercises and activities by which learners can apply the new concepts and knowledge.

Students perceive Google Classroom as being useful for accomplishing their tasks and activities. This finding extremely goes with what Davis (1989) states that Perceived Usefulness is “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” (p. 320). Users perceive a particular system or platform as being useful when their performance is increased while using it. Hence, the first-year students find Google Classroom useful since it allows them to better perform their works and tasks.

In relation to Perceived Usefulness, most participants believe that Google Classroom is useful due to the fact that it boosts their performance in learning English. This result is similar with the research of Wijaya (2016) about analysing the factors affecting the use of Google Classroom to support lectures. As a result, it is found that the variable of Perceived

Usefulness has a positive effect on the use of Google Classroom as a supporting classroom lectures. The online platform is useful and beneficial in completing tasks and assignments.

Although it is the first experience for the majority of the students to use Google Classroom, they are able to manage and adapt the online platform without much troubles. They indicate that the application is user-friendly which increases their effectiveness in submitting their assignments and tasks. Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use are the two variables of TAM which jointly influence the students' behaviours while participating and using Google Classroom as a learning tool. Students' perceptions of Google Classroom as being easy and useful can assist the learners in completing their assignments, as well as, boosting their communication and interaction with their teachers.

Furthermore, we have directed another question in order to know to what extent the feedback provided by the teachers is useful and helpful. From the obtained results, we deduce that the great percentage of the first-year students (77%) agree that the teachers' feedback is useful while using Google Classroom. They do believe that their teachers can provide them with efficient responses regarding their works as in the real classroom. This goes hand in hand with what Ur (1996) says that "In the context of teaching in general, feedback is the information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance" (p. 242). This means that feedback is a motive which pushes the learners to make more efforts in order to attain their learning objectives. Hence, the students take advantage of the feedback to correct their errors and learn in an independent way. The platform works to encourage flexible and independent learning.

Additionally, it is shown that (68%) of the participants agree that the content, objective and assessment are consistent while using Google Classroom. This means that the various elements incorporated in the online platform serve to maintain the students' interests to learn

English. All the elements of teaching are attached to each other in order to achieve better learning outcomes. In the platform, the content is interesting and stimulating in term of activities, objectives, tests, and remarks which fits the students' needs who feel motivated and interested to study and access their online courses. Thus, all these allow the first-year students to perceive Google Classroom as being a helpful platform which serves to support their learning.

From the results displayed in table (13), it appears that half of the participants agree with the statement which says that 'Using Google Classroom makes me more confident, more autonomous, more focused, and more motivated'. In fact, motivation is a clue for an effective teaching and learning as Ur (1996) who believes that "It is easier and more useful to think in terms of the motivated learner: one who is willing or even eager to invest effort in learning activities and to progress. Learner motivation makes teaching and learning immeasurably easier and more pleasant" (p. 274). This means that motivation plays a crucial role in the teaching and learning process by creating learners who are more energetic to increase their performance and make a progress.

Self-confidence leaves learners more interested to learn and acquire knowledge and new concepts. This confirms that Google Classroom is a great application which provides learners with a sense of self-confidence and autonomy. It encourages learners to be autonomous and independent learners who can rely on themselves to learn and solve their learning problems and issues without depending on the instructors. This goes directly with what Kumar (2020) says that the online learning encourages flexible learning in the sense that it creates a balanced world where learners can study whenever and wherever they want without considering the constraints of time and location.

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Out of fifty students who participated in the present investigation, (74%) of them find that Google Classroom gives them the opportunity to study anywhere and anytime. Thus, this data confirms that Google Classroom allows the students to learn independently, memorising the concepts and gaining a better learning experience. This goes hand in hand with what Holec (1981) says that autonomy is defined “as the ability to take charge of one’s own learning: to take charge of one’s own learning is to maintain the sense of responsibility for all the decisions regarding all the aspects of this learning” (p. 3). Autonomous learners have the capacity to take control of their own learning without the teacher’s guidance. In this sense, Google Classroom offers a comfortable atmosphere where learners can feel themselves more energetic to attend the online classes. Therefore, it allows them to develop positive learning attitudes by which they can make more efforts in their learning process to attain their learning goals. Google Classroom is considered as an online platform which can leave the students with a better learning experience.

