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**Distance Learning and its Impact on M'sila
Master One EFL linguistics Learners'
Knowledge and Linguistic Outcomes during the
Covid-19 Pandemic**

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Master's Degree**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work

❖ *To the souls of my beloved parents “**Youcef**” & “**Khaira**”.*

May they rest in peace

❖ *To my beloved family: my dearest wife for her support and patience, my two sweet sons “**Yacine**” & “**Youcef**”*

❖ *To all my brothers and sisters for their encouragement*

❖ *To my cheerful partner “**Boumediene**”*

❖ *To my best friend “**Foudil**” for his kindness and help*

❖ *To my friends “**Abd-el-Kader**” “**Yasser**” “**Badro**”*

❖ *To all my mates at M’sila University*

Khalil Chergui

Dedication

I dedicate this work

- ❖ *To my beloved parents “**Mokhtar**” & “**Djamila**” who lead me through the valley of darkness with light of hope and support*
- ❖ *To my beloved family: my dearest wife for her support and patience, my lovely daughter “**Amina**”, my two sweet sons “**Ahmed**” & the little “**Othman**”*
- ❖ *To all my brothers and sisters for their encouragement to continue my studies*
- ❖ *To my cheery partner “**Khalil**”*
- ❖ *To my friends “**Abd-el-Kader**” “**Yasser**” “**Badro**”*
- ❖ *To all my mates at M’sila University*

Boumediene Naoui

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ABSTRACT

Covid 19 pandemic has affected all aspects of life. The field of education was not of any exception since educational institutions all over the world shifted from face to face learning to distance learning mode. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of distance learning on EFL learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during the Covid 19 pandemic. The study is divided into two chapters. The first one is a literature review about distance learning and linguistic outcomes. The second chapter is devoted to field work. To answer the research questions, a descriptive qualitative method is adopted. Data are gathered through a questionnaire distributed to Master one linguistics students and an interview with four teachers from the English Department in M'sila University. The findings obtained show that distance learning had a negative impact on EFL learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during Covid 19 pandemic. Based on these findings, recommendations are suggested for students, teachers and university administration.

Key words: Distance Learning, Impact, EFL Learners, Linguistic Outcomes, Covid 19.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning

CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ICTs: Information and Communication Technologies

TBLT: Task-Based Language Teaching

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General Introduction

1. Background of the study

The world has witnessed a great technological development that affects all aspects of life. The field of education is one of them through the use of distance learning. This latter provides assistance for many people in the world, particularly those who work full-time, live in remote areas or have an alternative lifestyle due to illness or travel. Technology has made it possible to gain qualifications solely online and receive excellent education remotely through institutes that offer online courses. That means it does not matter where you live; you can still take advantage of online education. Distance learning technologies allow access to the latest and best information available. Learners invest in technology to access to large amounts of online resources and information. Thus, they become more independent and encouraged to carry out their own research.

The technology development was not the only factor that encouraged distance learning. However, it was imposed by the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in the world. Coronavirus has obliged all the world countries to take exceptional and strict measures in all fields such as: social distancing, wearing masks, closure of schools and universities. Education was not an exception and the authorities took into consideration the dangers of this pandemic. Therefore, distance learning was the solution that ensured the continuity of education. It became a necessity not an option. It was adopted by most institutions, colleges, schools and universities such as Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila which used the MOODLE Platform where courses and lectures were uploaded by teachers for their students to ensure communication with them in a safe environment and keep students in touch with their studies and teachers in spite of the healthy difficulties.

As a new mode of learning in Algeria, distance learning required isolation and the absence of direct contact between the teacher and the learners. Consequently, many experts

questioned its effectiveness for studies and worry that the lack of direct instructor feedback and support will affect their grades and performance. In other words, their concern is about the impact of distance learning on students' knowledge and linguistic outcomes.

2. Statement of the problem

Distance learning during Covid-19 era was an imposed substitute for face to face education. It was adopted by most governments after the urgent decision of closing the different educational institutions; schools, colleges and universities in order to reduce the quick spread of Coronavirus. Since this system was newly used in Algeria, its application faced many difficulties and obstacles such as the access to the internet which was not available for all. In addition to the lack of technology literacy among students that affected their knowledge acquisition and their linguistic outcomes.

3. Aims of the study

This study aims

- a. To investigate the impact of distance learning on EFL learners' knowledge and their linguistic outcomes during Covid-19 Pandemic. It includes modules coverage, oral and writing proficiency, understanding of course materials and coping strategies.
- b. To identify the difficulties and obstacles faced distance learning and suggest solutions and recommendations to overcome them.

4. Research questions

To achieve the above-mentioned aims, the current research seeks to answer the following questions:

- a. How did distance learning impact learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during Covid 19 pandemic?

- b. What are the challenges and obstacles that faced EFL learners during distance learning?

5. Research hypotheses

Based on the above research questions, it is hypothesized that:

- Distance learning had negative impact on learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes.
- Distance learning affected learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes positively.

6. Research Methodology

In order to identify the impact of distance learning on learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during Covid-19 Pandemic, a descriptive qualitative method is used. The data is collected through a students' questionnaire and a teachers' interview. The questionnaire was distributed to 30 EFL Master One Linguistics students as a sample among a population of 65 students in M'sila University to investigate their perceptions and attitudes towards distance learning and how it affected them. The interview was conducted with four teachers of Master one Linguistics students in the English department to know about their insights and experiences about the impact of distance learning on learners during the Covid-19 pandemic.

7. Significance of the study

This study is significant for both learners and teachers. For learners, it investigates the difficulties that affected their knowledge acquisition and linguistic outcomes in order to overcome them to guarantee good educational development and success. As for teachers, it helps them to adopt appropriate teaching methods and to adapt to urgent circumstances during crises time.

8. Structure of the study

This study is divided into two chapters. The first one is entitled literature review whereas the second one is about the field work.

The first chapter contains two sections. The first one tackles distance learning, its types and pedagogy, practices to make it effective, challenges faced learners and strategies to overcome. The second section deals with linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning. It starts with definition and types of linguistic outcomes, moving to factors affecting them, strategies and technologies for future enhancement. This section ends with previous studies related to distance learning and its impact on EFL learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during Covid 19 pandemic.

The second chapter is practical. It is divided into two sections. The first one exposes methodology, population and sampling, description of data collection tools. The second section is concerned with the analysis and discussion of the findings obtained from the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. Finally, the study ends with general results, recommendations and general conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE

REVIEW

SECTION ONE: DISTANCE LEARNING

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the field of education, with many institutions adopting distance learning as a way of delivering instruction while reducing the risk of infection. Distance learning refers to the use of technology to facilitate learning outside of the traditional classroom setting (Briz-Ponce et al., 2016, p. 252). This mode of learning has had a profound impact on knowledge and linguistic outcomes, both positive and negative (Education, Language, and Economics, 2010, p. 7).

On the positive side, Bhardwaj and Banks (2019, p. 229) acknowledged that distance learning has allowed students to access educational resources from anywhere in the world. This has enabled students to learn from top institutions without having to relocate or incur the costs associated with traditional learning (Moran & Rumble, 2004, p. 209). Additionally, distance learning has facilitated the development of self-directed learning skills, as students are required to take greater responsibility for their own learning (Keengwe, 2016, p. 45).

On the negative side, Johnston and López (2022, p. 50) believed that distance learning has been associated with a number of challenges that can negatively affect knowledge and linguistic outcomes. For example, the lack of face-to-face interaction with instructors and peers can make it more difficult for students to engage with the material and receive feedback Ragusa (2010, p. 112). Additionally, the technological requirements of distance learning may place a burden on students who do not have access to reliable internet or necessary hardware (Sadeghi, 2022, p. 70).

Studies have shown that the impact of distance learning on knowledge and linguistic outcomes varies depending on a number of factors, including the quality of the instruction, the level of student engagement, and the technological infrastructure available to support learning (Derakhshan et al., 2022, p. 373). In general, however, it appears that distance

learning can be an effective way of delivering instruction, provided that appropriate measures are taken to ensure that students have the necessary resources and support to succeed (Billings & Halstead, 2019, p. 405).

1.1.1. Definition of distance learning

Distance learning, also known as online learning or e-learning, refers to the use of technology to facilitate learning outside of the traditional classroom setting (Meletiadou, 2023, p. 28). This mode of instruction has become increasingly popular in recent years due to its flexibility and accessibility, allowing students to access educational resources and interact with instructors and peers from anywhere in the world (Resources, 2021, p. 102).

1.1.2. The importance of distance learning

Distance learning has become particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many institutions have had to shift to remote instruction to ensure the safety of students and faculty (Byrd, 2021, p. 69). This has highlighted the importance of distance learning as a means of delivering education in times of crisis (Cooper et al., 2022, p. 133). Latchem and Learning (2017, p. 188) quoted that distance learning can enable institutions to continue delivering instruction even when face-to-face instruction is not possible, ensuring that students are able to continue learning and progressing towards their educational goals.

Beyond its importance during times of crisis, distance learning offers a number of benefits for students and institutions alike (Scherman et al., 2023, p. 154). For students, distance learning can provide greater flexibility and accessibility, allowing them to learn at their own pace and on their own schedule. For institutions, distance learning can be a cost-effective way of delivering instruction, particularly for courses with large enrolments (Hou et al., 2020, p. 190).

Despite these benefits, however, distance learning is not without challenges. As mentioned above, the lack of face-to-face interaction with instructors and peers can make it more difficult for students to engage with the material and receive feedback.

Distance learning has emerged as an important mode of instruction in the 21st century, offering new opportunities for students and institutions to engage with educational content and interact with one another (Fudge & Ferebee, 2021, p. 248). This study will explore the impact of distance learning on knowledge and linguistic outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to better understand its potential benefits and challenges for education in the 21st century (Chatham, 2021, p. 266).

1.1.3. Types of Distance Learning

Scholars and academics have identified several types of distance learning, each with its own unique characteristics and benefits. Three commonly recognized types of distance learning are synchronous vs. asynchronous, self-paced vs. instructor-led, and blended learning (Garrison & Vaughan, 2011, p. 50).

1.1.3.1. Synchronous vs. asynchronous

Synchronous distance learning refers to instruction that occurs in real-time, with instructors and students participating in online activities simultaneously (Khosrowpour, 2012, p. 662). This type of distance learning may involve live video lectures, online discussions, and interactive activities. Synchronous distance learning can facilitate real-time communication and collaboration between instructors and students, and can help to foster a sense of community among learners (Bui & Kumar, 2023, p. 6).

Asynchronous distance learning, on the other hand, involves instruction that is not delivered in real-time (Shih & Wang, 2004, p. x). Instead, students access educational content and complete assignments on their own schedule (Ramlall et al., 2021, p. 152). This

mode of instruction can offer greater flexibility and convenience for students who may have other obligations or commitments that prevent them from participating in real-time instruction (Colomo-Palacios, 2012, p. II).

1.1.3.2. Self-paced vs. Instructor-led

Self-paced distance learning involves students working independently through course materials, with little to no interaction with instructors or peers (Zheng, 2018, p. 170). Blumberg (2017, p. 133) mentioned that this mode of instruction is often used in self-directed learning programs, and can be an effective way of developing students' self-directed learning skills.

Instructor-led distance learning, on the other hand, involves instructors providing guidance and support to students throughout the learning process (Khan, 2005, p. 13). This may involve regular feedback and interaction between instructors and students, and can help to ensure that students are meeting course objectives and learning outcomes (Palloff & Pratt, 2011, p. 290).

1.1.3.3. Blended learning

Blended learning refers to a combination of online and face-to-face instruction. This mode of instruction may involve students attending some classes in person while completing others online, or may involve a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction (Milakovich & Wise, 2019, p. 35). Blended learning can offer the benefits of both face-to-face and online instruction, allowing students to benefit from the flexibility and convenience of distance learning while still engaging in face-to-face interaction with instructors and peers (Bourne & Moore, 2005, p. 90).

Carvalho et al. (2020, p. 7) mentioned that these different types of distance learning offer a range of options for delivering instruction outside of the traditional classroom setting,

each with its own unique benefits and challenges. Understanding these different types of distance learning is important for educators and institutions seeking to develop effective and innovative approaches to teaching and learning in the 21st century (Demiray et al., 2011, p. xii).

1.1.4. Best Practices for Effective Distance Learning

In recent years, distance learning has become an increasingly popular mode of instruction, offering students and institutions greater flexibility and accessibility than traditional classroom-based instruction (Chen & Vijayaram, 2013, p. 48). Fackler et al. (2022, p. 13) thought that the shift to distance learning can also present a number of challenges for both teachers and learners. To ensure that students are able to achieve their learning objectives and receive a high-quality educational experience, it is important to adopt best practices for effective distance learning (Shattuck, 2014). In this part, five key best practices for effective distance learning will be examined, including engaging multimedia and activities, timely and effective feedback, aligned assessments, student collaboration and interaction, and learning analytics for monitoring progress (Khan & Ally, 2017, p. 61).

1.1.4.1. Engaging multimedia and activities

One of the most important practices for effective distance learning is the use of engaging multimedia and activities (Resources, 2020, p. 706). Distance learning can sometimes be less interactive and engaging than traditional classroom instruction, which can make it more difficult for students to stay motivated and focused (Thornburg et al., 2020, p. 83). By incorporating multimedia and interactive activities, instructors can help to capture students' attention and facilitate their understanding of course material (Ciccomascolo & Sullivan, 2013, p. 246).

1.1.4.2. Timely and effective feedback

Another key practice is to provide timely and effective feedback to students (Wiggins & McTighe, 2007). Mulholland and Turnock (2013, p. 87) believed that feedback is an essential component of the learning process, and can help students to understand their strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for improvement. In distance learning, providing feedback can be more challenging, particularly if instructors are not able to interact with students in real-time. However, by providing regular and timely feedback on assignments and assessments, instructors can help to ensure that students are receiving the support and guidance they need to succeed (Coghill & Coghill, 2020, p. 78).

1.1.4.3. Aligned assessments

In addition to providing engaging multimedia and effective feedback, it is important to ensure that assessments are aligned with course objectives and learning outcomes (Peters, 2022, p. 1512). Aligned assessments can help to ensure that students are learning the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the course, and can provide instructors with valuable insights into students' progress and achievement (Gradinarova, 2015).

1.1.4.4. Student collaboration and interaction

Another practice for effective distance learning is to encourage student collaboration and interaction (Tomei, 2009, p. 167). Distance learning can sometimes be isolating, which can make it more difficult for students to engage with course material and develop a sense of connection with their peers and instructors (Keengwe, 2014, p. 246). By promoting student collaboration and interaction through group projects, online discussions, and other activities, instructors can help to foster a sense of community among learners and promote engagement with course content (Stevenson & Bauer, 2019, p. 10).

1.1.4.5. Learning analytics for monitoring progress

Finally, learning analytics can be a valuable tool for monitoring student progress and identifying areas for improvement (Uçar, 2023, p. 61). By collecting and analysing data on student's engagement, performance, and other metrics, instructors can gain insights into how students are interacting with course material and identify areas where additional support or resources may be needed (Leicht et al., 2018).

These practices can help to ensure that distance learning is effective and engaging for students, and that instructors are able to provide the support and guidance necessary to promote student success (Eby, 2015, p. 170). Oduaran et al. (2021, p. 153) confirmed that by adopting these practices, institutions can help to ensure that distance learning remains a viable and effective mode of instruction in the 21st century.

1.1.5. Pedagogy of Distance Learning

Distance learning is a mode of instruction that requires unique pedagogical approaches to effectively facilitate learning (Simonson et al., 2014, p. 175). Here, we will examine three key pedagogical frameworks that are commonly used in distance learning: cognitive and constructivist theories, adaptation for distance learning, and student-centred learning.

