Exploring the Current Pedagogical Trends and Techniques in online Language Teaching in Pakistani Higher Education
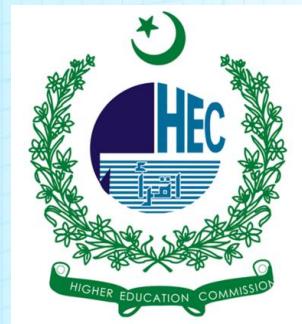
[1]**Masood Shah**
[2]**Dr. Mujahid Shah**

[1]MPhil Scholar Department of English Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. masoodnuml@gmail.com
[2]Assistant Professor, Department of English Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. mujahidshah@awkum.edu.pk

Abstract

This study investigates the available online language teaching challenges and drawbacks in higher education institutions in Pakistan by focusing on both teachers and students' standpoints. It utilizes a qualitative research approach, using structured interviews by collecting data from 25 participants (10 teachers and 15 students) from three different institutes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan. The findings of the study present issues faced by the teachers and students such as student engagement, inadequate internet access, limited digital literacy, academic integrity, and the perceived value of physical classroom interactions. Notably, participants emphasized the irreplaceable nature of face-to-face learning experiences, underscoring the enduring importance of personal connections in graduate education. The study concluded that online teaching platform offers flexibility for which technological infrastructure, pedagogical strategies and participants' feedback needs significant improvement which can strengthen the quality and effectiveness of online graduate education.

Keywords: Online teaching, digital literacy, in-person classes

Introduction

Pakistani higher education institutions have significantly changed in the recent years with the quick incorporation of digital learning and teaching and E-learning platforms especially at undergraduate level. An introduction of Online learning has increased access to education and provided flexibility outside of traditional classroom limits by allowing instructors and students to communicate synchronously and asynchronously from multiple locations (Sahoo, 2020; Hrastinski, 2008). But this change has certain limitations characterized by significant issues with technology infrastructure, pedagogical efficacy, student engagement, and instructional quality, particularly in language education.

Excellence in education is a multi-layered and context-specific concept that includes educational inputs, instructional methods, and learning outcomes including standards, achievement, and attainment (Asim & Okon, 2005; Cavanaugh, 2004; Iqbal & Ahamad, 2010). Learner performance, completion rates, and the efficacy of

instructional resources and interaction are frequently used to assess quality in online and remote learning settings (Kotirde & Yunos, 2014; Maduewesi, 2005).

E-learning, which is generally understood to be online education, which is enabled by information and communication technologies (ICT), places more emphasis on learning objectives than technology (Morley, 2003; Lim & Chai, 2004). The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has organized policy initiatives to advance digital infrastructure and virtual teaching capacity in Pakistan due to systemic challenges like high educational costs, limited access to qualified educators, and geographic limitations (Kashif, 2005; Khan, 2007). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the acceptance of online learning by highlighting its advantages and disadvantages, especially in language learning where social presence, engagement, and feedback are crucial (Bao et al., 2020; Bansal, 2020).

Examining the efficacy and difficulties of synchronous and asynchronous teaching styles is crucial given the increasing reliance on online education, particularly for English language training in Pakistan, where English is considered a second language (Abbas et al., 2020; Ellis, 2006). This study aims to investigate these dynamics in order to find methods for raising the caliber and inclusivity of online graduate-level language instruction in Pakistan.

Statement of the Problem

This study attempt to investigate how online teaching issues affect the quality of education and how these challenges can be address to enhance the effectiveness of online teaching at graduate level. The focus of the study is to look at the issues of online teaching at graduate level in Pakistan which are the lack of motivation, attachment in the physical setting, interaction and technical challenges.

Research Objectives

To identify challenges faced by the teachers and the students during their online classes.

To investigate overall level of satisfaction of the students and teachers with online classes and compare it with traditional in-person viewpoints.

Research Questions

What are the different challenges faced by the teachers and the students in online

learning?

What are the satisfaction level of the teachers and the students regarding online classes?

Significance of the Study

This study holds significant importance in shedding light on the challenges faced in online language teaching at the graduate level in Pakistan. As online education continues to expand, particularly in response to global shifts and local demands for flexible learning options, understanding the specific challenges within the context of language education becomes paramount. By identifying and analyzing these challenges, this research aims to provide valuable insights that can inform policymakers, educators, and institutions about effective strategies to enhance the quality and effectiveness of online language teaching. Moreover, the study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on educational practices in Pakistan, offering recommendations for improving pedagogical approaches, technological infrastructure, and student engagement in online language education.