The use of Google Classroom requires a special support and motivation from the teachers in order to use it and participate in an effective way. As the teachers’ motivation is considered to be the key for a successful teaching and learning, diagram (7) shows that the first-year students confirm that their teachers’ motivation is very significant in order to participate in the online courses using Google Classroom. This goes directly with what Harmer (2001) argues that “motivation is some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something” (p. 98). Motivation is a key principle in language teaching and learning, thus the teacher’s motivation is of strategic importance in order to make learners more interested to achieve successful outcomes in their educational carrier. Students are aware of the importance of the teachers’ motivation to reach their learning goals. Teachers cannot reach the intrinsic motivation of their learners but they can motivate them to join and participate during the online courses by using various methods and techniques.

Interesting methods of explanations, examples, authentic situations, and teaching materials all leave the learners interested to participate and interact with their teachers via Google Classroom.

From the results of this study, we reveal that nearly half of the participants (48%) respond that their teachers often explain and provide them with effective examples via Google Classroom. Examples are of a great importance for an effective teaching as Ur (1996) who says that “Very often a careful theoretical explanation only ‘comes together’ for an audience when made real through an example, or preferably several. You may explain, for instance, the meaning of a word, illustrating your explanation with examples of its use in various contexts, relating these as far as possible to the learners’ own lives and experiences” (p. 17). This confirms that examples are motives which help the students and leave them able to achieve their learning objectives and develop their cognitive abilities. They should be associated to the learners’ real life experiences as a way to deepen their understanding of a given concept.

The results of question (8) in relation to the difficulty or easiness of learning English using Google Classroom reveal that a percentage of (36%) of the students find that it is slightly difficult to study English via the online platform. The reason behind such a result is the weak Internet connection as one of the students argues that “The problem of Internet makes me more confused and late”. However, a great number of the participants indicate that it is easy to study English via Google Classroom because of the availability and easiness of accessing the class materials. It helps to foster the habit of self-learning allowing the students to practice and ask their questions while they are at home. This one of the best features which makes Google Classroom an appropriate and effective platform which fits the notion of self-learning. Students have the opportunity to attain their learning objectives even away from the real-classrooms.

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Additionally, two questions are included in the questionnaire to dippen and gather precise information. These questions are advanced to know the subjects of English which are easier and those which are complicated to study via Google Classroom. A great number of the participants find that Linguistics, Reading Techniques and Literature are the less complicated subjects for studying via the online platform due to the fact that they are simple and need less explanations and practice. Students can access their online courses in these subjects as easy as possible. One of the best features of Google Classroom is that the students' emails are linked to the online platform. Thus, they can receive announcements, instuctions and notifications at anytime involving the grading system, final exams and other related to day-to-day assignments.

Students indicate that some of the practical subjects like Phonetics and Grammar are complicated to study online by using Google Classroom. As they are first-year students and this is their first experience with the online platform. Therefore, these practical subjects need as much as possible of explanations, examples and practice in order to master them. Despite the fact that these subjects are slightly complicated to study online, but Google Classroom offors the opportunity to access their lessons and become independent learners who can rely on themselves. In such a case, the online platform is considered an effective tool in the academic setting working to make the teaching and learning process more interesting and challenging.