1.1.5.1. Cognitive and constructivist theories

Cognitive and constructivist theories are two key pedagogical frameworks that are often used in distance learning (Northcote & Gosselin, 2016, p. 186). Cognitive theories focus on how students learn and process information, and how they can develop their cognitive abilities through instruction (Papadakis et al., 2023, p. 76). Constructivist theories, on the other hand, emphasize the importance of active learning and student engagement in the learning process (Resources, 2017, p. 620). By incorporating these theories into their

instructional practices, distance learning instructors can help to create an environment that is conducive to student learning and engagement (Jennings, 2021, p. 235).

1.1.5.2. Adaptation to distance learning

Adaptation to distance learning is another important pedagogical consideration for instructors. Unlike traditional classroom instruction, distance learning requires unique instructional approaches and technology (Burgos et al., 2020, p. 136). To be effective, instructors must be able to adapt their instructional practices and materials to the needs of their students and the technological constraints of the platform. This may involve the use of multimedia materials, online collaboration tools, and other resources to enhance the learning experience for students (Medicine et al., 2018).

1.1.5.3. Student-centred learning

Student-centred learning is a key pedagogical framework for distance learning (Willems, 2013, pp. 309–310). Student-centred learning places the learner at the centre of the instructional process, emphasizing the importance of individualized learning and active engagement (Lewis, 2007, p. 21). By focusing on the needs and interests of individual students, instructors can help to create a learning environment that is personalized and engaging, and that promotes student success (Kats, 2010, pp. 263–264).

To conclude, these three pedagogical frameworks are essential considerations for instructors in distance learning. Bryan et al. (2017, p. 74) cited that by incorporating cognitive and constructivist theories, adapting instructional practices for distance learning, and prioritizing student-centred learning, instructors can help to create a dynamic and effective learning environment for their students, one that is grounded in best practices and pedagogical research (Nilson & Goodson, 2021).

1.1.6. Difference between Distance and Face-to-Face Learning

Distance learning and face-to-face learning are two different instructional modalities that have distinct advantages, disadvantages, limitations, and solutions. In this literature review, we will examine these differences in more details (Library & Information Science Abstracts, 2008, p. 134).

1.1.6.1. Advantages and disadvantages of the two modes of learning

Advantages and disadvantages of distance learning and face-to-face learning are often discussed in comparison to one another. Distance learning allows for flexibility, convenience, and accessibility, as students can learn from anywhere at any time. It also allows for the use of innovative technology and multimedia resources to enhance the learning experience (Nolasco, 2022). However, it can be challenging for some students who require more structure and support, and who may struggle with motivation and engagement (Creating Learning Environments to Support Student Motivation Post-Pandemic | Teaching + Learning Lab, n.d.).

Face-to-face learning, on the other hand, provides a structured and immersive learning experience that promotes interaction and collaboration between students and instructors (Singh et al., 2021). It also allows for immediate feedback and personalized instruction, as instructors can observe and respond to students in real-time. However, it may be limited by physical space and time constraints, and may not be as accessible or flexible as distance learning (Cavalcanti et al., 2021).

1.1.6.2. Limitations and solutions

Limitations and solutions for distance learning and face-to-face learning are also important considerations. Distance learning may be limited by technological barriers, such as limited internet access or lack of access to necessary software and hardware. Solutions to

these limitations may include providing students with the necessary technology and resources, or offering alternative modes of instruction (Bidgoli, 2004, p. 663). Bonk and Graham (2012) claimed that face-to-face learning may be limited by space and time constraints, as well as by the availability of qualified instructors. Solutions may include scheduling classes at convenient times and locations, or offering online resources and support for students.

The advantages, disadvantages, limitations, and solutions for distance learning and face-to-face learning are complex and multifaceted. While both modes of instruction have unique strengths and weaknesses, a combination of the two may provide the most effective learning experience for students (Oecd, 2009). By carefully considering the needs and preferences of individual learners, instructors can help to create a learning environment that is engaging, effective, and adaptable to the changing needs of the education landscape (NeSmith, 2023, p. 51).

1.1.7. Assessment and Evaluation in Online Learning

Assessment and evaluation are important components of online learning, as they allow instructors to measure student learning and adjust instruction as needed. Here, we will examine three key aspects of assessment and evaluation in online learning: effective assessment strategies, formative and summative assessments, and the use of rubrics (Resources, 2020b, p. 907).

1.1.7.1. Effective assessment strategies

Effective assessment strategies are essential for ensuring that online learning is effective and engaging. Some strategies that have been shown to be effective in online learning include project-based assessments, authentic assessments, and performance assessments (Resources in Education, 1998, p. 16). These types of assessments allow

students to demonstrate their understanding of the material in a way that is more meaningful and relevant to real-world applications.

1.1.7.2. Formative and summative assessment

Formative and summative assessments are also important considerations in online learning. Formative assessments are designed to provide feedback and help students improve their understanding of the material, while summative assessments measure student learning at the end of a unit or course (Bonk & Graham, 2012, p. 797). Both types of assessments are important for ensuring that students are mastering the content and are able to apply it in a meaningful way.

1.1.7.3. Use of rubrics

The use of rubrics is another important aspect of assessment and evaluation in online learning. Rubrics provide a clear and objective way to evaluate student work and provide feedback that is specific and actionable (McTighe et al., 2020, p. 112). By providing detailed rubrics that outline the expectations for each assignment, instructors can help to ensure that students are clear on what is expected of them and can tailor their work accordingly.

Bloomberg (2021, p. 167) stated that effective assessment and evaluation strategies are essential for ensuring that online learning is effective and engaging. By using a variety of assessment types, including formative and summative assessments, and incorporating the use of rubrics, instructors can help to ensure that students are mastering the content and are able to apply it in a meaningful way (Santos et al., 2018, p. 39).

1.1.8. Opportunities and Challenges for Distance Learning During COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented significant challenges and opportunities for distance learning. Three key aspects of the opportunities and challenges for distance learning

during COVID-19: challenges faced by learners and teachers, strategies for addressing challenges, and opportunities for innovation (Islam et al., 2022, p. 217).

1.1.8.1. Challenges faced by learners and teachers

Both learners and teachers faced a lot of challenges in the transition from face to face to distance learning. Some common challenges faced by learners include difficulties with access to technology and internet connectivity, lack of motivation and engagement, and social isolation. Teachers, on the other hand, may face challenges related to adapting to new instructional modes, developing effective online assessments and feedback mechanisms, and maintaining student engagement and participation (Beldhuis, 2012, p. 160).

1.1.8.2. Strategies for addressing challenges

Strategies for addressing these challenges have varied, but some common approaches have included providing access to technology and resources, increasing communication and support for students and teachers, and developing innovative approaches to assessment and instruction. (Policy, 1992, p. 46) For example, some institutions have provided students with laptops and other necessary technology, while others have implemented virtual office hours and increased online communication and collaboration tools.

1.1.8.3. Opportunities for innovation

Opportunities for innovation have also emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic (Andreas, 2022, pp. 29–30). These opportunities include the development of new technologies and platforms that support distance learning, as well as the exploration of new instructional modes and approaches. Russell (2020, p. 170) stated that some educators have experimented with gamification and other interactive approaches to increase student engagement, while others have used virtual and augmented reality to create immersive learning experiences.

The challenges and opportunities presented by distance learning during COVID-19 have emphasized the need for innovative and adaptable approaches to education (Badran et al., 2022). By addressing the challenges faced by learners and teachers, and by leveraging the opportunities for innovation, educators can create a more effective and engaging learning experience for all students.

SECTION TWO: LINGUISTIC OUTCOMES AND KNOWLEDGE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

In language learning, the ultimate goal is to achieve positive linguistic outcomes, which can be defined as the measurable results of language learning activities. At this point, two key aspects of linguistic outcomes in language learning: the definition and types of linguistic outcomes, and the factors affecting linguistic outcomes (Resources in Education, 1998b, p. 72).

1.2.1. Definition and types of linguistic outcomes

Linguistic outcomes can be defined as the measurable results of language learning activities that demonstrate the acquisition of linguistic knowledge and skills (Arnbjörnsdóttir & Ingvarsdóttir, 2017, p. 77). These outcomes can be divided into four main types: receptive, productive, interactive, and mediating. Receptive outcomes involve the comprehension of written and spoken language, while productive outcomes involve the ability to produce written and spoken language. Interactive outcomes involve the ability to communicate effectively with others in the target language, while mediating outcomes involve the ability to translate and interpret between languages (Jacko, 2012, p. 381).

1.2.2. Factors affecting linguistic outcomes

Factors that affect linguistic outcomes can be categorized into three main areas: learner factors, instructional factors, and contextual factors. Learner factors include individual characteristics such as age, motivation, and prior language learning experience. Instructional factors include the quality and effectiveness of language instruction, including the types of instructional materials and the teaching methods employed (Li et al., 2022, p. 389). Contextual factors include the broader social, cultural, and political context in which

language learning occurs, such as the availability of language resources and the attitudes of society towards the target language.

Research has shown that a variety of factors can influence linguistic outcomes in language learning. For example, individual learner characteristics such as motivation and self-efficacy have been found to be important predictors of success in language learning (Resources, 2019, p. 170). Similarly, the quality and effectiveness of language instruction, including the use of appropriate instructional materials and teaching methods, have been found to be crucial factors in achieving positive linguistic outcomes (Hativa, 2001). Additionally, the broader social and cultural context in which language learning occurs, including attitudes towards the target language and access to language resources, can also play a significant role in influencing linguistic outcomes (Brown et al., 2013, p. 58).

Linguistic outcomes are an important aspect of language learning, and understanding the factors that affect these outcomes is crucial for developing effective language instruction and achieving positive learning outcomes (Resources, 2020c, p. 307). By considering learner, instructional, and contextual factors, language educators can help to create an environment that promotes success in language learning and facilitates the attainment of positive linguistic outcomes.

1.2.3. Strategies for enhancing linguistic outcomes and knowledge

In order to enhance linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning, a number of strategies have been proposed. Two key strategies: the role of feedback and technology in language learning, and the benefits of contextualized language learning (Hinkel, 2016, p. 191).

1.2.3.1. Role of feedback and technology

One important strategy for enhancing linguistic outcomes and knowledge is the provision of effective feedback to learners (Jennings, 2021b, pp. 221–223). Feedback can take many forms, including corrective feedback on language errors, positive reinforcement of correct language use, and feedback on broader aspects of language learning such as learning strategies and study skills. Research has shown that timely and constructive feedback can improve learner motivation and self-efficacy, and can promote more effective language learning (Bista & Glass, 2019, p. 727).

Zou and Thomas (2019) presented that another strategy for enhancing linguistic outcomes and knowledge is the use of technology in language learning. Technology can provide a variety of benefits to language learners, including increased access to authentic language materials, enhanced opportunities for collaborative learning, and more personalized and adaptive learning experiences. However, the effective integration of technology into language learning requires careful consideration of factors such as the type of technology used, the pedagogical approach employed, and the level of support and guidance provided to learners (ECEL 2018 17th European Conference on e-Learning, 2018, pp. 291–292).

1.2.3.2. Contextualized language learning

In addition to these strategies, contextualized language learning has been identified as a key approach for enhancing linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning. Contextualized language learning involves the integration of language learning activities with real-world contexts and situations, such as work, travel, or social interactions. By providing learners with opportunities to use language in meaningful and authentic contexts,

contextualized language learning can enhance learner motivation and engagement, and can promote more effective language learning outcomes (Lan & Grant, 2021).

Generally, the strategies outlined above offer valuable insights into the ways in which linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning can be enhanced. By providing effective feedback, leveraging technology, and adopting a contextualized approach to language learning, educators can help to create an environment that promotes success in language learning and facilitates the attainment of positive linguistic outcomes (Handbook of U.S. Latino Psychology, 2009).

1.2.4. Pedagogy for improving linguistic outcomes and knowledge

In order to improve linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning, various pedagogical approaches have been developed and implemented. In this part, we will examine three key pedagogies: communicative language teaching, task-based language teaching, and content and language integrated learning (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

1.2.4.1. Communicative language teaching

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the development of communicative competence in learners (Kianiparsa, 2015). CLT focuses on the use of language for meaningful communication, rather than on the mastery of discrete language skills or grammatical structures. By providing learners with opportunities to practice using language in real-life contexts, CLT aims to develop learners' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a variety of situations (Gałajda, 2017, p. 24).

1.2.4.2. Task-based language teaching

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is another pedagogical approach that aims to improve linguistic outcomes and knowledge by focusing on language use in real-life contexts (Charamba, 2022, p. 263). TBLT involves the integration of language learning

activities with real-world tasks, such as problem-solving, decision-making, and information-gathering activities. By providing learners with opportunities to use language in the context of meaningful and authentic tasks, TBLT aims to develop learners' communicative competence and to promote the acquisition of language knowledge and skills.

1.2.4.3. Content and language integrated learning

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is a pedagogical approach that involves the integration of language learning with the study of academic content in a non-native language (Khalyapina, 2020, p. 96). CLIL aims to develop both language skills and content knowledge, and to promote the integration of language learning with other academic domains. By providing learners with opportunities to learn content in a non-native language, CLIL aims to develop both linguistic and cognitive skills, and to promote deeper learning and understanding (Coyle & Meyer, 2021, p. 78).

These three pedagogical approaches offer valuable insights into the ways in which linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning can be improved. By emphasizing communication and real-world language use, integrating language learning with authentic tasks and academic content, and promoting deeper learning and understanding, communicative language teaching, task-based language teaching, and content and language integrated learning can help to create an environment that promotes success in language learning and facilitates the attainment of positive linguistic outcomes (Griffiths & Soruç, 2020, p. 25).

1.2.5. Assessment of linguistic outcomes and knowledge

Assessment plays a critical role in measuring linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning. Language assessments are used to evaluate learners' language proficiency, identify areas of strength and weakness, and provide feedback on progress.

Therefore, we will examine the role of assessment in measuring proficiency and the different types of language assessments (Peterson & Jabbari, 2022).

1.2.5.1. Role of assessment in measuring proficiency

Assessment is an essential tool for measuring language proficiency and knowledge. It provides learners with feedback on their progress and helps teachers to identify areas where learners may need additional support or instruction. Language assessments are used to evaluate learners' abilities in different areas of language use, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing, as well as in areas such as grammar and vocabulary. They may also be used to measure learners' ability to use language in real-life contexts, such as in social or professional situations (Railean, 2020).

1.2.5.2. Different types of language assessments

There are different types of language assessments that can be used to measure linguistic outcomes and knowledge. These include formative assessments, which are used to provide ongoing feedback and support to learners, and summative assessments, which are used to evaluate learners' progress at the end of a course or unit. Other types of language assessments include diagnostic assessments, which are used to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses in specific areas of language use, and placement assessments, which are used to determine learners' level of proficiency and to place them in appropriate courses or programs (Hall et al., 2015, p. 170).

In addition to these traditional types of language assessments, there are also new and innovative approaches to language assessment that have emerged in recent years. For example, technology-based assessments, such as online language assessments and automated scoring systems, are becoming increasingly popular in language teaching and

assessment. These tools can provide efficient and reliable feedback to learners, and they can be used to assess learners' language proficiency in real-time (Ekbatani, 2010).

Language assessment is a critical component of language learning, as it provides learners with feedback on their progress and helps teachers to identify areas of strength and weakness. By using a range of different assessment types and approaches, teachers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of learners' language proficiency and knowledge, and provide them with the support and instruction they need to succeed (Wahba et al., 2017, p. 257).

1.2.6. Technology tools for improving linguistic outcomes and knowledge

Muñoz-Luna and Taillefer (2017) claimed that technology has become an increasingly important tool for improving linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning. In this part, we will study the use of educational technology for language learning and effective strategies for integrating technology in language teaching.