Delimitation of the Study

The researcher has targeted only three institutions of KPK i.e. IMSciences Peshawar Edward College Peshawar, and Islamia College University Peshawar. Faculty members or students of no other university were consulted for the study. Students of BS program were selected for the study. No school or college's students were considered. Number of students stood at 15 and faculty members at 10.

Related Literature

Selim (2007) focused on e-learning, which has been integrated into many college programs and is one of the devices that emerged from data innovation. There are several considerations to make while developing or implementing college instructional programs that include e-learning-based courses. The purpose of this study is to identify the main success factors (CSFs) for online education as seen by university students. Teachers, students, IT, and university support were the four groups into which the survey results for the published e-learning essential success criteria were separated. In every category, several metrics were offered. A survey of 538 college students was conducted to assess the classification. The results showed

eight different kinds of e-learning CSFs, each of which had several important e-learning success markers. The validity coefficient of each metric indicated how important it was. A confirmatory factor modeling approach was used to assess the criticality of the measures included in each CSF category.

Iqbal (2010) carried out analysis on the subject of how training moves both social and monetary development in any country. Considering this, it is fundamental to lay out systems for guaranteeing that everybody approaches excellent instruction that is additionally modest. Tragically, Pakistan has not had the option to profit from the amazing open doors given by web-based learning. The institutional and mechanical framework, culture, PC education, and openness are the primary drivers of this. In spite of the public authority's obligation to advancing e-learning in the country and praiseworthy measures like the making of the Virtual College (VU), Pakistan has far to go prior to receiving the particular financial rewards of e-learning. Through distance learning, the Allama Iqbal Open University offers 'Training for All' beginning with vital (functional) education.

Anwar (2011) focused on resolution of e-learning programs into the school system has reshaped the course of securing and dispersal of information all through the general public. Despite the fact that numerous specialists correspond that e-learning coordination is useful as far as the new ways it draws in understudies, this doesn't guarantee the outcome of e-learning programs. Developing nations like Pakistan, who have yet to completely obtain the rewards of e-learning, can see this happening. Although this issue's theoretical importance is emphasized in study, there is little actual evidence, especially with relation to developing nations like Pakistan. As a result, the goal of this study is to identify the problems with e-learning through the feedback that students have provided and to offer solutions. Through an extensive literature review and discussions with the students, a variety of challenges present in a Pakistani private institution were discovered in order to accomplish this goal. The results showed that the biggest obstacles to the successful integration of e-learning were a lack of electricity and English ability.

In the study of Esichaikul (2011), made sense of the projects choose for irregular examining were English Appreciation (Eng101), Business and Specialized English

(Eng201) and Business Correspondence (Eng301). Three procedures were utilized to assemble the information: an overview survey, reviewed conversation board (GDB) remarks, and perception of the correspondence and execution on assigned channels. 1025 reactions to the study survey were gotten out of an all-out populace of 9919. The outcomes showed that simultaneous language classes could conquer a portion of the limitations of non-concurrent e-language learning for second language (L2) students. According to the research's conclusions, Pakistani e-language learning would flourish in an environment that combined synchronous and asynchronous paradigms.

Shifat (2020) in his study explained that asynchronous mode is better since most online students work and study at the same time, thwarting anxiety from synchronous sessions' time restraints (Ghazali et al., 2009). The majority of research on a/synchronous media has thus far studied how well students perform and how involved they are; nevertheless, the context of learning is frequently disregarded, particularly with regard to EFL/ESL learners (Mondol & Mohiuddin, 2020). To advance online learner-centered language education, it is critical to understand students' impressions of how synchronous and asynchronous sessions affect their behavior (Radha et al., 2020).

Muhammad (2020) examined the viewpoints of Pakistani high-level training students towards compulsory online and distance learning school courses amidst Coronavirus. Overviews of undergrad and graduate understudies were directed to find out about their perspectives about web-based schooling in Pakistan. The findings of the study revealed that in emerging countries like Pakistan, where the extraordinary greater part of understudies need web association because of specialized and monetary hardships, web-based learning can't yield the expected outcomes. In the study, different troubles raised by undergrads incorporated the teacher's absence of up close and personal commitment, reaction times, and the absence of ordinary homeroom socialization.