The results of the last question of the questionnaire regarding the interest of the students while participating in Google Classroom help to have a clear understanding of the students' views during their learning journey with the online platform. Half of the respondents agree that by using Google Classroom their interest in learning English becomes bigger. In this sense, the online application fosters the students' interest to learn English by allowing

them to access the class materials from anywhere in the world as a way to develop their autonomy and self-confidence in learning the language from their homes. It seeks to integrate and encourage a new form of teaching and learning in order to meet and satisfy the interests and needs of its participants. It is considered as a new and an interesting experience to the first-year students who feel motivated to participate, engage and interact with their teachers by relying on Google Classroom as a supplemental way for learning English.

To sum up, the results reveal that most students have a positive view of Google Classroom as an effective learning tool which supports their learning. They believe that it plays a role in their language development and increases their cognitive abilities. They have appreciated the useful features of the online platform that make the access and submission of the class materials easy. It is perceived as a learning management system which works to handle the class activities and fully fit the needs and interests of its participants. In relation to Perceived Usefulness, students perceive that Google Classroom is a useful and helpful application which supports the learning process. As for the second variable of Perceived Ease of Use, students agree with the easiness of accessing and submitting their assignments and activities via Google Classroom.

From the above discussed findings, we deduce that students view and perceive Google Classroom as a learning tool which supports and fosters their learning of English at the level of usefulness and easiness of use. This answers the first question and at the same time confirms the first hypothesis presented in the general introduction.

4.2 The Teaching Materials Used in Google Classroom to Teach the Basic Skills of the English Language

In order to answer the second question presented in the general introduction, the questionnaire and interview are jointly designed to answer it and test the validity of the

second hypothesis. The findings of the students' questionnaire reveal that a great number of the participants believe that documents in the form of PDFs are considered as the commonly used and sent teaching materials while participating in Google Classroom. A document contains the course content organised in one file so that the students are supposed to access it. It simplifies and supports the teaching and learning process since it is structured in a helpful and interesting way in order to fit the students' needs and be easily scanned by the learners.

Diagram (9) shows that a great number of the respondents find that videos and pictures are often used by the teachers While teaching via Google Classroom. They are commonly used to satisfy the learners and fit their interests in order to create a stimulating learning atmosphere. The different technologies allow to make the learning content interesting by making use of voices, pictures, and colours to make the class more vivid and attention-catching. Hence, teachers are supposed to mix the different teaching materials which are useful for presenting visual and audio content to the online class. This result goes hand in hand with what Ur (1996) states about the use of a video in the teaching and learning process, "Video is an excellent source of authentic spoken language material; it is also attractive and motivating. It is flexible: you can start and stop it, run forward or back, 'freeze' frames in order to talk about them" (p. 191). This means that videos are used to attract the students' attention and increase their interests to study in an effective way.

In the teachers' interview, one question is included to get a clearer and deeper understanding of the commonly used teaching materials in Google Classroom. The findings demonstrate that teachers use a variety of materials to teach English via the online platform. One of the teachers asserts that "I use a variety of PDFs, videos, articles, and letters. In Google Classroom, I put links to some videos before the session so that they will be able to access and watch them. Then, when I send them the lecture, they try to relate the information

in the video with the text available.” Another participant claims that they commonly rely on documents, texts and activities since they are the teaching materials which are mostly recognised by the learners giving them the opportunity to practice and apply what they have already learned. Other interviewees respond that they vary between different types of videos and audios including short and long videos, educational videos and videos with many episodes taken from the Net. They use them especially to tackle the subject of Listening and Speaking. Teachers and students discuss the various videos and use them to deduce new topics and subjects in order to make the subject of Listening and Speaking interesting and enjoyable.

By relying on Google Classroom, teachers have the opportunity to send the teaching materials, instructions and the questions attached to them in advance. This allows the learners to think about the course content in advance and answer the various questions. Moreover, this opportunity saves time and introduces a new method of teaching and learning. It gives the teachers and learners more time to interact and discuss the content during the online course. Thus, Google Classroom is beneficial for the teaching and learning process due to the fact that it helps the teachers in terms of classroom management and lesson planning. Teachers are able to prepare and manage their online courses while they are at home. They have enough time to think about the teaching materials and resources which fit their students’ needs and interests, as well as, answering the students’ questions in an appropriate way.