1.2.6.1. Educational technology for language learning

Educational technology, such as computer-assisted language learning (CALL) software and online learning platforms, provides learners with additional opportunities to practice language skills and receive feedback. These tools can be particularly effective in providing learners with personalized instruction and immediate feedback, which can help to enhance their language proficiency and knowledge. Some examples of educational technology tools that have been used successfully in language teaching include language learning apps, virtual language exchange platforms, and video conferencing software (Zou, 2013).

1.2.6.2. Effective integration of technology

Effective integration of technology in language teaching requires careful consideration of both the technology tools themselves and the pedagogical approaches used to incorporate them into language learning activities. Technology should be used to enhance, rather than replace, traditional language learning activities such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Teachers should also be mindful of the potential for technology to create a sense of isolation among learners and should seek to create opportunities for collaboration and interaction among learners through online learning environments (Li & Swanson, 2014, pp. 116–117).

Effective integration of technology can also involve the use of multimedia resources, such as videos, podcasts, and online articles, to provide learners with engaging and authentic language learning experiences. These resources can be used to expose learners to real-world language use and to provide them with opportunities to practice language skills in different contexts (Learning, 2011, p. 51).

In conclusion, technology tools have the potential to significantly enhance linguistic outcomes and knowledge in language learning. By effectively integrating educational technology into language teaching activities, teachers can provide learners with personalized instruction, immediate feedback, and engaging language learning experiences that can help to enhance their language proficiency and knowledge (Carrió-Pastor, 2016, p. 23).

1.2.7. Learner's characteristics in distance learning

Learner's characteristics play a crucial role in the success of distance learning. We will discuss the impact of age, motivation, and prior knowledge on learner success in distance learning and strategies for supporting diverse learners (Resources, 2022b, p. 66).

1.2.7.1. Role of age, motivation and prior knowledge

Age is an important factor to consider in distance learning as older learners may face unique challenges such as decreased digital literacy and a higher likelihood of experiencing social isolation. Younger learners, on the other hand, may require more guidance and support to stay focused and engaged in online learning activities. Therefore, it is important for teachers to be mindful of the diverse age range of their learners and to provide differentiated support as needed (Hill-Jackson et al., 2019).

Motivation is another critical factor that can impact learner success in distance learning. Learners who are self-motivated and have a strong sense of purpose and ownership in their learning are more likely to succeed in online learning environments (Lin & Huang, 2011). Teachers can support learner motivation by providing clear learning objectives, providing timely and specific feedback, and creating opportunities for collaboration and interaction among learners.

Prior knowledge is also an important factor in learner success in distance learning. Learners with a strong foundation of prior knowledge in a subject area are more likely to succeed in online learning activities and may be able to progress through course materials more quickly. Teachers can support learners with diverse levels of prior knowledge by providing differentiated instruction and by using adaptive learning technologies that adjust course materials and activities based on individual learner needs (Salkind & Margolis, 2006).

1.2.7.2. Strategies for supporting diverse learners

Strategies for supporting diverse learners in distance learning include providing multiple modes of instruction, such as video lectures, audio recordings, and interactive simulations, to cater to different learning styles. Teachers can also use scaffolding techniques to support learners with diverse levels of prior knowledge, such as providing additional

resources or guiding questions to help learners build a strong foundation of understanding (Resources in Education, 1998c).

To sum up, Resources (2019b, p. 168) determined that learner characteristics such as age, motivation, and prior knowledge play a vital role in the success of distance learning. Teachers can support diverse learners by providing differentiated instruction, using adaptive learning technologies, and creating opportunities for collaboration and interaction among learners. By addressing the unique needs and characteristics of their learners, teachers can help to promote success and engagement in distance learning.

1.2.8. Research on the impact of distance learning on EFL learners' linguistic outcomes and knowledge during the Covid 19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented changes to the field of education, with a significant shift towards online and distance learning. This shift has affected various aspects of education, including the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning. Several studies have investigated the impact of the pandemic on EFL learners' linguistic outcomes and knowledge in distance learning contexts (Al-Obaidi et al., 2023, p. 247).

One study by Liu and colleagues (2021) explored the impact of the pandemic on Chinese EFL learners' vocabulary learning in online contexts. The study found that although online learning provided flexibility and convenience, it was not without its challenges, including the lack of face-to-face interactions and reduced opportunities for social learning. The researchers emphasized the importance of designing online courses that provide opportunities for interaction, collaboration, and feedback (Barbugli et al., 2023, p. 67).

Another study by Lin and Huang (2021) investigated the impact of the pandemic on Taiwanese EFL learners' writing performance in online contexts (Işık et al., 2023, p. 499).

The study found that online learning had a significant impact on learners' writing performance, with some learners experiencing positive outcomes, while others faced difficulties and constraints. The researchers suggested that instructors should incorporate diverse instructional strategies, such as peer feedback and revision, to enhance learners' writing skills.

In a similar study, Ahmad and Saeed (2021) examined the impact of the pandemic on Pakistani EFL learners' reading comprehension skills in online contexts. The study found that while some learners adapted well to online learning, others struggled with time management and self-regulation. The researchers recommended that instructors should provide timely feedback and support to help learners overcome these challenges (Akbari et al., 2023).

Furthermore, a study by Li and colleagues (2021) investigated the impact of the pandemic on EFL learners' listening comprehension skills in online contexts. The study found that online learning had both positive and negative effects on learners' listening skills. The researchers suggested that instructors should design online courses that incorporate interactive and engaging listening activities to enhance learners' listening skills (Oraif & Elyas, 2021).

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on EFL learners' linguistic outcomes and knowledge in distance learning contexts. The studies reviewed in this literature review suggest that instructors should design online courses that provide opportunities for interaction, collaboration, and feedback, as well as diverse instructional strategies to enhance learners' language skills. Furthermore, instructors should also provide timely feedback and support to help learners overcome the challenges of online learning.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted education, with distance learning emerging as a key method for delivering education. While it presented numerous challenges, it also brought about opportunities for innovation and improvement. Effective pedagogical strategies, assessment methods, and technology tools have shown potential in enhancing linguistic outcomes in distance learning environments. However, it is crucial to acknowledge and address the limitations and challenges faced by learners with diverse needs to ensure that distance learning remains accessible and effective for all. Strategies for supporting and accommodating these learners must be implemented to create an inclusive educational experience.

Despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic, distance learning has gained prominence in language learning. Best practices for effective distance learning include incorporating engaging multimedia, providing timely and constructive feedback, aligning assessments with learning objectives, promoting student collaboration and interaction, and utilizing learning analytics to monitor progress. The utilization of cognitive and constructivist theories, adapting teaching methods for distance learning, and emphasizing student-centered learning approaches play pivotal roles in shaping distance learning pedagogy. Furthermore, the review highlights the importance of addressing challenges faced by learners and teachers, leveraging feedback mechanisms and educational technology, and integrating contextualized language learning approaches, such as communicative language teaching, task-based language teaching, and content and language integrated learning, to enhance linguistic outcomes and knowledge acquisition in distance learning settings.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PRACTICAL

PART

Introduction

This chapter is mainly concerned with the practical framework of the present study, which aims at investigating the impact of distance learning on Master One EFL learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during the Covid 19 pandemic, at M'sila University.

The present chapter tries to describe, analyse, and interpret the questionnaire and the teachers' interview findings. The first section deals with the description of the methodology adopted, the population and the sample, it also describes the data collection tools used for investigation. Finally, the chapter ends with a general conclusion of the results, pedagogical implications, and limitations of the study.

2.1. Research methodology design

2.1.1. Methodology

In order to identify the impact of distance learning on Master One EFL learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during the Covid 19 pandemic, a descriptive qualitative research design is adopted because it is the appropriate way to discern their point of view. As it is claimed by Creswell (2014), a qualitative method is the best way to explore more thoroughly the participants' experiences, attitudes and beliefs, as it does not regard facts as objectives, but as subject reality related to differences in each individual. He also mentioned that it is a helpful method to achieve the research objectives in a smooth way. Corbin and Strauss (2008) stated that *“qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of the participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than test variables”* (p.12).

2.1.2. Population and Sampling:

The population selected for this study is EFL Master One linguistics students at Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila. This selection is due to the fact that they have

experienced distance learning during Covid 19 pandemic for two years in their undergraduate phase. The population consists of 65 students, but only 30 of them who were randomly selected to participate and answered the questionnaire that was handed to them manually in the amphitheatre.

2.1.3. Description of data collection tools

2.1.3.1. Description of questionnaire

To investigate the impact of distance learning on learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes, one of the data collection tools used in the present study is the questionnaire because the data can be gathered in a short period with less efforts and it is a useful method to gather data. Moreover, questionnaire is considered as an effective data collection method, when attitudes, beliefs, views and preferences are investigated. This questionnaire contains 25 questions arranged in five sections, with five questions in each one, tackling the most important points concerning the impact of distance learning on Master One EFL learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes. The questionnaire is designed according Likert Scale (five multiple choices for each question) to be completed by students placing a cross (x) in the corresponding box that represents their response to each question.

- **Section One: Students' attitudes about Modules coverage and studies during the pandemic:** This section assesses the students' satisfaction with the coverage of modules (Q1), their ability to keep up with studies (Q2), the support provided by lecturers (Q3), the flexibility offered by the university (Q4), and the extent to which they feel they missed out on essential learning experiences (Q5).
- **Section Two: Oral proficiency:** This section focuses on the students' oral proficiency and includes questions about the impact of the pandemic on their oral proficiency (Q1), opportunities for practicing speaking skills (Q2), the effectiveness of online speaking assessments (Q3), technical difficulties faced during assessments

(Q4), and the perceived impact of the pandemic on their oral proficiency if there had been no pandemic (Q5).

- **Section Three: Writing proficiency:** This section explores the students' writing proficiency and includes questions about the impact of the pandemic on their writing proficiency (Q1), opportunities for practicing writing skills (Q2), the effectiveness of online writing assessments (Q3), technical difficulties faced during assessments (Q4), and the perceived impact of the pandemic on their writing proficiency if there had been no pandemic (Q5).
- **Section Four: Comprehension and understanding of course materials:** This section focuses on the students' comprehension and understanding of course materials and includes questions about the difficulty of understanding course materials during the pandemic (Q1), the effectiveness of online lectures and materials (Q2), technical difficulties affecting comprehension (Q3), support provided by the university for understanding course materials (Q4), and the perceived missed learning experiences due to the pandemic (Q5).
- **Section Five: General well-being and coping strategies:** This section assesses the students' general well-being and coping strategies during the pandemic, including questions about their coping with pandemic-related challenges (Q1), support provided by the university for mental health and well-being (Q2), the impact of personal challenges on studies (Q3), social support during the pandemic (Q4), and the need for additional support for mental health and well-being (Q5).

2.1.3.2. Description of teachers' interview

For the purpose of investigating EFL teachers' insights and experiences towards the impact of distance learning on learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during Covid 19 pandemic, an interview, that contains five questions, was held with four teachers who

were chosen randomly among those of Master One linguistics option from the English department of Mohammed Boudiaf University of M'sila.

- **Q1: Can you describe how you have approached module coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic?** This question aims to understand the strategies and approaches teachers have taken to cover the required course modules during the pandemic.
- **Q2: How have you noticed that the Covid-19 pandemic affected your students' oral proficiency?** This question explores the impact of the pandemic on students' oral proficiency skills.
- **Q3: How have you noticed that the Covid-19 pandemic affected your students' writing proficiency?** Here, the focus is on how the pandemic has influenced students' writing skills.
- **Q4: How have you assessed your students' comprehension and understanding of course materials during Covid 19 pandemic?** This question aims to understand the methods teachers have used to assess students' comprehension and understanding of the course materials in a remote learning environment.
- **Q5: How have your students responded to the changes in learning caused by the pandemic?** This question explores students' reactions and responses to the changes brought about by the pandemic.

2.2. Discussion and recommendations

2.2.1. The Questionnaire Analysis and Discussion

- **Section One : Students' attitudes about modules coverage and studies during the pandemic**

Q1: How satisfied were you with the modules coverage during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very dissatisfied	06	20
Somewhat dissatisfied	12	40
Neutral	07	23,33
Somewhat satisfied	05	16,66
Very satisfied	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 01 : Students' Satisfaction about Modules Coverage

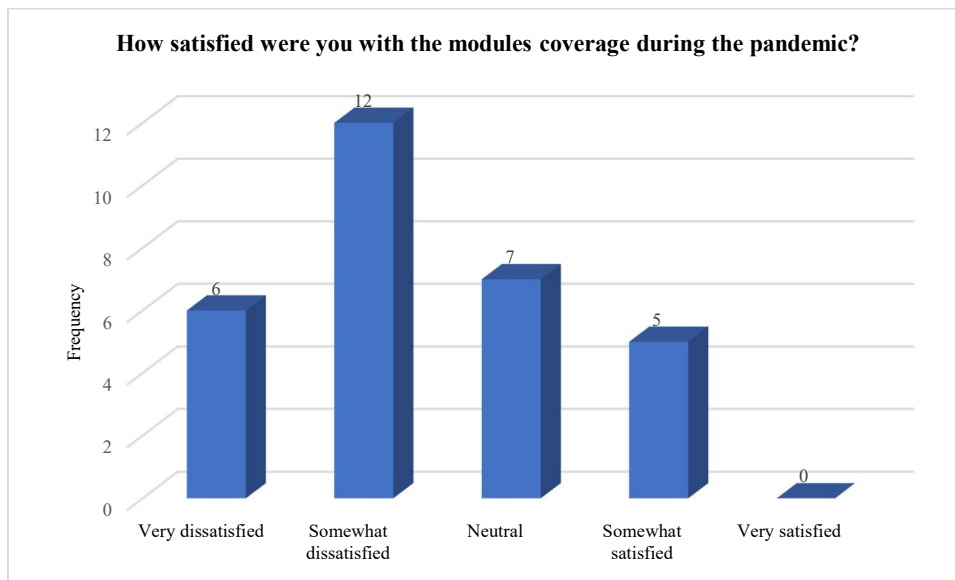


Figure 01 : Students' Satisfaction about Modules Coverage

The first item aims at knowing the students' satisfaction levels regarding modules coverage during the pandemic. The results showed that 6 out of 30 students, 20%, were very dissatisfied with the modules coverage. Additionally, 12 students with the rate of 40% expressed some level of dissatisfaction, while 7 (23.3%) of them had a neutral stance. On the positive side, 5 (16.7%) of the students reported feeling somewhat satisfied. Notably, none of the students indicated being very satisfied. Overall, the data suggests that a majority of the students (60% combined for very dissatisfied and somewhat dissatisfied) had concerns or were dissatisfied with the modules coverage during the pandemic.