In the study of Qamar (2020), the author undergone through his own teaching experience in quarantined-at-home settings, he describes and reflect on e-learning plan and its implementation. He is instructing two classes of 80 undergraduate students each. In a formal academic context, he taught the first half of the semester's

course material. However, they are now teaching online after the fictional corona breakout. He began his e-learning plan, which was based on blended learning and guided by the key goals to maintain accessibility and quality, in accordance with university policies and the resources that were accessible. He worked on two-way correspondence between the teacher and students by employing both synchronous and asynchronous modes, which were widely used and accessible. The feedback was obtained after implementing the e-learning plan for three weeks authenticated his understanding of the study situation as practical and grounded.

Anwar (2023) looked into the attitudes and methods teachers used when using the IBOX learning platform for instruction. To understand more about the teaching practices of teachers who utilize the IBOX, the researchers used an exploratory qualitative study approach. Social constructivism and the theory of social learning were the theories used in this study. A targeted interview was conducted with fifteen teachers. According to the study's findings, teachers had a favorable opinion of the IBOX unified learning platform. The study also presented that using the IBOX platform has increased students' in-class performance. The researchers recommended educational administrators to design the curriculum to incorporate blended learning at all learning levels.

The literature review identifies the global and local challenges in online graduate level language teaching including technology, pedagogy, and student engagement. Although, studies are providing solutions to enhance teaching, there is still a gap in the Pakistani context particularly in KPK where socio-cultural, economic and technological influence the distinguishing needs. This paper fills that gap with context-related insights and suggestions.

Methodology

This study utilizes a qualitative research design to address the issues of online language teaching at graduate level in Pakistan. The respondents involved were 25 individuals (15 students and 10 instructors) of three institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Institute of Management Sciences, Edward College and Islamia College University Peshawar. It formulated structured interviews used to gather primary data (teacher and student designed separately) and to obtain secondary data. Few

secondary sources such as libraries, research articles, dissertations, and the internet were used.

The interview questions revolved around such themes as engagement, digital literacy, feedback, academic integrity, peer learning and preferences between online and physical classrooms. Teachers and students were selected by convenience and random sampling respectively. To conduct the analysis, the research utilized the thematic analysis tool, which enabled the determination of patterns and findings based on the responses given by the participants. In order to facilitate anonymity, a coding system was employed, in which teachers and students got unique codes. This method offers a good framework on which the dynamics of teaching languages online in Pakistani context of higher education can be understood.

Structured Interview

A structured interview is a data collection method commonly used in qualitative research. It involves a standardized set of questions that are prepared in advance and asked in the same order to all participants. This format ensures consistency and comparability of the responses, allowing the researcher to systematically collect data on specific topics or issues.

In a structured interview, the interviewer does not deviate from the prepared questions or ask additional questions that are not included in the interview schedule. The responses are typically open-ended, giving participants the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in their own words. This method is particularly useful for gathering detailed and comparable data from multiple participants, which can be analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and insights relevant to the research question.

In this case two different structured interviews are prepared i.e. one for the teachers and the second one for the students. Teachers' interview consists of the following questions.

1.   What was the students' attention level during your experience of online class? Were they keen to learn? 1

2.   Comparing your physical classroom experience, how far you find it challenging to manage an online class? List some problem you faced

3.   Keeping in view your online experience, are you satisfied with the feedback you got from your students?

4.   What is your observation about the digital literacy of the students?

5.   Comparing physical classes with online, which one is your preferred method? Why?

6.   Do you believe the students maintained their academic integrity in your online experience?

7.   Do you believe you successfully established personal connections required for a teacher during your online experience?

8.   Do you think the students are well-equipped for learning online?

9.   Do you recommend online classes in future for pursuing a Bachelor degree in Pakistan?

10.   Have you got any professional development training before taking classes online?

Students' interview includes the following questions.

1.   How you see the personal interaction you experienced with your instructor during online class?

2.   Keeping in view your online experience, how do you feel about the level of autonomy you have as a student in your online classes?

3.   Are you satisfied with the feedback you received from your teachers or instructor in your online courses?

4.   What is your observation on peer learning during your online class? Comparing peer interaction in a physical class, are you satisfied with the peer interaction you have been through in online class?