To sum up, Google Classroom gives the teachers the opportunity to mix different teaching materials and resources either audio or visual as a way to create a stimulating learning environment where the learners find themselves more motivated and interested to study and join the online classes. By joining the findings of both the students’ questionnaire and teachers’ interview, we can deduce that the commonly used materials to teach English via

Google Classroom are documents in the form of PDFs, articles, pictures and especially videos which attract the attention of the learners and therefore increase their motivation and willingness to achieve better learning outcomes. These results answer the second question and confirm the second hypothesis which says that the teaching materials that the teachers use to teach the basic skills of English are the documents, videos, pictures and articles.

4.3 Students' Interaction and Engagement While Using Google Classroom

In the questionnaire and interview, some questions are advanced in order to know how Google Classroom fosters the interaction and the engagement of the first-year students ,as well as, to get a deep understanding of the various techniques used by the teachers to create an interactive learning environment. The findings of the students' questionnaire reveal that Google Classroom enables the students to interact with their teachers and peers. Table (08) shows that a great number of the participants (64%) agree that the online platform is useful in promoting their interaction and communication with the other participants. Students have the opportunity to interact and discuss the content by asking their questions which will be answered by their teachers especially when the content is challenging and requires more explanations and clarifications from the instructor. This absolutely goes hand in hand with what Mukundan (2022) advocates that the different options integrated in Google Classroom provide the teachers with the opportunity to foster the classroom interaction. By using Google Classroom, the classroom interaction is achieved by exchanging assignments and tasks between the teachers and students, it offers various options which allow the students to receive, submit and send back their works.

This part of the investigation dealing with the students' interaction and communication via Google Classroom demonstrates that the first-year students develop a feeling of satisfaction while interacting with their teachers via the online platform. They feel

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comfortable conversing and communicating with the other participants. The findings reveal that most students believe that Google Classroom is useful for an effective classroom interaction and communication. Thus, this result is similar with Iftakhar (2016) who arrives to the conclusion that the participants of his investigation find that Google Classroom allows them to receive many uploaded files at a time. As they have been given Gmail id from DIU (Daffodil International University), they have the ability to join the class by using class code from anywhere and anytime.

In the section of students' experience with Google Classroom, we have advanced one question to know the feeling of the students when interacting by using the platform and whether they are satisfied with the online form of interaction. The results show that (74%) of the students respond that they feel at ease when interacting with their teachers and peers as they participate in Google Classroom. It justifies the fact that an accurate classroom interaction can be achieved in the online form of education as the one which is introduced in the face-to-face classes. This means that teachers have the opportunity to present the course content followed by an online interaction where the learners are able to express themselves freely by asking their questions about the lesson to have a deep understanding of the new concepts. Classroom interaction is one of the basic components of a successful teaching and learning as it is mentioned by Kalantari (2009) "Through carefully designed classroom interaction activities, involving various forms of more or less realistic practice, learners can become skilled at actually doing the things they have been taught about" (p. 425). An effective classroom interaction has a positive impact on the learning outcomes since it boosts the students' chances for a successful language learning and acquisition.

In addition, the findings demonstrate that Google Classroom helps the students to feel comfortable while interacting with the teachers as well as giving them a sense of self-

confidence and satisfaction. It works to keep the learners more motivated and interested to join the online classes in order to express themselves. There are one category of the learners who are shy and feel confused to interact and ask their questions during the face-to-face sessions. Thus, Google Classroom helps them to raise their self-confidence to interact and become more engaged in the course by sitting at home and making an online interaction with the instructors. The platform encourages them to reduce the negative feelings of shyness and confusion.

The findings of the present research reveal that the students are satisfied with Google Classroom as a tool which supports and complements the teaching and learning process. In relation to the students' satisfaction, our result is similar with the research of Shaharane et al. (2016) about 'The Application of Google Classroom as a tool for Teaching and Learning'. They find that the greatest number of the students are satisfied with Google Classroom since they believe it is an effective and efficient medium for developing their language learning.