Q2: How well were you able to keep up with your studies despite the pandemic-related challenges?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	02	6,66
Somewhat	09	30
Moderately	13	43,33
Very	06	20
Extremely	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 02 : Students' Ability to Keep up with Studies during the Pandemic

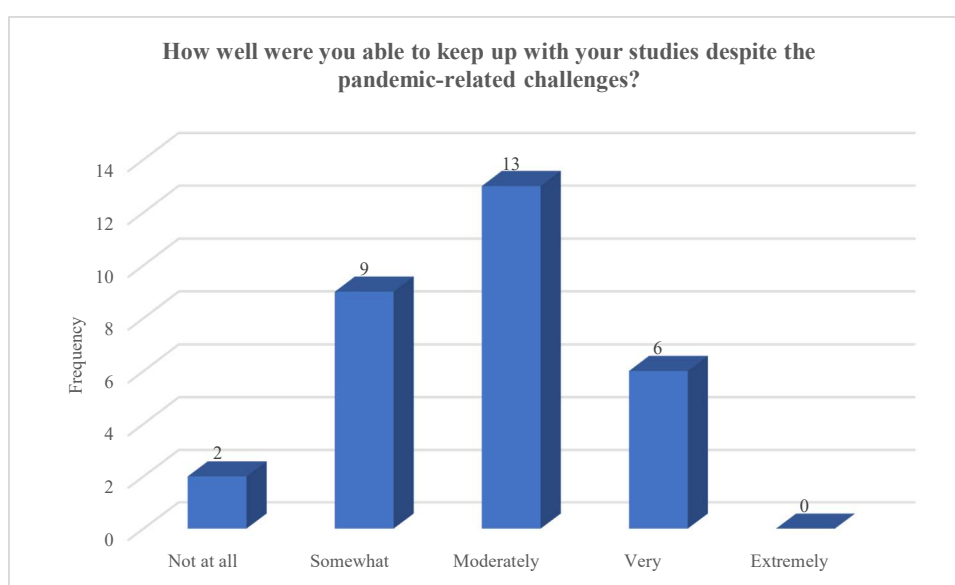


Figure 02 : Students' Ability to Keep up with Studies during the Pandemic

The table and the graph above reveals that a significant portion of the students faced challenges in keeping up with their studies during the Covid-19 pandemic. Two students reported not doing well at all, while nine students felt somewhat well and 13 students indicated moderate success. On the other hand, six students reported doing very well, but none of them felt they were extremely well. According to the findings, the majority of the students were able to adapt and maintain their academic progress reasonably during the pandemic.

Q3: How much support did your lecturers provide during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very little support	05	16,66
Some support	09	30
Adequate support	12	40
Good support	04	13,33
Excellent support	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 03 : Lecturers' Support during Pandemic

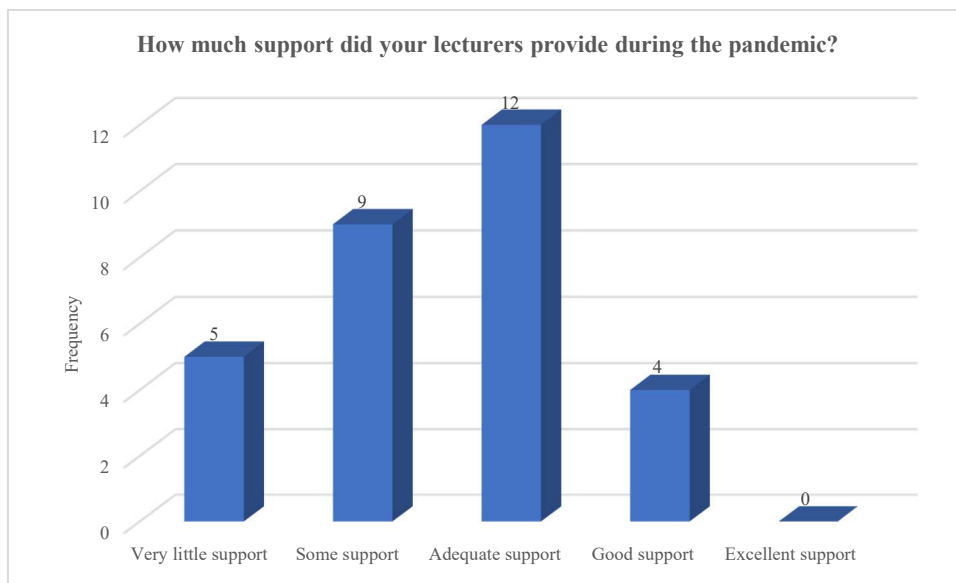


Figure 03 : Lecturers' Support during Pandemic

This item assesses the level of support provided by lecturers during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results revealed that 12 students reported receiving adequate support, making it the most common response. Nine students mentioned receiving some support, while five students felt that their lecturers provided very little support. Four students reported receiving good support, but none indicated receiving excellent support.

Q4: How much flexibility did the university offer you during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very little flexibility	03	10
Some flexibility	08	26,66
Adequate flexibility	05	16,66
Good flexibility	13	43,33
Excellent flexibility	01	3,33
Total	30	100

Table 04 : University Flexibility with Students during the Pandemic

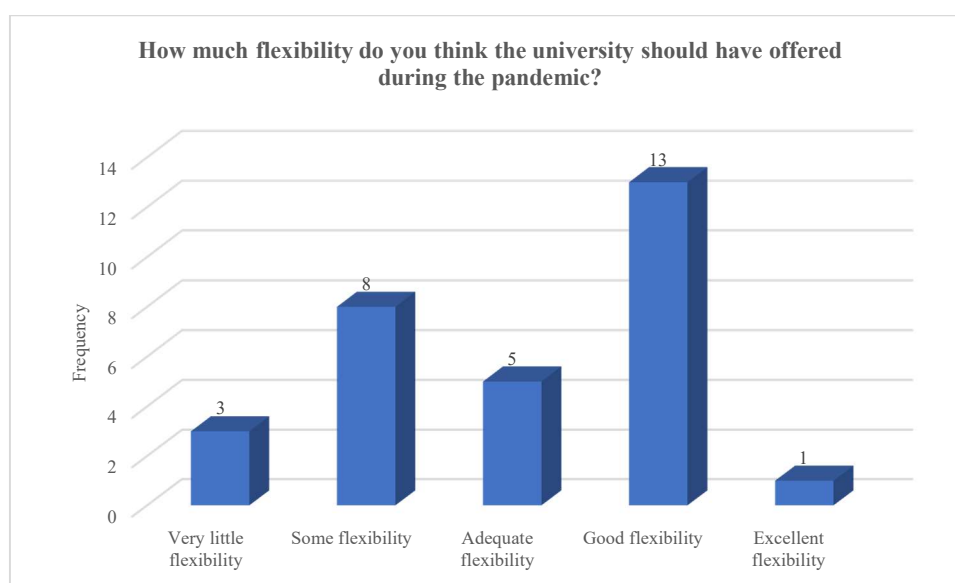


Figure 04 : University Flexibility with Students during the Pandemic

According to the table, regarding the level of flexibility offered by the university during the Covid-19 pandemic, the results showed a range of perceptions. A minority of students (10%) felt that the university provided very little flexibility, while a larger portion (26.67%) believed that some flexibility was offered. A smaller percentage (16.67%) considered the flexibility provided by the university as adequate. On the positive side, a majority of students (43.33%) reported that the university offered good flexibility. However, only one student (3.33%) regarded the flexibility as excellent. These findings highlight a mixed perception among the respondents, with a significant portion expressing satisfaction, but also a notable number feeling that more flexibility could have been offered by the university during the pandemic.

Q5: How much do you feel like you missed out on essential learning experiences because of the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Missed out on a lot	14	46,66
Missed out on some	08	26,66
Neutral/Unsure	05	16,66
Did not miss out much	03	10
Did not miss out at all	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 05 : The Missing Learning Experiences during the Pandemic

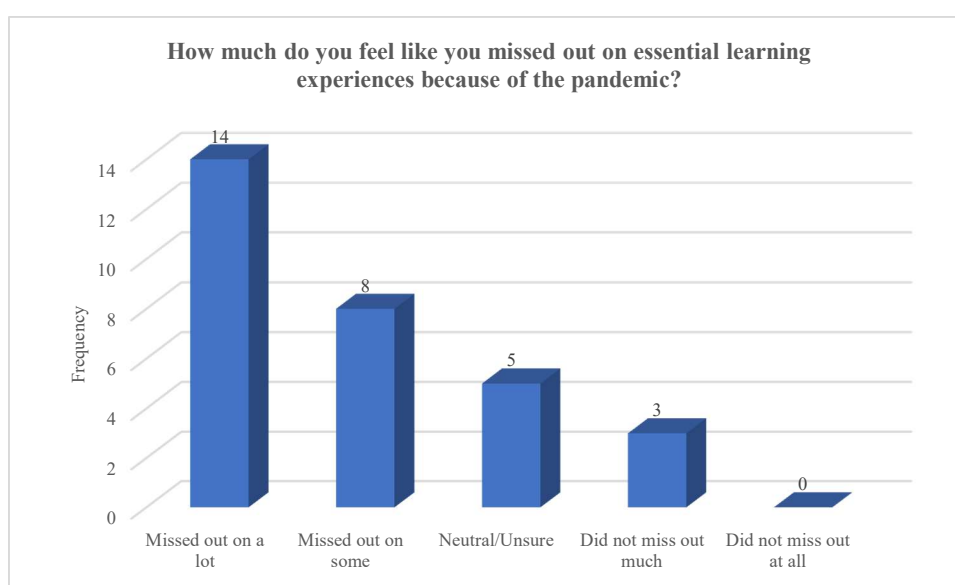


Figure 05 : The Missing Learning Experiences during the Pandemic

The data collected indicates that the majority of students feel they missed out on essential learning experiences due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Among the respondents, 14 students expressed that they missed out on a lot of essential learning experiences, while 8 students stated that they missed out on some. A total of 5 students remained neutral, neither feeling they missed out nor didn't miss out. Only 3 students mentioned that they did not miss out much, and none of the students claimed to have not missed out at all. Since the majority of them feel they missed out on essential learning experiences, it is deduced that distance learning during the pandemic could not be an effective substitute to traditional learning.

➤ **Section Two : Oral proficiency**

Q1: How much did the pandemic affect your oral proficiency?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very negatively affected	10	33,33
Somewhat negatively affected	08	26,66
Neutral/Unsure	07	23,33
Somewhat positively affected	04	13,33
Very positively affected	01	3,33
Total	30	100

Table 06 : The Effect of Pandemic on Students' Oral Proficiency

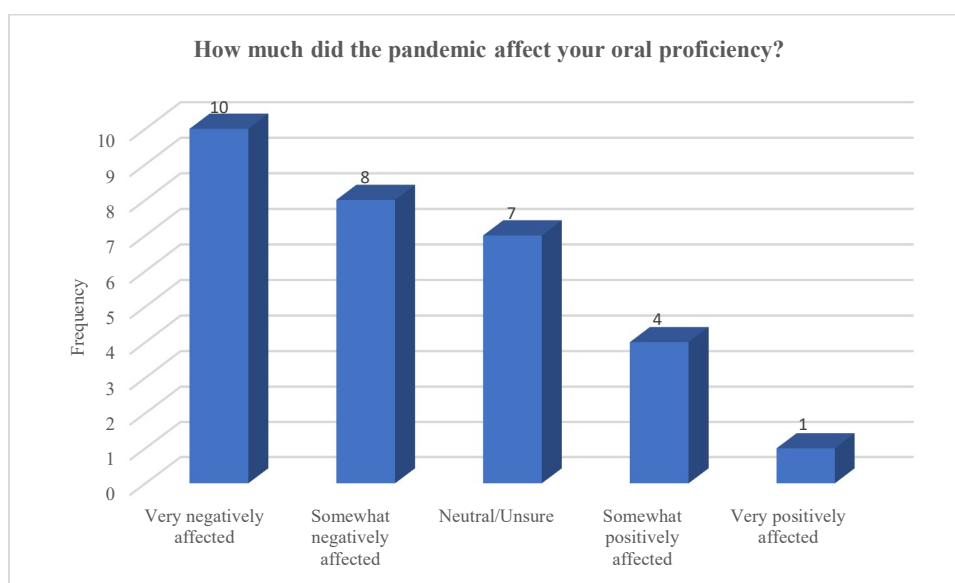


Figure 06 : The Effect of Pandemic on Students' Oral Proficiency

The data of this item suggests that the pandemic has had a predominantly negative impact on learners' oral proficiency. Among the participants, 10 students reported a very negative effect, indicating a significant decline in their oral communication skills. Additionally, 8 students stated that their oral proficiency was somewhat negatively affected, while 7 students reported no significant change (neutral). On the other hand, 4 students experienced a slight improvement, and only 1 student reported a significant positive impact on their oral proficiency. This negative effect may be due to the lack of speaking opportunities because of social distancing.

Q2: How many opportunities did you have to practice your speaking skills during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very few opportunities	06	20
Some opportunities	12	40
Adequate opportunities	08	26,66
Good opportunities	04	13,33
Excellent opportunities	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 07 : Students' Opportunities to Practice Speaking Skills during Pandemic

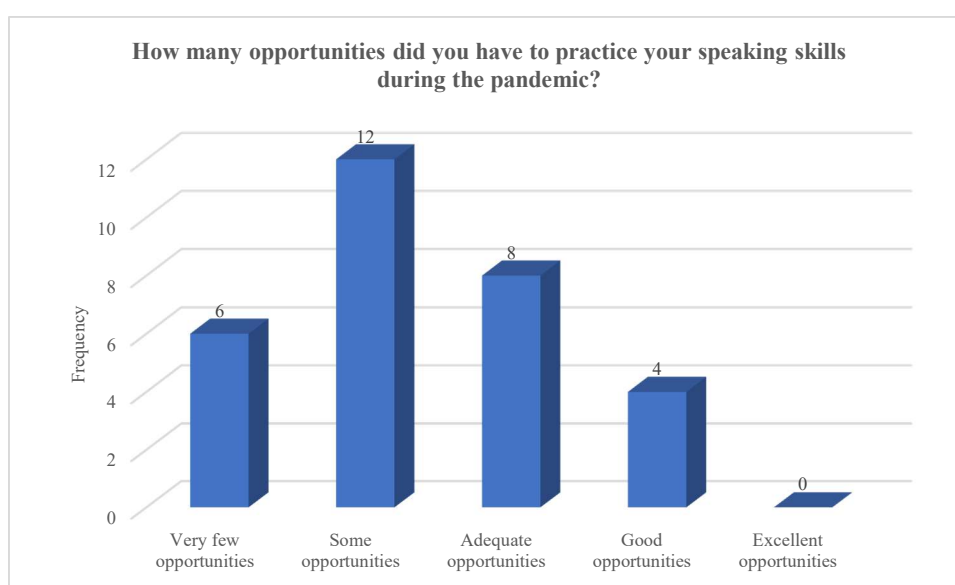


Figure 07 : Students' Opportunities to Practice Speaking Skills during Pandemic

The data collected in this item indicates various levels of opportunities to practice speaking skills during the Covid-19 pandemic. Among the informants, 6 students reported very few opportunities, suggesting limited chances to practice speaking. 12 students had some opportunities, indicating a moderate number of chances to improve their speaking abilities. 8 students stated that they had adequate opportunities, indicating a satisfactory situation for them. 4 students mentioned having good opportunities, suggesting a relatively high number of chances to engage in speaking activities. None of the students reported excellent opportunities.