5.   What challenges have you faced while seeking feedback/ immediate feedback while navigating and using various learning platforms and tools for your online?

6.   During your online classes have you felt any feeling of loneliness or missed peer learning?

7.   Which one is your preferred mode of learning: physical or online?

8.   Are there any specific subjects or topics that you find particularly challenging to learn in an online setting? If yes, what makes these subjects harder to grasp

compared to traditional in-person classes?

9.   Do you thing the environment you got for your online learning is conducive for learning? Have you got enough space at your home/work place to take online class comfortably?

10.   Do you recommend online classes for future at Bachelor level?

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis techniques in research methods refer to the various approaches and tools used to process, interpret, and draw conclusions from collected data. These techniques help researchers identify patterns, relationships, and trends within the data, ultimately leading to a better understanding of the research problem.

In this case, thematic analysis techniques are used for analyzing data for this research. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used in social sciences, humanities and Psychology in order to identify, analyze and interpret pattern or themes within qualitative data such as structured interview or participants' responses both in oral and in written form. The main purpose of thematic analysis is to gain insight into underlying meaning and experiences of the target participants. Responses to questions are thoroughly analyzed and discussed in paragraph form under the relevant heading. Both the teachers and students' responses are discussed separately.

Coding

The name of the teachers and students are properly coded. Teachers' names are started from a capital T followed by serial number and then by the initial letter of the teacher's first name. For example, a teacher named as Hamid Khan is represented as T2H. Here the 'T' stands for teacher, followed by a serial number and then the initial letter of his first name i.e. Hamid. Same techniques are used for students. Name of the teachers and students are attached in the annexure along with their email addresses.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Data analysis is conducted from two distinct viewpoints; the perspectives of teachers and the perspectives of students.

Analysis of Data on the Basis of Teachers' Responses

Faculty members from three institutions; the Institute of Management Sciences, Edward College Peshawar, and Islamia College University Peshawar, were

interviewed to find out more about their experiences with online learning. Formal interviews were conducted with ten instructors in all. The Research Methodology contains a description of the interview questions. The replies were evaluated and summarized descriptively due to the subjective nature of the questions.

Students' Keenness and Attention Level

Majority of instructors reported low levels of student interest and focus during online sessions. The main causes reported by the nine out of ten teachers are; students' lack of seriousness, frequent logouts, low involvement, and distractions from home surroundings. Teachers felt that they lost the authority and control that were present in traditional classroom settings, and students' attention was mostly observed when they were specifically addressed or asked for their opinions. The only instructor who consistently claimed enjoying holding students' attention was this one. The primary obstacles to effective online learning, according to educators, are distractions, low motivation, and a lack of seriousness.

Online Class Management

Ninety percent of instructors cited significant challenges in managing online classes following the sudden shift to virtual learning. Among the primary issues were students' lack of zeal and earnestness, a lot of diversions, minimal interaction, multitasking, and resistance to the online format. Instructors also highlighted the difficulty of maintaining discipline and engagement in the absence of physical presence, inadequate preparation, and inadequate digital literacy. One strategy that reduced interruptions was microphone muting, but it also reduced engagement. Effective management was assessed by just one teacher, who cited proactive classroom control, clear instructions, and well-defined rules. Successful online class administration has been demonstrated to need strong preparation, digital proficiency, and innovative solutions to behavioral and technological challenges.

Feedback from the Students

Gathering feedback in online classes remained challenging, despite professors' belief that it was essential for effective education and a strong student-teacher relationship. Most teachers reported little student participation and unfavorable attitudes toward providing feedback, which hindered training progress and two-way communication.

Compared to traditional classroom settings, where students were typically more attentive and receptive, online learning environments showed lower levels of seriousness, engagement, and constructive criticism. Only a tiny percentage of educators reported positive outcomes, crediting improved communication and timely feedback systems for their achievements. The lack of meaningful feedback was generally seen to be a major barrier to effective education and student development in virtual learning.

Students' Digital Literacy

Although it was challenging to get feedback in online classes, instructors believed it was essential for good instruction and building strong student-teacher relationships. Most teachers reported little student participation and a hostile attitude toward providing feedback, which hindered two-way communication and hindered the improvement of education. In contrast to online learning environments, which were marked by lower levels of seriousness, engagement, and constructive criticism, physical classrooms generally encouraged students to pay closer attention and respond more quickly. A few teachers reported favorable results, which they linked to improved communication and prompt feedback systems. In general, it was thought that a major barrier to efficient instruction and student development in virtual learning was the lack of meaningful feedback.