However, some students believe that Google Classroom is not useful and effective in promoting their engagement and interaction while learning English. They justify their answer by stating that this form of interaction lacks the organisation which influences their interaction with the teachers in a negative way. The lack of the Internet connection is considered also an obstacle which can affect the students' interaction. One of the participants mentions that "I do not feel close to my teacher when interacting with them using Google Classroom". This means that some students prefer to have the teachers in front of them in order to interact and answer their questions.

To have a reliable result and a deep understanding of the concept of online interaction, we have included some questions in the interview to get additional information and tackle this concept from the side of the teachers. We have asked the teachers about the performance of

their learners while participating in Google Classroom. One interviewee advocates that their students attend their lessons and they do participate and interact like in the face-to-face sessions by fixing the activities and sending them back to the teachers. This confirms that online interaction with Google Classroom increases the students' performance. It makes them more interested to join the online sessions and try to adapt this new form of interaction and communication. Another participant states that they cannot read all the students' comments in Google Classroom to answer them. Thus, they talk and interact with their learners via Google Meet which is attached to Google Classroom by sending a link which enables the students to join the online class.

Furthermore, question (8) of the interview is addressed to know the way Google Classroom enables the teachers to explain the content appropriately. The results demonstrate that most interviewees are satisfied and find the online platform useful to transmit their lessons and interact with their students. For instance, one teacher argues that "I use Google Classroom mainly to sustain my lessons, it is something practical. Even if the students are at home, they can get access to the activities and get my feedback". She adds that the online platform is very useful for practice since it allows her to take notes of the major mistakes which are made by the students and to send them a feedback based on those errors. Thus, the students correct their works based on those errors and this encourages them to become autonomous and independent learners. Other participants believe that the option of including links, videos and a variety of teaching materials improves their way of explaining and interacting with their students. They agree that the online platform allows them to create a live interaction with the students where they can discuss some points and ideas related to the course and the instructor can invite the learners to some sites and YouTube videos in order to develop a deep understanding of the new concepts.

This goes hand in hand with what McGinnis (2021) says that it is the responsibility of the teachers to create an interactive learning environment in Google Classroom by mixing different types of resources and providing students with different options to submit their works. This means that students have the choice to give their answers in the form of a comment, video or a drawing via Google Classroom. The interpretation that we can make is that Google Classroom is a useful tool which can promote the students' interaction and engagement depending on the teachers' techniques and methods of explanation which can attract the learners and increase their self-confidence and willingness to participate, interact and ask their questions.

Teachers believe that Google Classroom is very effective and complementary. It helps them to manage time in teaching their subjects by sending documents and announcements to their students. They agree to keep using the online platform even if they will get back to the face-to-face sessions since it is useful and an interesting experience which benefits both teachers and students.

To conclude, the findings of both the questionnaire and the interview confirm that Google Classroom is a great and a useful application advanced by Google to promote the students' interaction and engagement in the online courses. It provides the teachers with a new form of interaction to discuss and answer the questions of their students in an accurate way. The present investigation demonstrates that both students and teachers are satisfied and feel comfortable while interacting via Google Classroom. Thus, the findings discussed in this section allow us to answer the third question and confirm the third hypothesis which states that through Google Classroom, the first-year students can interact with both their teachers and peers.

4.4 The Difficulties that Teachers and Students Can Encounter in the Implementation of Google Classroom in the EFL Classes

In the questionnaire, we have asked the participants about the main limitations and difficulties they likely encounter while participating in Google Classroom. Diagram (11) shows that the students find a problem to concentrate during the online classes since the majority of the students talk at the same time. They also find a difficulty to contact the teachers individually. This confirms what Dhull and Arora (2017) say that “Studies show that feeling of isolation was a huge stress factor that prompted students to drop out” (p. 33). Although Google Classroom offers an interactive and a flexible learning atmosphere, it leads to various limitations in its implementation in the EFL classes.