Q3: How effective were the online speaking assessments in evaluating your oral proficiency?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Not effective at all	11	36,66
Somewhat ineffective	08	26,66
Moderately effective	07	23,33
Very effective	02	6,66
Extremely effective	00	00
Total	28	93,33

Table 08 : Effectiveness of Online Speaking Assessments

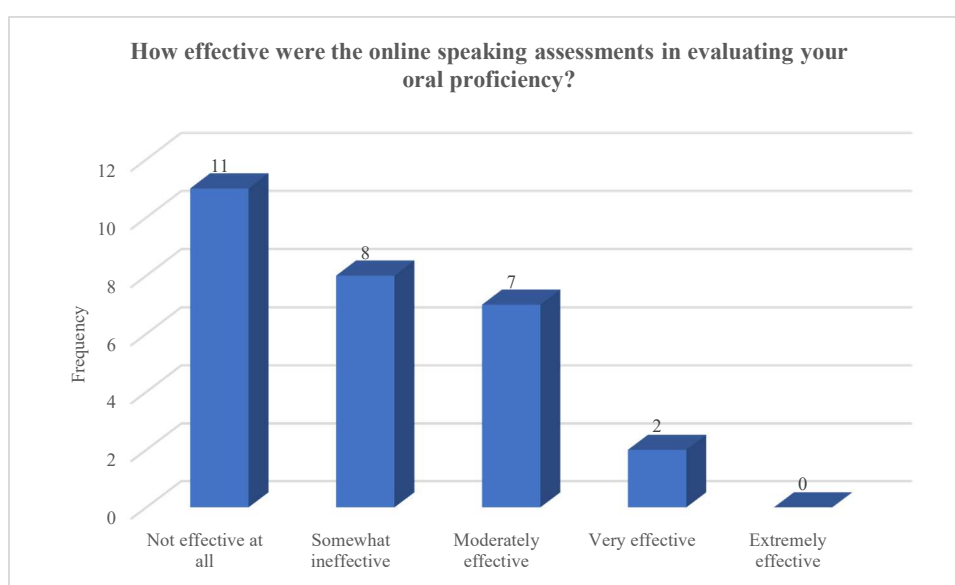


Figure 08 : Effectiveness of Online Speaking Assessments

The data mentioned in the table above reflects students' perceptions about the effectiveness of online speaking assessments in evaluating their oral proficiency during Covid 19 pandemic. The majority of them (63.33%) expressed dissatisfaction with the effectiveness. About 36.67% of the students believed that the assessments were not effective at all, while 26.67% considered them somewhat ineffective. Only a smaller percentage of students (30%) found the assessments to be moderately or very effective (23.33% and 6.67% respectively). None of the students reported that the assessments were extremely effective.

Q4: How many technical difficulties did you face during online speaking assessments?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Faced many technical difficulties	15	50
Faced some technical difficulties	09	30
Faced a few technical difficulties	01	3,33
Faced no technical difficulties	03	10
Did not have any online speaking assessments	02	6,66
Total	30	100

Table 09 : Technical Difficulties during Online Speaking Assessments

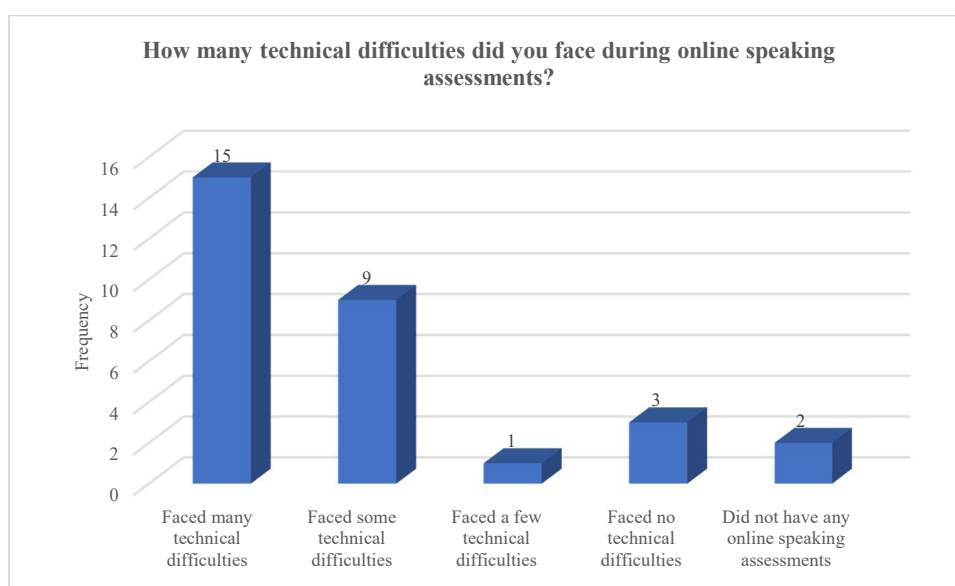


Figure 09 : Technical Difficulties during Online Speaking Assessments

This question aimed to assess the technical difficulties experienced during online speaking assessments amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. The results showed that a majority of the students (50%) encountered many technical difficulties, while 30% faced some difficulties. A small percentage reported facing only a few technical issues (3.3%), and 10% stated they experienced no technical difficulties. Additionally, 6.7% of the students did not have any online speaking assessments. These findings suggest that a significant number of the surveyed students faced technical challenges during their online assessments because of their unfamiliarity with the new method of assessment.

Q5: How much do you think your oral proficiency would have been affected if there had been no pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
very negatively affected	06	20
somewhat negatively affected	03	10
Neutral/Unsure	06	20
somewhat positively affected	10	33,33
very positively affected	05	16,66
Total	30	100

Table 10 : The Impact of the Pandemic on Students' Oral Proficiency

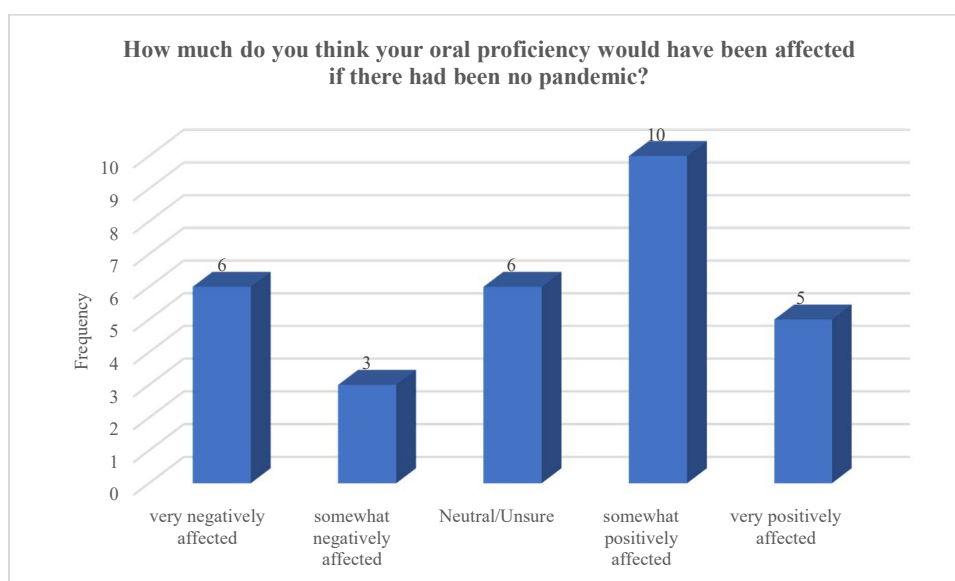


Figure 10 : The Impact of the Pandemic on Students' Oral Proficiency

In this item, the students were asked about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on their oral proficiency. The responses varied, with 20% of the students stating that their oral proficiency would have been very negatively affected if there had been no pandemic. Another 10% believed it would have been somewhat negatively affected. On the other hand, 33.33% of the students thought their oral proficiency would have been somewhat positively affected, and 16.67% believed it would have been very positively affected. Meanwhile, 20% of the students remained neutral, indicating that they did not perceive a significant impact on their oral proficiency.

➤ **Section Three : Writing proficiency**

Q1: How much did the pandemic affect your writing proficiency?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very negatively affected	04	13,33
Somewhat negatively affected	12	40
Neutral/Unsure	09	30
Somewhat positively affected	04	13,33
Very positively affected	01	3,33
Total	30	100

Table 11 : The Effect of Pandemic on Students' Writing Proficiency

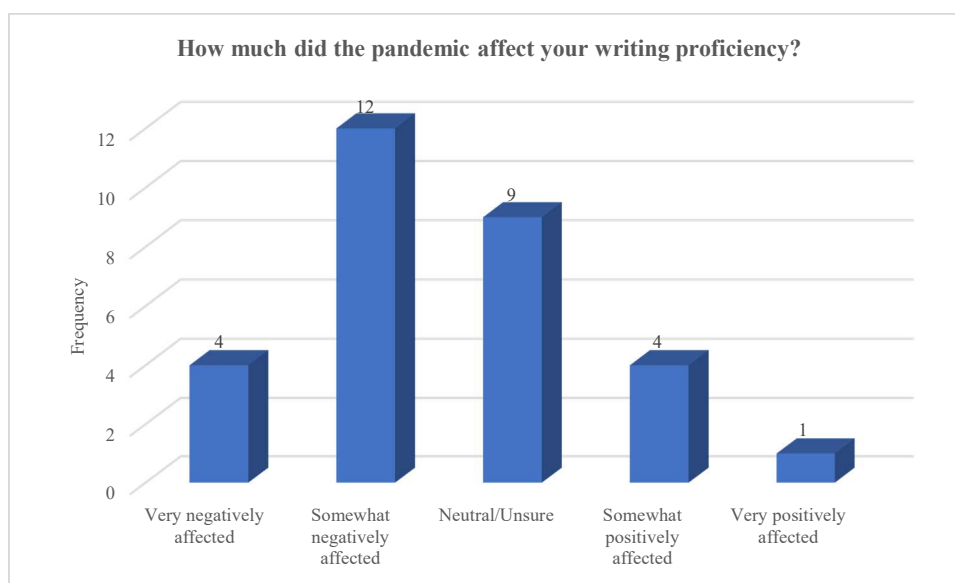


Figure 11 : The Effect of Pandemic on Students' Writing Proficiency

The data gathered from this item reveals insights into the impact of the pandemic on students' writing proficiency. 13.3% of the respondents reported being very negatively affected in their writing skills. Additionally, 40% mentioned being somewhat negatively affected, suggesting a noticeable but less severe impact. Conversely, 30% stated they were neutral, implying their writing proficiency remained relatively stable. Interestingly, 13.3% of the respondents experienced some positive effects, with a small number reporting improvement in their writing skills. Only 3.3% reported being very positively affected. Overall, the data suggests that the majority of Master 1 students felt varying degrees of negative impact on their writing proficiency during the pandemic, with a smaller portion experiencing positive effects or remaining unaffected.

Q2: How many opportunities did you have to practice your writing skills during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very few opportunities	11	36,66
Some opportunities	11	36,66
Adequate opportunities	03	10
Good opportunities	04	13,33
Excellent opportunities	01	3,33
Total	30	100

Table 12 : Students' Opportunities to Practice Writing Skills during Pandemic

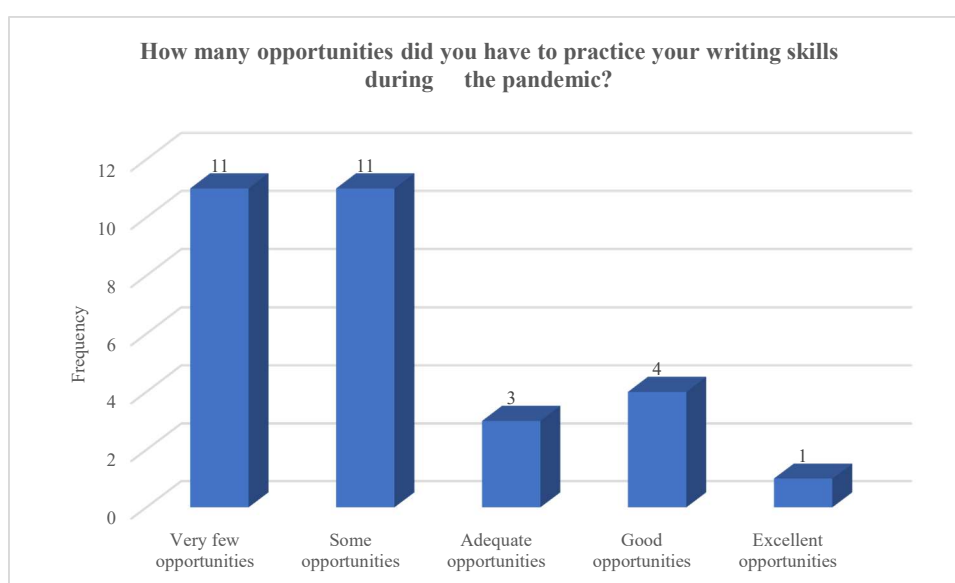


Figure 12 : Students' Opportunities to Practice Writing Skills during Pandemic

This question focuses on the opportunities the students had to practice their writing skills during the Covid-19 pandemic. The obtained results showed that a substantial proportion of the students felt that their opportunities for writing practice were limited. Around 36.7% of the students reported having very few opportunities, while a similar percentage had some opportunities. Approximately 10% of the students felt they had adequate opportunities, while 13.3% reported having good opportunities. Only one student, representing about 3.3% of the sample, said they had excellent opportunities.

Q3: How effective were the online writing assessments in evaluating your writing proficiency?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Not effective at all	06	20
Somewhat ineffective	12	40
Moderately effective	10	33,33
Very effective	01	3,33
Extremely effective	01	3,33
Total	30	100

Table 13 : Effectiveness of Online Writing Assessments

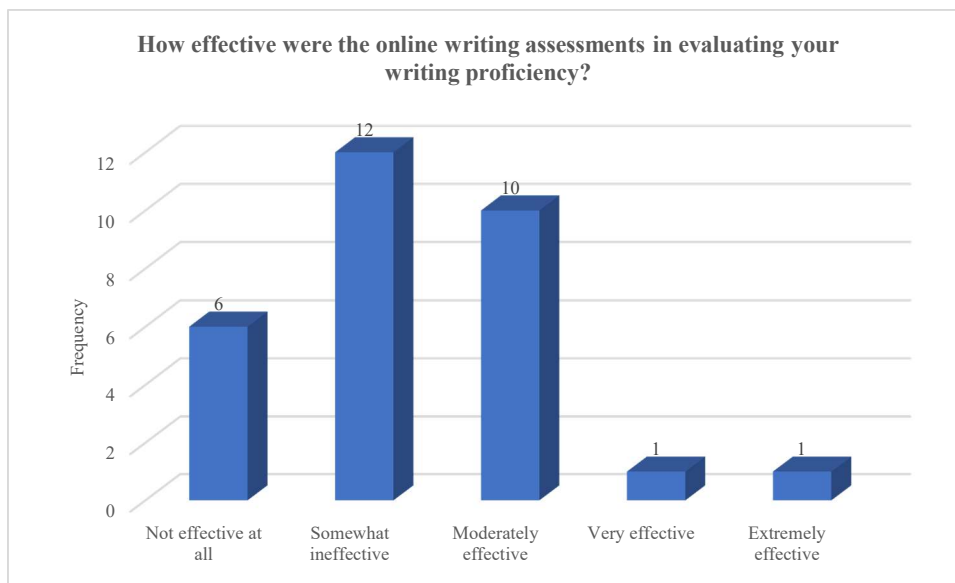


Figure 13 : Effectiveness of Online Writing Assessments

The collected data from the sample of 30 Master 1 students regarding the effectiveness of online writing assessments in evaluating their writing proficiency during the Covid-19 pandemic shows mixed opinions. Out of the respondents, 20% felt that the assessments were not effective at all, while 40% believed they were somewhat ineffective. Approximately one-third of the students considered the assessments to be moderately effective. Interestingly, only a small fraction, 3.3% each, rated the assessments as very effective or extremely effective. These findings suggest that a majority of the students had doubts about the efficacy of online writing assessments.