Physical Classes VS Online Classes

The majority of professors stated that they clearly preferred in-person instruction over online instruction due to infrastructural constraints, poor connectivity, and students' indifferent views toward virtual learning. Instructors stressed the importance of face-to-face communication for maintaining control, ensuring participation, assessing understanding, and getting immediate feedback—all elements they felt were mostly absent in virtual settings. While some educators promoted a blended learning strategy, stressing the value of digital literacy and technological adaption, others stressed that for online learning to be successful, both teachers and students require sufficient institutional support and training. Overall, teachers favored in-person instruction and supported a gradual integration of technology through improvements to infrastructure and training, even if they recognized the growing importance of digital learning.

Students' Academic Integrity in Online Classes

The majority of teachers expressed a definite preference for traditional classroom settings over online instruction due to infrastructure limitations, poor connectivity, and students' apathy toward virtual learning. Teachers stressed the importance of face-to-face contacts for maintaining authority, ensuring participation, assessing understanding, and receiving timely feedback—aspects that they found mostly absent in virtual contexts. While some educators promoted a hybrid approach, emphasizing the importance of digital literacy and technological adaptation, others stressed that institutional support and suitable training for both teachers and students are necessary for effective online education. Even though they recognized the expanding importance of digital learning, instructors generally supported the progressive incorporation of technology through infrastructure development and training.

Establishing Personal Bond with Students in Online Class

The majority of teachers (90%) said that building strong teacher-student relationships in online courses is difficult compared to traditional classroom settings. They attributed this to students' lack of commitment, earnestness, and prolonged concentration in online settings, which hinders two-way conversation and the development of relationships. Instructors claim that effective bonding boosts students' interest, dedication, and learning; yet, in online settings, this process is hindered by distractions and a lack of connection. Professors generally pushed for particular strategies to strengthen bonds in online learning environments and stressed the value of face-to-face contacts in developing strong relationships between instructors and students.

Students' Spaces and Preparedness

Because they were ill-prepared, the majority of teachers (70%) claimed that students needed additional time, resources, and training to transition to online learning. Major problems that hindered concentration and communication were unreliable internet access, a lack of reliable digital tools, frequent disruptions, and the absence of specific study spaces at home. The fact that just a tiny portion of educators were happy with their students' digital readiness suggests that experiences differ depending on the circumstances. Effective online learning was generally found to be hampered by

inadequate infrastructure and learning environments.

The Future of Online Classes

Concerns about the future use of online education for bachelor's degrees were expressed by the majority of instructors (9 out of 10), who emphasized that issues including student focus, engagement, and the need for in-person connections must be addressed before widespread use. Several teachers (T2W, T3A, T8A, and T10S) recommended digital literacy classes to get students ready for online study. Others focused on ethical (T7I) and psychological (T1E) preparation, highlighting the importance of morality, decorum, and mindset for effective online learning. T9A emphasized institutional readiness while promoting sufficient infrastructure and assistance. A few educators (T4H, T6R) expressed hope that students will eventually become used to learning online. All things considered, a successful online bachelor's degree program requires a combination of outstanding digital literacy and institutional, ethical, psychological, social and technical readiness.

Analysis of Students' Responses Based on the Structured Interview

This analysis is based on the structured interview conducted from 15 students about the online classes. Responses of the students are discussed under a single heading, as covered in the questions.

All questions were subjective in nature, therefore the responses are described accordingly.

Students' personal interaction with the teachers in online classes

Thirteen out of fifteen students stated that online learning negatively affected their interactions with teachers and classmates. They stated that immersive learning, real-time communication, and timely question clarification were all hampered by the lack of in-person interaction. Additionally, students brought attention to problems that left them feeling disengaged and frustrated, such as a lack of time to ask questions and teachers' partial or delayed responses. Overall, a significant contributing element to their poor learning experience was the lack of meaningful connection and efficient communication throughout online sessions.

Peer Interaction in Physical vs. Online Learning

Fourteen out of fifteen students said they preferred in-person classes over online ones.