Regarding the use of Google Classroom, the findings reveal that problems of the Internet connection occupy (18.45%) of the students’ views. The lack of Internet connection affects the students’ performance as many of them complain about this issue which makes them late and not interested in the online classes. It reduces their interaction and engagement as well as the quality of online education. Most participants believe that the online platform does not allow them to ask and answer their questions freely. They view that the face-to-face classes give them more opportunities to express and ask for more clarifications and questions since the teacher is close to them. In fact, this kind of students depends on the teachers and their guidance.

Furthermore, a minority of the students are not familiar with the online technology and the new form of education. They cannot adapt and access the online courses in an effective way since they are new in this field. This goes hand in hand with what Pappas (2015) states that Google Classroom is considered too ‘googlish’ due to the fact that it includes various

bottoms which can cause confusion. It is the first experience for the majority of the students who find themselves strangers with this form of education.

One question is advanced in the interview in relation to the problems and limitations encountered while using Google Classroom. The aim of this question is to gather some additional information and tackle the concept from the teachers' perspective. The findings reveal that most of the interviewees report that they do not face any problem while working with Google Classroom. This confirms that the platform is effective and useful from the teachers' view. It provides them with more opportunities to achieve their educational objectives. One teacher advocates that they do find a problem with Google Meet which is attached to Google Classroom by a given link. They find that it is not practical since they spend all the time repeating the same idea to each student who interrupts and joins the online class. In general, teachers believe that their students suffer from the problem of Internet connection which does not allow them to join and attend the online sessions. They also state that Google Classroom does not offer an opportunity for speaking. This makes teaching the subject of Listening and Speaking slightly challenging and demanding. The only way through which the teachers and students can contact each other is through writing.

To sum up, both the students' questionnaire and teachers' interview serve to clarify and introduce the main limitations and problems encountered in the implementation of Google Classroom as a learning tool. Google Classroom, like any other platform, has benefits and drawbacks which can reduce its effectiveness. Among the problems encountered while using the online platform, there are: the absence of individuality since the students cannot contact the teachers individually, the lack of concentration, the weak Internet connection, the lack of familiarity with the online technology, ...ect. The findings reveal that these limitations affect negatively online teaching and learning by making the students and teachers confused

and less interactive and engaged in the online courses. These results allow us to answer the fourth and last question of the investigation. Thus, they partly confirm the fourth hypothesis which states that the teachers and the students face problems of Internet connection, lack of training and lack of participation. However, some limitations are added to answer this question in an accurate way.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided a discussion and interpretation of the results of the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview conducted at the department of English at ENSB in Algiers. The findings of the investigation have been discussed by relying on the theoretical framework of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) presented by Davis (1989). The interpreted results have allowed to answer the research questions and confirm or disconfirm the suggested hypotheses which have been introduced in the general introduction.

Based on the above results, we have confirmed that the first-year students have developed positive perceptions of Google Classroom. They have perceived Google Classroom as a tool which is useful and supports their English learning. It helps to increase the students' performance. It is regarded as an effective platform in term of Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use as it helps and facilitates for the learners the process of accessing the online courses from anywhere and anytime.

The outcomes of both the questionnaire and interview have revealed that Google Classroom gives the teachers the opportunity to mix different teaching materials in order to satisfy and fit the students' needs and interests in learning English. Teachers can send a variety of teaching materials including documents, videos, pictures, articles and letters...ect.

This option attracts the students' attention and makes them more motivated and interested to join the online classes.

Additionally, the results of the investigation have demonstrated that Google Classroom plays a significant role in promoting the students' interaction and engagement during the online courses. Students have found themselves comfortable as they feel at ease while conversing and interacting with their teachers through the online platform. It enables both teachers and learners to create an interactive and stimulating learning environment where they can make a debate, exchange ideas and ask and answer questions.