Q4: How many technical difficulties did you face during online writing assessments?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Faced many technical difficulties	07	23,33
Faced some technical difficulties	10	33,33
Faced a few technical difficulties	10	33,33
Faced no technical difficulties	03	10
Did not have any online writing assessments	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 14 : Technical Difficulties during Online Writing Assessments

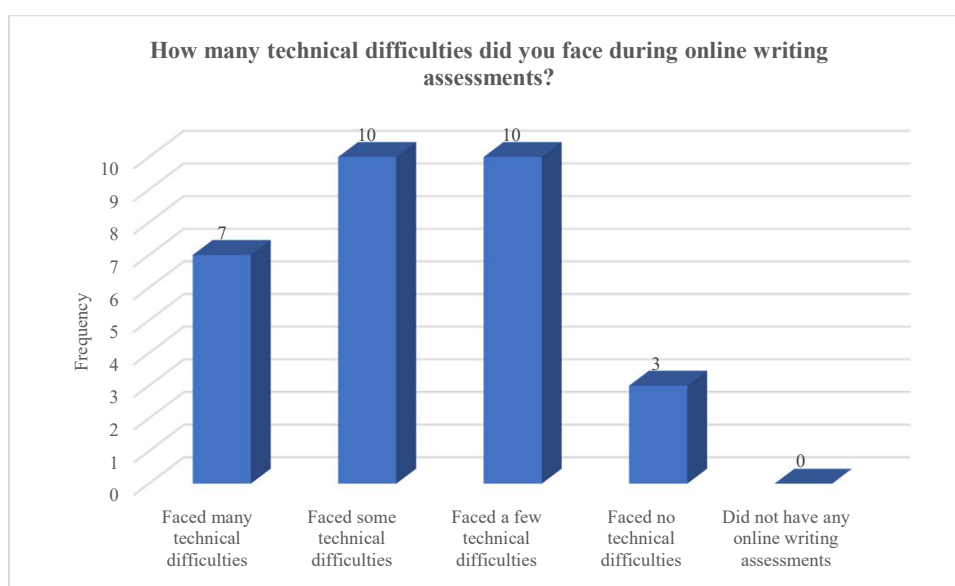


Figure 14 : Technical Difficulties during Online Writing Assessments

The focus in this item is on the technical difficulties faced students during online writing assessments during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results revealed that the majority of the surveyed students encountered technical challenges. Specifically, 7 students reported experiencing many technical difficulties, while 10 students faced some technical difficulties. Another 10 students encountered a few technical issues, and only 3 students claimed to have encountered no technical difficulties. None of the students stated that they did not have any online writing assessments. These findings provide an insight into the experiences of the surveyed students, suggesting that technical difficulties were prevalent during online writing assessments, albeit to varying degrees.

Q5: How much do you think your writing proficiency would have been affected if there had been no pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
very negatively affected	03	10
somewhat negatively affected	03	10
Neutral/Unsure	03	10
somewhat positively affected	14	46,66
very positively affected	07	23,33
Total	30	100

Table 15 : The Impact of the Pandemic on Students' Writing Proficiency

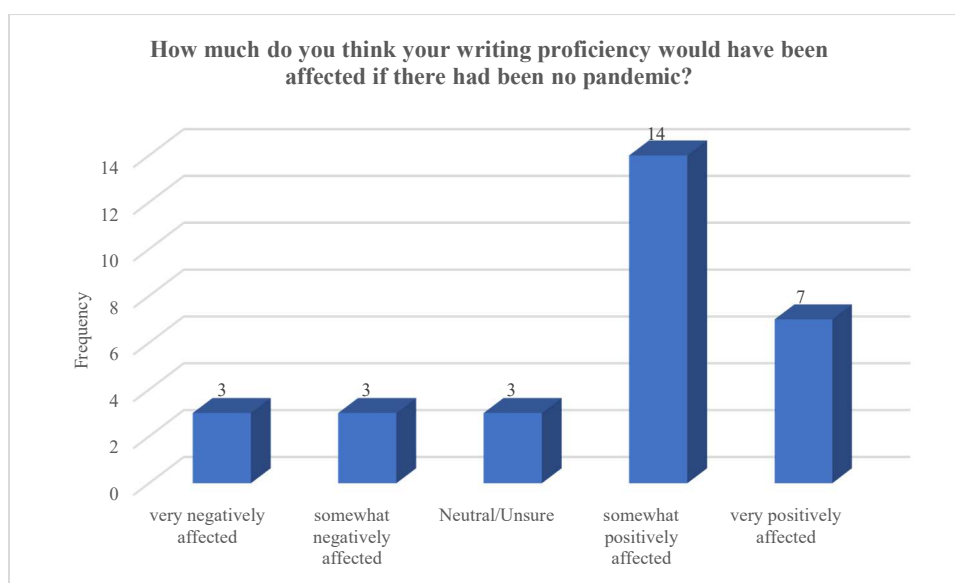


Figure 15 : The Impact of the Pandemic on Students' Writing Proficiency

Throughout this item, the students were asked about how their writing proficiency would have been affected without the Covid-19 pandemic, the responses varied. Three students, 10%, felt that their writing proficiency would have been very negatively affected, while another three, 10%, believed it would have been somewhat negatively affected. Three, 10%, students had a neutral stance, indicating no perceived impact. Fourteen students, 46,66%, thought their writing proficiency would have been somewhat positively affected, and seven students, 23,33%, believed it would have been very positively affected. These responses suggest that a significant portion of the students perceive the pandemic as having a negative impact on their writing skills.

➤ **Section Four : Comprehension and understanding of course materials**

Q1: How much harder was it to understand course materials (MOODLE – e-books...) during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Much harder to understand	05	16,66
Somewhat harder to understand	13	43,33
No change in difficulty	06	20
Somewhat easier to understand	04	13,33
Much easier to understand	02	6,66
Total	30	100

Table 16 : Difficulties in Understanding Course Materials during the Pandemic

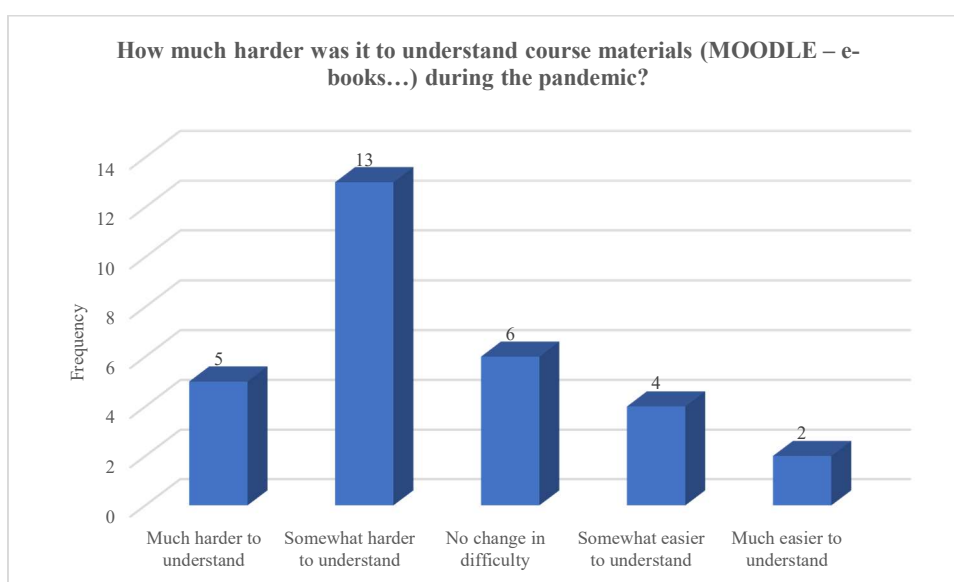


Figure 16 : Difficulties in Understanding Course Materials during the Pandemic

The item aims at assessing the difficulty of understanding course materials during the pandemic. The findings indicate that a majority of the students (60%) experienced an increased level of difficulty. Specifically, 16.7% found it much harder, while 43.3% found it somewhat harder. On the other hand, 20% reported no change in difficulty, while 13.3% found it somewhat easier and only 6.7% found it much easier. These results suggest that most of the surveyed students faced challenges in comprehending course materials during the pandemic, while a smaller proportion found it easier.

Q2: How effective were the online lectures and materials in helping you understand the course content?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Not effective at all	06	20
Somewhat ineffective	07	23,33
Moderately effective	13	43,33
Very effective	02	6,66
Extremely effective	01	3,33
Total	29	96,66

Table 17 : Effectiveness of Online Lectures and Materials

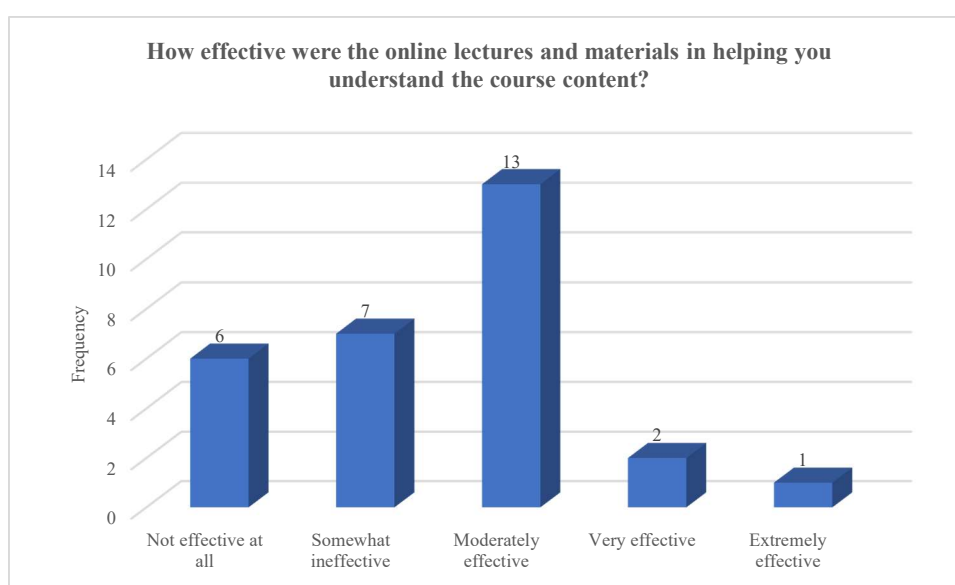


Figure 17 : Effectiveness of Online Lectures and Materials

The obtained results indicate varying perceptions regarding the effectiveness of online lectures and materials during the Covid-19 pandemic. Among the respondents, 43.3% found them to be moderately effective, while 23.3% considered them somewhat ineffective and 20% reported that they were not effective at all. A few students, 6.7%, found the online resources to be very effective, and only 3.3% regarded them as extremely effective. These findings suggest that while a significant portion of the surveyed students found the online lectures and materials moderately effective, a notable number had mixed views or deemed them ineffective.

Q3: How many technical difficulties affected your comprehension of course materials?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Faced many technical difficulties	08	26,66
Faced some technical difficulties	11	36,66
Faced a few technical difficulties	08	26,66
Faced no technical difficulties	01	3,33
Did not have any online lectures or materials	01	3,33
Total	29	96,66

Table 18 : Technical Difficulties in Understanding Course Materials

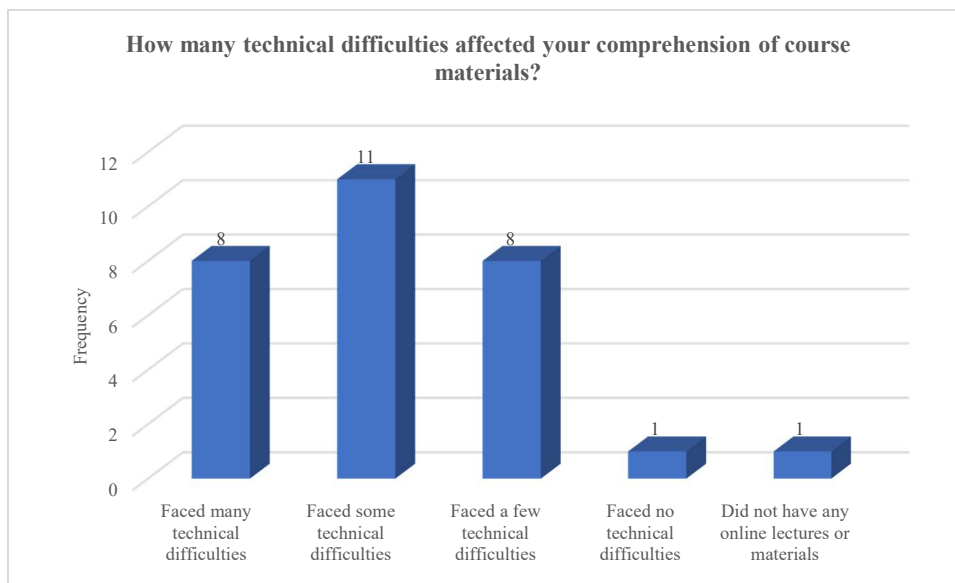


Figure 18 : Technical Difficulties in Understanding Course Materials

The table and the bar graph above revealed that technical difficulties had a notable impact on the students' comprehension of course materials during the Covid-19 pandemic. Among the surveyed students, 8 reported facing many technical difficulties, 11 faced some technical difficulties, and 8 faced a few technical difficulties. One student did not experience any technical difficulties, while another student did not have any online lectures or materials. These findings indicate that most of the students encountered challenges in accessing and understanding course materials due to technical issues, highlighting the impact of the pandemic-induced shift to online learning on their educational experience.

Q4: How much support did the university provide for you to understand the course materials during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very little support provided	12	40
Some support provided	09	30
Adequate support provided	07	23,33
Good support provided	01	3,33
Excellent support provided	01	3,33
Total	30	100

Table 19 : University Support in Understanding Course Materials

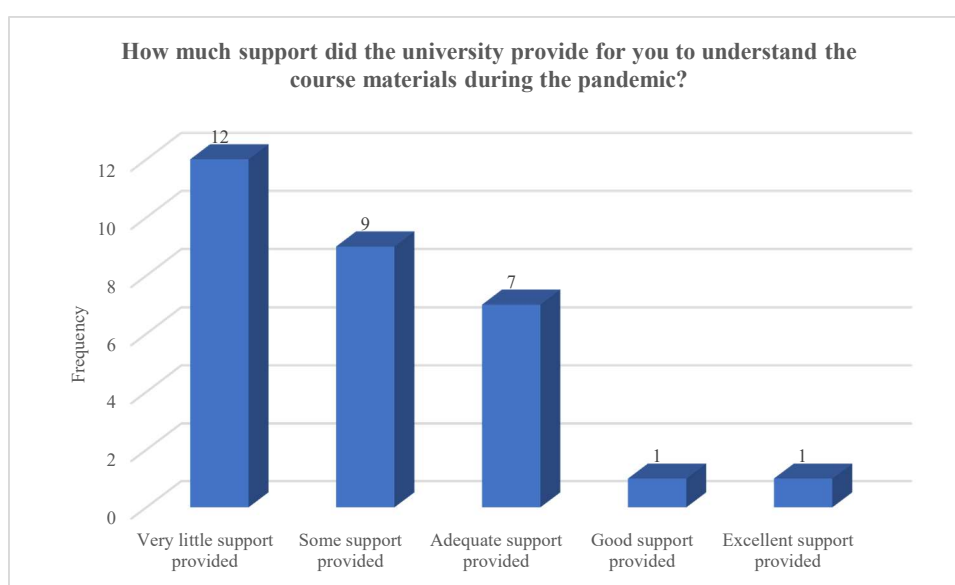


Figure 19 : University Support in Understanding Course Materials

As shown above, the findings reveal mixed opinions regarding the support provided by the university to understand course materials during the Covid-19 pandemic. 40% of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction, stating that the university provided very little support. 30% acknowledged that some support was given but still considered it insufficient. A smaller group (23.3%) believed the university's support was adequate, while a mere 6.6% rated it as good (3.3%) or excellent (3.3%). Overall, the majority of students (70%) expressed dissatisfaction or found the support lacking, while a minority (26.6%) felt their needs were met to varying degrees.