They underlined that in-person settings promote peer interaction, group learning, idea sharing, and critical thinking—aspects that are mostly absent from online settings. Due to the lack of connection in virtual classes, students reported feeling disengaged, alone, and deprived of important learning opportunities. Online learning was somewhat collaborative, according to just one student. Overall, the answers emphasize the necessity of techniques to promote interaction in online learning as well as the significance of peer engagement in successful learning.

Students' Autonomy and Learning

Twelve out of fifteen students who were asked about their experiences with online classrooms said they greatly valued the freedom and flexibility that come with virtual learning. Benefits including the capacity to repeat lectures that have been recorded, modify the pace of learning to suit individual needs, manage personal schedules in addition to studies, and access additional materials for a deeper comprehension were noted. Students were able to concentrate on difficult ideas, learn on their own, and take charge of their own education thanks to this independence. In general, students appreciated the customized and adaptable aspects of online education, viewing it as empowering and helpful for successful information retention and academic growth.

Are the Students well equipped?

The majority of students (87%) stated that they have the devices, computers, and reliable internet needed for online learning, which at first indicated that they were prepared for virtual learning. However, they had to deal with a lot of difficulties, such as weak cellular signals, frequent power outages, and internet failures, which resulted in missed sessions, interrupted learning, and less engagement with teachers. Despite not having the necessary equipment, two students showed perseverance by using friends' or relatives' facilities to attend classes. Overall, even though the majority of students had access to technology, connectivity and power problems made it difficult for them to learn online. Nevertheless, their tenacity and flexibility demonstrated a strong desire to finish their education in spite of these challenges.

Feedback and Students' Learning

Feedback is essential to students' academic development since it enables them to pinpoint knowledge gaps and modify their teaching methods. Thirteen out of fifteen

students in online classes, however, expressed discontent with the feedback procedure. They brought attention to problems like little time for interactive sessions, one-way communication, a lack of instructor responses, and little opportunities to ask questions. These difficulties hampered individualized learning and general information acquisition by causing dissatisfaction, a decline in involvement, and comprehension gaps. Just two students said their feedback experiences were satisfactory. In order to guarantee successful learning and academic advancement, students generally underlined the necessity of enhancing feedback systems and interactive channels in online education.

Adapting to Learning Platform and Tools

For online classes, the majority of students used video conferencing software, with five utilizing Zoom and ten using Google Meet. Out of 15 students, only 5 had enough instruction on these technologies; most had to use them on their own and frequently enrolled in online courses for the first time. Online learning was difficult due to the absence of prior expertise and structured instruction, underscoring the necessity of training sessions and tutorials. In general, students stressed that colleges should offer structured assistance to enable them to use video conferencing technologies efficiently for a more seamless and effective online learning experience.

Learning Environment and Spaces

Student involvement, critical thinking, and academic results are all improved in a well-equipped and accommodating learning environment with reliable systems, essential technology, excellent guidance, and attentive teachers. On the other hand, learning is hampered by unresponsive teachers, a lack of resources, and distractions.

In terms of home learning environments, nine out of fifteen students said they had peaceful, designated areas for online classes that allowed for concentrated study, defined routines, and isolation from domestic distractions. The remaining six students encountered difficulties: two had to deal with noise pollution from construction, neighbors, or family members, and four lacked individual study areas and had to share or find quiet spots.

These incidents demonstrate how important a suitable learning environment is to successful online learning. Teachers should take into account the home environments

of their students and put techniques in place to minimize distractions, offer direction, and encourage the development of appropriate study areas for online learning.

Potential Feeling of Loneliness in Online Class

In real classrooms, interactions between teachers, students, and peers are essential to learning because they promote critical thinking, teamwork, and psychological health. An effective and inspiring learning environment is produced by prompt feedback, direction, and peer involvement.

Seven out of fifteen students who took classes online reported feeling lonely, not interacting with their peers, and having less interest in their academics. Because they lacked the authority, presence, and in-person interactions of teachers as well as the collaborative dynamics with classmates, they viewed online sessions to be less engaging. On the other hand, eight students indicated happiness with their online learning experience and adjusted well to the virtual environment, interacting with peers and teachers without expressing feelings of loneliness. Overall, these experiences show that, even if some people find success with online learning, in-person contacts are still crucial for engagement, psychological support, and overall educational development.