Finally, the implementation of Google Classroom in the EFL classes has led to some limitations which can reduce its effectiveness. The performance of both teachers and students can be negatively affected by these drawbacks including problems of Internet connection, lack of individuality, few opportunities for asking questions and so many others. These limitations should be overcome and solved for using Google Classroom in an effective way.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present study has investigated the perceptions of the EFL first-year students of the use of Google Classroom as a teaching and learning tool. It has been based on four main objectives. First, it has aimed in determining the students' perceptions of the implementation of Google Classroom in the teaching and learning process. Second, it has attempted to identify the main teaching materials that are integrated in the teaching of English via the online platform. Third, it has aimed in investigating the way Google Classroom fosters the students' interaction and engagement in the EFL classes. As for the fourth and last objective of this dissertation, it has aimed in examining the main limitations and difficulties encountered by both teachers and students while using Google Classroom as a teaching and learning tool.

To reach the previously mentioned objectives, the study has relied on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989) as a theoretical framework. It analyses the usage and acceptance of a given system in the teaching and learning context. It has aimed in exploring the users' satisfaction and adoption of Google Classroom as a tool which supports the teaching and learning process. The model is based on two main components: 1- Perceived Usefulness and 2- Perceived Ease of Use which are used to determine the extent to which the users of a given platform accept to use it. TAM has been used in the present investigation to explore the students' perceptions of Google Classroom in term of its usefulness and accessibility.

As a way to gather reliable and relevant data, the study has used two data collection tools that are a questionnaire and a structured interview. The research has adopted a questionnaire of seventeen items addressed to fifty first-year students of the department of English at ENSB in Algiers. As for the structured interview, five teachers have been

interviewed to collect some findings which have served to answer the research questions. The mixed-methods research which integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods has been adopted in the process of data collection and data analysis in order to answer the research questions and test the suggested hypotheses advanced in the general introduction. The quantitative data have been analysed using the Descriptive Statistics while the qualitative data have been analysed by relying on the Qualitative Content Analysis.

The results of the students' questionnaire have revealed that the first-year students have developed positive perceptions of Google Classroom as an effective learning tool. They have believed that the online platform is a useful and a complementary medium which supports the teaching and learning process. Google Classroom helps to increase the students' performance as it provides them with an easy access to the online courses sent by their teachers. Moreover, it facilitates the process of accessing and submitting the assignments for a successful language learning and acquisition.

Google Classroom gives the teachers the opportunity to use different teaching materials in the process of teaching English. In order to attain the instructional objectives, teachers can use a variety of teaching materials including: documents in the form of PDFs, videos, pictures and articles. This mixture of resources helps to attract the students' attention and make them more motivated and interested in acquiring new concepts.

Furthermore, the findings have indicated that Google Classroom fosters the interaction and engagement of the first-year students in the EFL classes. It allows the teachers and students to exchange assignments, activities and feedback as well as discussing and evaluating new ideas and topics. Students are able to ask their questions and for more clarifications and explanations especially when the course content is challenging and problematic which requires more efforts on the part of the teacher.

Although Google Classroom is beneficial and effective as a teaching and learning tool, it has some limitations which reduce its effectiveness in the teaching and learning process. The findings have revealed that the students find it difficult to contact their teachers. It is also difficult for them to concentrate when all the participants talk at the same time during the online classes. In addition, problems of the Internet connection make the students more confused and late. These limitations can influence in a negative way the implementation of Google Classroom in the EFL classes.

Finally, the hypotheses of this research have been confirmed by adding more information about the topic of investigation. Students have perceived Google Classroom as an online learning tool which allows them to develop their language skills and their performance in learning English. It consists of various options which give the chance to mix different teaching materials and resources in order to create an interactive and engaging learning environment to achieve the learning outcomes.