Q5: How much do you feel like you missed out on essential learning experiences because of the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
many essential learning experiences	12	40
some essential learning experiences	13	43,33
a few non-essential learning experiences	04	13,33
Did not miss out on any essential learning experiences	01	3,33
Had additional learning experiences due to the pandemic	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 20 : The Missing of Essential Learning Experiences during the Pandemic

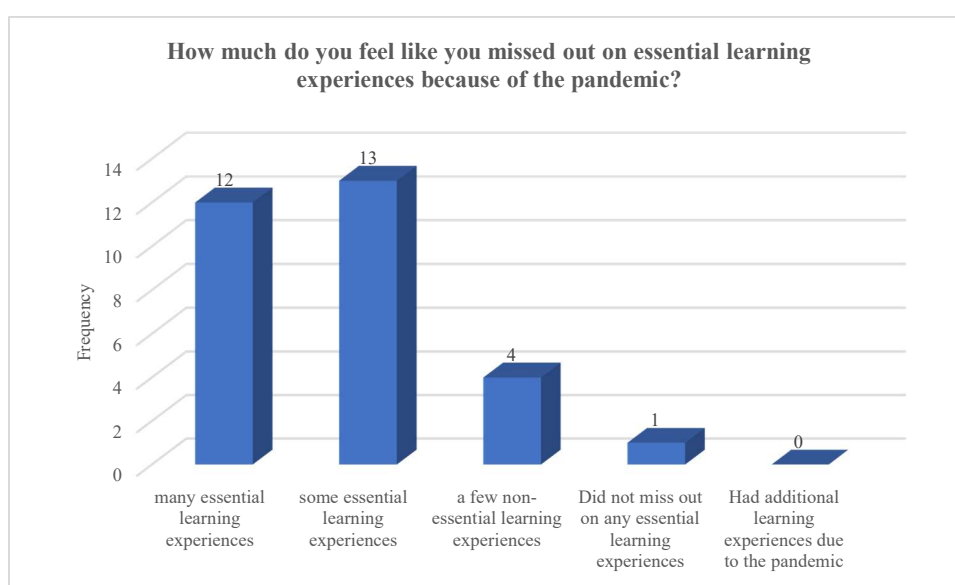


Figure 20 : The Missing of Essential Learning Experiences during the Pandemic

In a sample of 30 Master 1 students, their perceptions of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on essential learning experiences were assessed. The results revealed that 40% of the students felt they missed out on many essential learning experiences due to the pandemic. Another group of 43.3% reported missing out on some essential learning experiences, while a smaller proportion (13.3%) mentioned missing out on a few non-essential learning experiences. Only one student (3.3%) indicated that they did not miss out on any essential learning experiences. Notably, none of the students reported having additional learning experiences as a result of the pandemic.

➤ **Section Five : General well-being and coping strategies**

Q1: How well did you cope with pandemic-related challenges during your studies?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Did not cope well at all	02	6,66
Coped somewhat poorly	13	43,33
Coping was neither poor nor good	06	20
Coped somewhat well	07	23,33
Coped very well	02	6,66
Total	30	100

Table 21 : Students' Coping with Pandemic-related Challenges

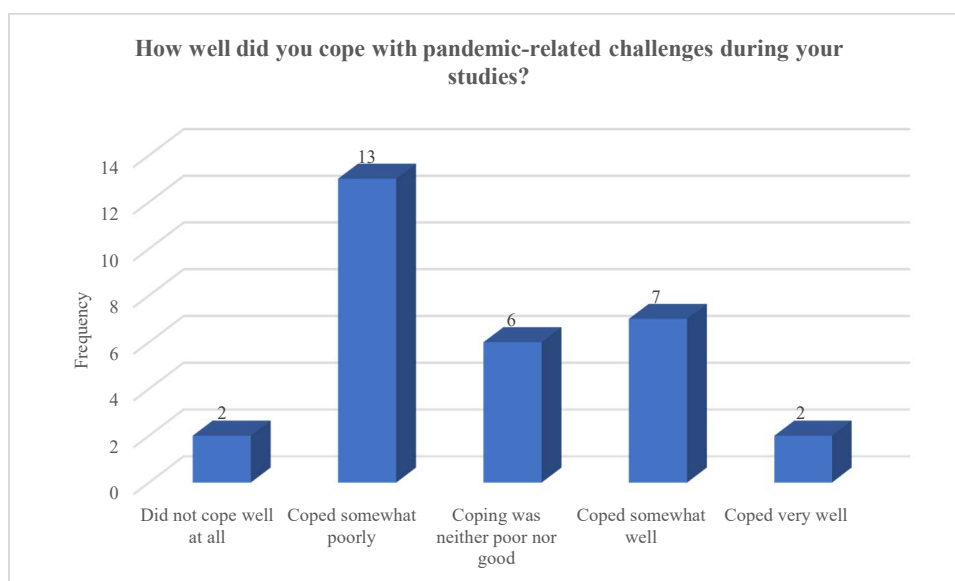


Figure 21 : Students' Coping with Pandemic-related Challenges

In this Item, the question asked was about students' coping with Covid-19 pandemic-related challenges during their studies. The results indicate that a small proportion of students, specifically two representing 6,66%, reported not coping well at all. The majority of respondents, 13 students with a rate of 43,33%, mentioned coping somewhat poorly, indicating that they faced difficulties but managed to handle them to some extent. Six students, 20%, felt their coping was neutral, neither poor nor good. Seven students, 23,33%, reported coping somewhat well, suggesting they were able to manage the challenges reasonably. Only two students, 6,66%, claimed to have coped very well, indicating a higher level of confidence and competence in navigating the difficulties.

Q2: How much support did the university provide for your mental health and well-being during the pandemic?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very little support provided	11	36,66
Some support provided	10	33,33
Adequate support provided	06	20
Good support provided	01	3,33
Excellent support provided	02	6,66
Total	30	100

Table 22 : University Support for Students' Mental Health and Well-being

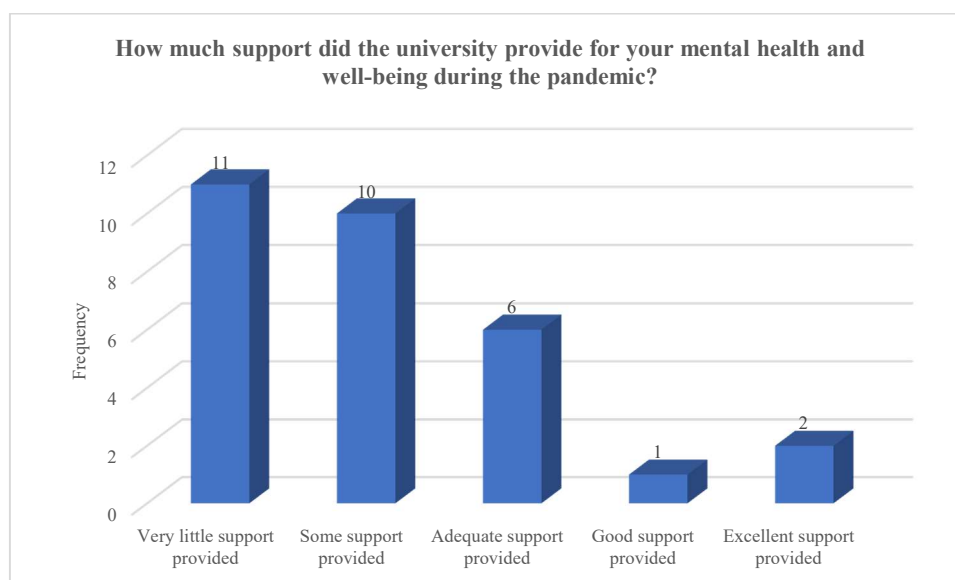


Figure 22 : University Support for Students' Mental Health and Well-being

The table and the figure above aims to assess the level of support provided by the university for students' mental health and well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The results revealed that the majority of students had mixed opinions regarding the support they received. The largest group, comprising 36.7% of the sample, felt that the university provided very little support, while 33.3% reported some level of support. A smaller percentage of students, 20%, believed that the university provided adequate support, and only 3.3% considered the support to be good. Interestingly, 6.7% of students felt that the support provided was excellent.

Q3: How much did personal challenges during the pandemic affect your studies?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Personal challenges affected studies profoundly	06	23,33
Personal challenges affected studies significantly	07	36,66
Personal challenges affected studies somewhat	11	20
Personal challenges had little effect on studies	04	13,33
Personal challenges had no effect on studies at all	00	00
Total	28	93,33

Table 23 : The Impact of Students' Personal Challenges on their Studies

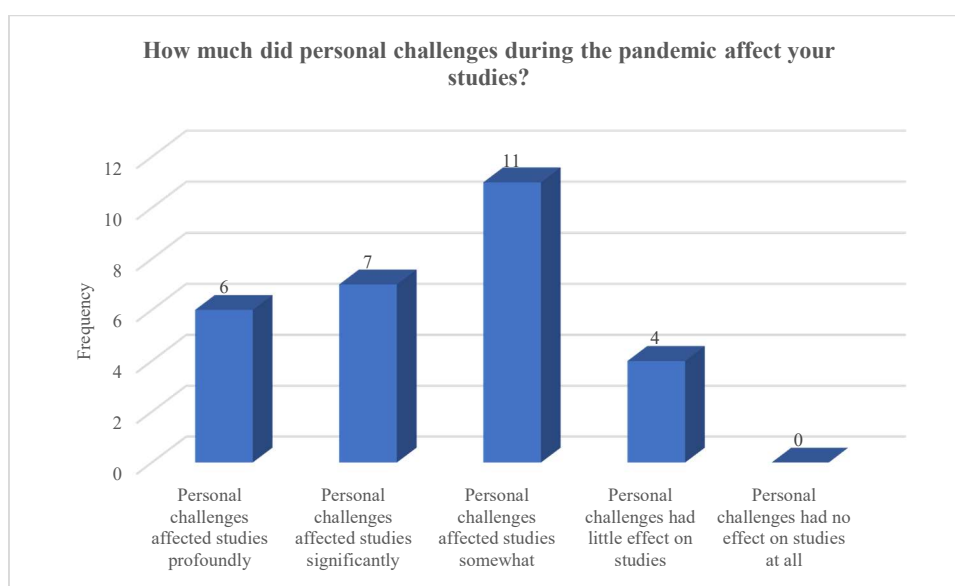


Figure 23 : The Impact of Students' Personal Challenges on their Studies

The data collected in this item indicate that personal challenges during the pandemic had a noticeable effect on their studies. All the respondents reported experiencing some level of impact on their academic performance. The largest proportion (36.7%) stated that personal challenges somewhat affected their studies. Another fraction of 23.3% reported significant effects, while 20% mentioned profound effects and a group of 13,33% believed that personal challenges had only a little effect. Interestingly, none of the students claimed that personal challenges had no effect on their studies at all. These findings suggest that all the students in the sample experienced some degree of impact on their academic performance due to personal challenges during the pandemic.

Q4: How much social support did you have during the pandemic to help cope with your studies?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
No social support at all	11	36,66
Very little social support	09	30
Some social support	08	26,66
Adequate social support	01	3,33
Excellent social support	01	3,33
Total	30	100

Table 24 : The Social Support in Students' Coping with their Studies

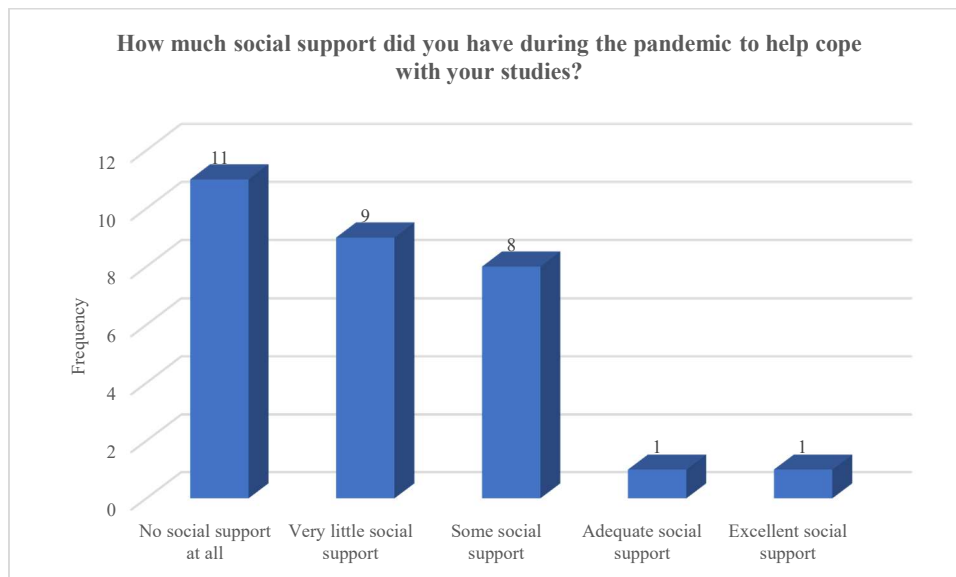


Figure 24 : The Social Support in Students' Coping with their Studies

The data collected from a sample of 30 Master 1 students shows that a significant number of students had limited or no social support during the Covid-19 pandemic while coping with their studies. The majority of respondents, 93,33%, reported having either no social support or very little social support. Only a small percentage of students, 6,66%, indicated having adequate or excellent social support. These findings suggest that the surveyed students experienced challenges in managing their studies without sufficient social support.

Q5: How much additional support for mental health and well-being during the pandemic would you have preferred from the university?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Much more support needed	09	30
Somewhat more support needed	09	30
A little additional support needed	02	6,66
No additional support needed	10	33,33
Much additional support not needed	00	00
Total	30	100

Table 25 : Students’ Expectations for Mental Health and Well-being Additional Support

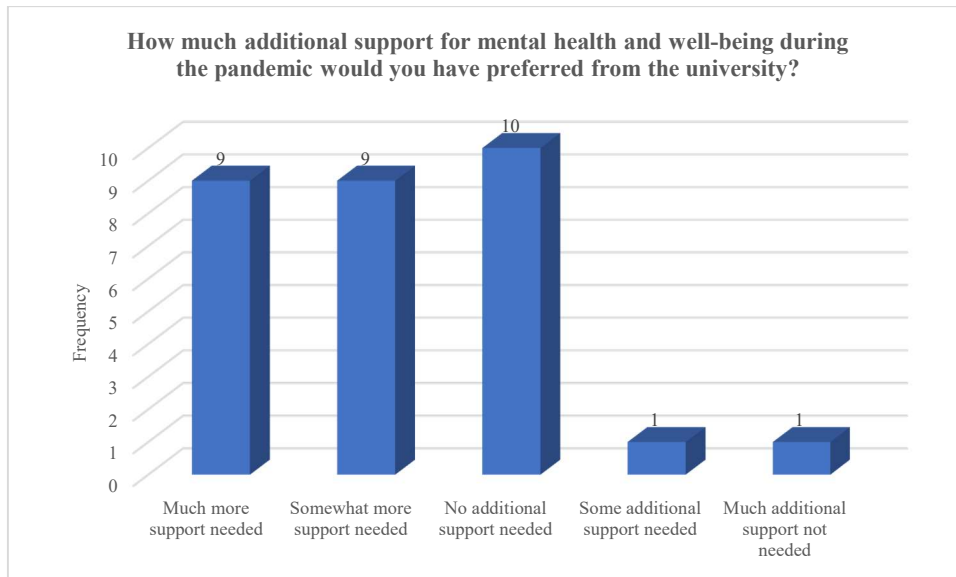


Figure 25 : Students’ Expectations for Mental Health and Well-being Additional Support

The findings of this item indicate that 66,66% of the surveyed students expressed a desire for more support, with 30% indicating a need for much more support, another 30% stating that somewhat more support would be beneficial and 6.66% felt that only a little support was necessary. On the other hand, 33.3% of the students believed that the existing support systems were sufficient. The data highlights a significant portion of students who sought increased assistance for mental health and well-being during the pandemic.