It is hoped that this research has contributed to the field of online education by relying on different applications and platforms. Some future researches are recommended in relation to the concept online teaching and learning for the purpose of enriching the field of online education, which are as follows:

- The role of Google Classroom in enhancing the students' self-confidence;
- Students' attitudes of learning Listening and Speaking via Google Classroom;
- The teaching techniques used by the teachers to foster the students' interaction and engagement via Google Classroom;
- The application of Zoom as a teaching and learning tool in the EFL classes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:
Students' Questionnaire

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students, you are kindly invited to fill this questionnaire giving your opinion about the use of Google Classroom as an effective learning tool. Your answers are of a great importance for the research and its validity, and they will be confidential and used only for academic purposes. I appreciate your collaboration.

Thank you for your collaboration

Section One: Background Information

1. How difficult is the learning of English at ENSB?

Very difficult Difficult Slightly difficult

2. How often do you use Google Classroom to access the courses of English?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

3. Have you ever used Google Classroom before arriving at ENSB?

Yes, I have No, I have not

4. Have you ever received any training before participating in Google Classroom?

Yes, I have No, I have not

5. How important is getting trained for an effective use of Google Classroom?

Very important Important Slightly important Unimportant

Section Two: Students' Perceptions of the Use of Google Classroom

6. Answer by putting a mark (√) on each statement below:

- **Ease of Access :**

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
-It is easy to sign on to Google Classroom -It is easy to access the courses -It enables to send and receive assignments -It is easy to submit (complete) the assignments -It is easy to navigate and understand the system -I can save the lectures for the future use					

- **Perceived Usefulness:**

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
-The quality of the learning activity is excellent -Google Classroom enables us to interact with the teachers and peers - The course activities help me to apply and practice what I have learned -The feedbacks provided by the teachers are useful -The content, objective and assessment are consistent (related) using Google Classroom -I use Google Classroom to send my work to the teachers					

Section Three: Students' Learning Experience of Google Classroom

7. Do you feel at ease when interacting with the teachers and peers using Google Classroom?

Yes

No

If no, why?

.....
.....

8. How far do you agree with the following statement?

“Using Google Classroom makes me more confident, more autonomous, more focused, and more motivated.”

Strongly agree Agree Neutral
Disagree Strongly disagree

9. How important is the teachers’ motivation for an effective participation in Google Classroom?

Very important Important Slightly important Unimportant

10. How often do the teachers explain and provide effective examples via Google Classroom?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

11. What are the teaching materials send by the teachers via Google Classroom: documents in the form of PDFs, pictures, videos, books, or articles?

.....

12. Does Google Classroom allow you to study anywhere and anytime?

Yes No

13. Put a tick(√) on the limitations you likely find while using Google Classroom:

- I am not familiar with the online technology.
- I have problems with the Internet connection.
- There is a lack of organisation.

Appendix 2:
Teachers' Interview

Teachers' interview

This interview is part of our research which is about first-year EFL students' perceptions of the use of Google Classroom as an effective learning tool at ENSB in Algiers. Your answers will be helpful to carry out our research, they will be confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Thank you for your collaboration.

1. What subject do you teach?
2. What do you think about teaching your subject using Google Classroom?
3. Have you ever received any training before using Google Classroom?
4. How important is getting trained for an effective use of Google Classroom? Why?
5. From your own experience, would you enlighten us about the difficulty or easiness of getting access to Google Classroom?
6. What teaching materials do you use to teach your subject via Google Classroom?
Would you give more details about the point?
7. Based on your experience as a teacher, how do you perceive your students' performance while using Google Classroom? Would you give more details about the point?
8. How can you explain the fact that Google Classroom allows you to interact and explain the content more effectively?
9. How do you motivate your students to participate during the online courses?
10. Would you cite some problems of the main you encountered while using Google Classroom?
11. How is teaching the English language using Google Classroom: effective, demanding, boring, or complicated? Would you give more details about the point?