2.2.2. The Teachers' Interview Analysis and Discussion

Q1: Can you describe how you have approached module coverage during Covid 19 pandemic?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers adopted various approaches to cover modules for Master 1 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. One teacher mentioned a combination of in-person and distance learning, with most modules being taught remotely. Students prepared in advance and brought their difficulties to the in-person sessions, allowing for condensed coverage and discussion. Another teacher used online lectures on Moodle, supplemented by limited face-to-face classes following health protocols. A third teacher faced challenges in covering oral expression modules due to limited student access to ICTs, relying on Telegram for communication and task sharing. However, pragmatics modules were relatively easier as Master's students actively participated. Lastly, one teacher used a mix of in-person classes for theory and assigned distance tasks. These approaches aimed to ensure module coverage while adapting to the constraints of the pandemic, promoting student engagement and support.

Q2: How have you noticed that Covid 19 pandemic affected your students' oral proficiency?

The teachers in the interview unanimously agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic had a detrimental impact on their students' oral proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). They observed a decline in students' ability to engage in meaningful discussions, receive instant feedback, and express themselves effectively. The shift to distance learning limited students' opportunities for interaction and practice, leading to decreased participation and reduced fluency. Teachers noticed that students often forgot what they had learned, struggled to find words, construct coherent sentences, and even experienced difficulties in

thinking. To sum up, the pandemic disrupted the development of students' oral proficiency, resulting in insufficient language skills compared to previous years when face-to-face instruction was possible.

Q3: How have you noticed that Covid 19 pandemic affected your students' writing proficiency?

The COVID-19 pandemic had a detrimental impact on the writing proficiency of Master 1 EFL learners. Students exhibited spelling mistakes, lacked coherence and cohesion in their writing, struggled with sentence organization, and had limited written production. Some students faced difficulties in note-taking, formulating sentences, and providing examples. The time constraints imposed by the pandemic negatively influenced students' writing proficiency. However, not all teachers noticed a significant change in their students' writing abilities. Overall, the pandemic disrupted students' writing skills, including clarity, structure, grammatical accuracy, and engagement with the writing process.

Q4: How have you assessed your students' comprehension and understanding of course materials during Covid 19 pandemic?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers employed a variety of assessment methods to evaluate their students' understanding of course materials in a distance learning format. Continuous assessment and testing were used to gauge comprehension, with regular quizzes and assignments being implemented. Short quizzes with justifications and discussion questions were utilized, along with paired discussions and oral comprehension assessments through direct questions. Some teachers relied on records and video tapes to assess speaking proficiency, despite facing challenges with this method. Assessments also included oral presentations, and written tests and projects. To conclude, teachers adapted their assessment strategies to the remote learning environment while considering the limitations and circumstances imposed by the pandemic.

Q5: How have your students responded to the changes in learning caused by the pandemic?

According to the interviewed teachers, students' responses to the changes in learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic varied. Some teachers attempted to maximize in-person sessions and emphasized key content for students to study independently. Others reported that students recognized the negative effects of the pandemic, such as decreased assimilation, motivation, and concentration. Students also expressed fatigue, reluctance, and a loss of enthusiasm for studies. However, they held onto optimism, eagerly awaiting the day they could meet their friends and teachers. Lack of interest and motivation were common among students, potentially contributing to limited engagement with distance learning methods. Students had mixed opinions about the hybrid learning approach, with some liking it and others disliking it. Overall, students faced challenges in adapting to remote learning, and the emotional impact of the pandemic, including illness and loss, was evident in their responses.

2.2.3. General results

The general results of the questionnaire and the teachers' interview provides a comprehensive overview of the impact of distance learning on Master 1 EFL learners during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results indicate that students had various attitudes towards modules coverage and studies. Concerns or dissatisfaction with modules coverage were expressed by 60% of students, suggesting that important aspects were lacking in spite of the various strategies adopted by teachers to cover all modules.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a predominantly negative impact on students' oral proficiency. A significant decline in oral proficiency was reported by 80% of participants, likely due to limited speaking opportunities resulting from social distancing measures. These findings are similar to those of teachers who unanimously agreed that students' oral proficiency was negatively affected by the pandemic.

Regarding writing proficiency, 53,33% of students experienced negative impacts on their writing skills. The results obtained from both the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview showed that the limited opportunities for writing practice, technical difficulties during online writing assessments and time constraints imposed by the pandemic negatively influenced students' writing proficiency, including clarity, structure, grammatical accuracy, and engagement with the writing process.

The comprehension and understanding of course materials during the pandemic were also affected. A majority of students (60%) faced increased difficulty in comprehending course materials. This is due to many technical difficulties and the lack of support provided by the university. These findings highlight the challenges faced by students in understanding course materials and the need for improved support and accessibility.

In terms of students' well-being and coping strategies during the pandemic, a significant portion of students faced challenges in coping with pandemic-related difficulties. 50% of the students reported either not coping well or coped somewhat poorly but they managed to handle the difficulties to some extent. They felt that the support provided by the university for mental health and well-being was limited. This claim was supported by the teachers' views who declared that students lost their concentration, motivation and enthusiasm for studies.

In conclusion, the questionnaire and the interview results highlight the negative impact of distance learning on Master 1 EFL learners during the Covid-19 pandemic. Concerns about module coverage, declines in oral and writing proficiency, difficulties in comprehending course materials, and challenges in coping with the pandemic-related situation were common themes. These findings emphasize the need for improved support, accessibility, and well-being services to address the academic and mental health needs of students during times of crisis.

2.2.4. Recommendations

On the light of the findings obtained from this study, some recommendations can be suggested for students, teachers and university administration to improve the quality of education during crises time such as pandemics or bad weather conditions.

Firstly, the administration should provide both teachers and students with the right technological tools to ensure the continuity of the teaching-learning process whatever the circumstances are. In addition to that, the university should organize training sessions for learners and teachers to better understand the e-learning platforms in order to use them effectively.

Secondly, teachers should have a good mastery of technology that enables them to make their online lessons more interesting. Feedback is an important element to improve the level of students. Therefore, teachers ought to take it into consideration and make it as constructive as that in face to face learning.

Finally, students should also master the use of technology tools to understand the e-learning platforms that become an integral part of the educational process. They are advised to be more self-directed learners doubling their efforts to ensure maximum outcomes.

General Conclusion

The spread of Covid 19 pandemic has led to unprecedented disruption in the different educational institutions with the social distancing policy adopted by all countries of the world to limit the spread of the virus. In order to minimize the impact of that disruption, like all countries of the world, Algeria introduced distance learning as a solution to guarantee the continuity of the educational process. However, this mode of learning was not an adequate alternative to traditional mode.

The research field work is conducted with Master One EFL linguistics students and four teachers in the English Department of Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila. It aims to investigate the impact of distance learning on EFL learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during the Covid 19 pandemic. It also intends to identify the difficulties and obstacles faced distance learning and suggests solutions and recommendations to overcome them.

This study seeks to answer the following questions: How did distance learning impact learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during Covid 19 pandemic? What are the challenges and obstacles that faced EFL learners during distance learning? In addition, it is hypothesized that distance learning had negative impact on learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during the Covid 19 pandemic. It is also hypothesized that distance learning affected learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes positively.

To carry out this study, a descriptive qualitative method is adopted .The data is collected through a questionnaire which was distributed to 30 EFL Master One Linguistics students in M'sila University to investigate their perceptions and attitudes towards distance learning and how it affected them. The data is also gathered via an interview that was conducted with four teachers of Master one Linguistics students in the English department

to know about their insights and experiences about the impact of distance learning on learners during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The current research is divided into two chapters. The theoretical one tackles aspects related to distance learning in section one. While the second section deals with learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes and the role of technology for improving them. The second chapter is devoted to the field work to provide answers to the research questions.

Finally, the findings obtained after the analysis and discussion of both the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview confirm the research hypothesis which stated that distance learning had negative impact on learners' knowledge and linguistic outcomes during the Covid 19 pandemic. The results also go in the same direction with the previous studies mentioned in the literature review.

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Appendices

Appendix A : Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

This questionnaire is a part of a Master dissertation that aims at investigating the impact of distance learning on M'sila Master One EFL learners' (Linguistics students) knowledge and linguistic outcomes during COVID-19 Pandemic. We would be very grateful if you take the following questionnaire seriously and accept completing it. You are kindly requested to fill this questionnaire by putting a cross (x) in the corresponding box.

I. Section One: Students attitudes about Modules coverage and studies during pandemic:

1. How satisfied were you with the modules coverage during the pandemic?
 - a. Very dissatisfied
 - b. Somewhat dissatisfied
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Somewhat satisfied
 - e. Very satisfied
2. How well were you able to keep up with your studies despite the pandemic-related challenges?
 - a. Not at all
 - b. Somewhat
 - c. Moderately
 - d. Very
 - e. Extremely
3. How much support did your lecturers provide during the pandemic?
 - a. Very little support
 - b. Some support
 - c. Adequate support
 - d. Good support
 - e. Excellent support
4. How much flexibility did the university offer you during the pandemic?
 - a. Very little flexibility
 - b. Some flexibility
 - c. Adequate flexibility
 - d. Good flexibility
 - e. Excellent flexibility
5. How much do you feel like you missed out on essential learning experiences because of the pandemic?
 - a. Missed out on a lot
 - b. Missed out on some
 - c. Neutral/Unsure
 - d. Did not miss out much
 - e. Did not miss out at all

II. Section Two: Oral proficiency

1. How much did the pandemic affect your oral proficiency?
 - a. Very negatively affected
 - b. Somewhat negatively affected
 - c. Neutral/Unsure
 - d. Somewhat positively affected
 - e. Very positively affected
2. How many opportunities did you have to practice your speaking skills during the pandemic?
 - a. Very few opportunities
 - b. Some opportunities
 - c. Adequate opportunities
 - d. Good opportunities
 - e. Excellent opportunities
3. How effective were the online speaking assessments in evaluating your oral proficiency?
 - a. Not effective at all
 - b. Somewhat ineffective
 - c. Moderately effective
 - d. Very effective
 - e. Extremely effective
4. How many technical difficulties did you face during online speaking assessments?
 - a. Faced many technical difficulties
 - b. Faced some technical difficulties
 - c. Faced a few technical difficulties
 - d. Faced no technical difficulties
 - e. Did not have any online speaking assessments
5. How much do you think your oral proficiency would have been affected if there had been no pandemic?
 - a. Would have been very negatively affected
 - b. Would have been somewhat negatively affected
 - c. Neutral/Unsure
 - d. Would have been somewhat positively affected
 - e. Would have been very positively affected

III. Section Three: Writing proficiency

1. How much did the pandemic affect your writing proficiency?
 - a. Very negatively affected
 - b. Somewhat negatively affected
 - c. Neutral/Unsure
 - d. Somewhat positively affected
 - e. Very positively affected

2. How many opportunities did you have to practice your writing skills during the pandemic?
 - a. Very few opportunities
 - b. Some opportunities
 - c. Adequate opportunities
 - d. Good opportunities
 - e. Excellent opportunities
3. How effective were the online writing assessments in evaluating your writing proficiency?
 - a. Not effective at all
 - b. Somewhat ineffective
 - c. Moderately effective
 - d. Very effective
 - e. Extremely effective
4. How many technical difficulties did you face during online writing assessments?
 - a. Faced many technical difficulties
 - b. Faced some technical difficulties
 - c. Faced a few technical difficulties
 - d. Faced no technical difficulties
 - e. Did not have any online writing assessments
5. How much do you think your writing proficiency would have been affected if there had been no pandemic?
 - a. Would have been very negatively affected
 - b. Would have been somewhat negatively affected
 - c. Neutral/Unsure
 - d. Would have been somewhat positively affected
 - e. Would have been very positively affected

IV. Section Four: Comprehension and understanding of course materials

1. How much harder was it to understand course materials (MOODLE – e-books...) during the pandemic?
 - a. Much harder to understand
 - b. Somewhat harder to understand
 - c. No change in difficulty
 - d. Somewhat easier to understand
 - e. Much easier to understand
2. How effective were the online lectures and materials in helping you understand the course content?
 - a. Not effective at all
 - b. Somewhat ineffective
 - c. Moderately effective
 - d. Very effective
 - e. Extremely effective

3. How many technical difficulties affected your comprehension of course materials?
- a. Faced many technical difficulties
 - b. Faced some technical difficulties
 - c. Faced a few technical difficulties
 - d. Faced no technical difficulties
 - e. Did not have any online lectures or materials
4. How much support did the university provide for you to understand the course materials during the pandemic?
- a. Very little support provided
 - b. Some support provided
 - c. Adequate support provided
 - d. Good support provided
 - e. Excellent support provided
5. How much do you feel like you missed out on essential learning experiences because of the pandemic?
- a. Missed out on many essential learning experiences
 - b. Missed out on some essential learning experiences
 - c. Missed out on a few non-essential learning experiences
 - d. Did not miss out on any essential learning experiences
 - e. Had additional learning experiences due to the pandemic
- V. Section Five: General well-being and coping strategies**
1. How well did you cope with pandemic-related challenges during your studies?
- a. Did not cope well at all
 - b. Coped somewhat poorly
 - c. Coping was neither poor nor good
 - d. Coped somewhat well
 - e. Coped very well
2. How much support did the university provide for your mental health and well-being during the pandemic?
- a. Very little support provided
 - b. Some support provided
 - c. Adequate support provided
 - d. Good support provided
 - e. Excellent support provided
3. How much did personal challenges during the pandemic affect your studies?
- a. Personal challenges affected studies significantly
 - b. Personal challenges affected studies somewhat
 - c. Personal challenges had no effect on studies
 - d. Personal challenges had little effect on studies
 - e. Personal challenges had no effect on studies at all

4. How much social support did you have during the pandemic to help cope with your studies?
- a. No social support at all
 - b. Very little social support
 - c. Some social support
 - d. Adequate social support
 - e. Excellent social support
5. How much additional support for mental health and well-being during the pandemic would you have preferred from the university?
- a. Much more support needed
 - b. Somewhat more support needed
 - c. No additional support needed
 - d. Some additional support needed
 - e. Much additional support not needed

Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix B : Teachers' Interview

Introduction:

Hello and thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this research study is to explore students' attitudes and experiences during the pandemic, specifically related to module coverage, oral and writing proficiency, and comprehension and understanding of course materials. We appreciate your willingness to share your insights and experiences with us.

1. Can you describe how you have approached module coverage during Covid 19 pandemic?

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.....

2. How have you noticed that Covid 19 pandemic affected your students' oral proficiency?

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3. How have you noticed that Covid 19 pandemic affected your students' writing proficiency?

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4. How have you assessed your students' comprehension and understanding of course materials during Covid 19 pandemic?

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.....

5. How have your students responded to the changes in learning caused by the pandemic?

.....
.....

Conclusion

Thank you again for your time and insights. Your feedback will be valuable for our research study and will help us better understand how students are coping and learning during the pandemic.

الملخص

لقد أثرت جائحة كوفيد-19 على كل جوانب الحياة. لم يكن مجال التعليم استثناءً لأن المؤسسات التعليمية في جميع أنحاء العالم تحولت من التعلم الحضوري إلى وضع التعلم عن بعد. الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التحقيق في تأثير التعلم عن بعد على معرفة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية والمحصلات اللغوية خلال جائحة كوفيد 19. تم تقسيم الدراسة إلى فصلين. الفصل الأول هو الجانب النظري حول التعلم عن بعد والمحصلات اللغوية. أما الفصل الثاني فقد خصص للعمل الميداني. للإجابة على أسئلة البحث تم اعتماد المنهج الوصفي النوعي. تم جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان وزع على طلبة السنة الأولى ماستر لغة انجليزية تخصص لسانيات وكذلك مقابلة أجريت مع أربعة أساتذة من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة المسيلة. أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها أن التعلم عن بعد كان له تأثير سلبي على معرفة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ومحصلاتهم اللغوية خلال جائحة كوفيد-19. بناءً على هذه النتائج، تم اقتراح توصيات للطلبة والأساتذة وكذا إدارة الجامعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم عن بعد، الأثر، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، المحصلات اللغوية،

كوفيد 19.