Problems of a Subject/s in Online Class

In online classes, students reported varying degrees of difficulty in various subjects, indicating that problems are not consistent. Some people found Drama (S5M, S15K) and Applied Linguistics (S1H, S3H) challenging since the theoretical or emotional elements were difficult to communicate online. Others found it difficult to understand the practical or subtle material in Geometrical Structures (S3H, S14M), Phonetics and Phonology (S8M, S10A), and Literary Analysis in English Literature and Novels (S7Y, S13I). A few students (S2J, S9A, S12F, and S13I) believed that the subject type had no bearing, highlighting the fact that the difficulties of online learning extend beyond specific courses. All things considered, these answers demonstrate the variety of subject-specific challenges that students encounter in online learning.

Online Classes and Students' Recommendation for Future

Fourteen out of fifteen students said that they preferred traditional, on-campus classrooms over online learning when asked about their preferences for further

education. They underlined that obtaining a bachelor's degree is essential for future employment opportunities and that in-person instruction offers greater concentration, quick feedback, peer learning, and practical assistance. While some students (S1H, S11U, S15K, S9A) emphasized the importance of real-time interaction with teachers and peers for comprehensive learning, others (S5M, S2J, S3H) emphasized that in-person education is more beneficial for developing skills needed for jobs. While S4Y and S8M pointed out a lack of adequate preparation or resources for online learning, other students (S8M, S13I, and S14M) reported that online classes frequently felt teacher-controlled and oppressive.

On the other hand, only one student (S10A), citing a favorable experience and faith in the potential of virtual learning for the future, suggested continuing online lessons at the bachelor's level.

Overall, most students favored traditional schooling because of its dynamic, interesting, and organized setting, but a small percentage thought that online learning may be beneficial if done well.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study comes to the conclusion that both professors and students are dissatisfied with online language instruction. Effective teaching-learning dynamics have been hampered by the lack of in-person i nteraction, delayed feedback, low interest, and difficulties with classroom management. Students face loneliness, diversions, and trouble grasping tough topics while teachers battle to keep an eye on their development and uphold discipline. Both groups recognize the flexibility and accessibility provided by online education in spite of these difficulties. The results indicate that while traditional classrooms cannot be completely replaced by online learning, it can become more successful with the right instruction, technology assistance, and pedagogical modification.

The study suggests requiring digital training for both teachers and students before beginning online instruction in order to improve the efficacy of online language instruction. Institutions should guarantee digital literacy, dependable technological assistance, and explicit guidelines on plagiarism and academic integrity. Instructors should use engaging teaching techniques, vary their methods of evaluation,

give prompt feedback, and promote student involvement. To increase motivation, lessen isolation, and promote a more effective online learning environment, it is crucial to have organized schedules, interesting course content, cooperative activities, and compassionate teaching methods.

References

Abbas, Q., Jalil, M. K., & Iqbal, J. (2020). English as a second language in Pakistan: Challenges and prospects. *Asian EFL Journal, 24*(3), 45–60.

Adnan, M., & Kainat, A. (2020). Online learning amid the COVID-19 pandemic: Students' perspectives. Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology, 2(1), 45-51. https://doi.org/10.33902/JPSP.2020261309

Anhwere, A. (2023). *Teachers' attitudes and instructional practices using the IBOX blended learning platform: A qualitative study* (Unpublished manuscript).

Anwar, M., Hukamdad, & Niwaz, A. (2011). Experience of e-learning in Pakistan: Perceptions and suggestions of graduate students. International Journal of Academic Research, 3(3), 373-376.

Asim, A. E., & Okon, J. E. (2005). *Educational quality assurance*. Calabar: University Press.

Bao, W., et al. (2020). COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies, 2*(2), 113–115.

Cavanaugh, C. (2004). Distance education quality: Success factors. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems, 32*(3), 245–258.

Ellis, R. (2006). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Esichaikul, V., Lamnoi, S., & Bechter, C. (2011). Student modelling in adaptive e-learning systems. Knowledge Management & E-Learning: An International Journal (KM&EL), 3(3), 342-355.

Hrastinski, S. (2008). Asynchronous and synchronous e-learning. *Educause quarterly*, *31*(4), 51-55.

Iqbal, M. J., & Ahmad, M. (2010). Enhancing quality of education through e-learning: The case study of Allama Iqbal Open University. Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education, 11(1), 84-97.

Iqbal, M., & Ahamad, M. (2010). Quality in higher education. *Pakistan Journal of Education, 27*(1), 23–34.

Kashif, M. (2005). E-learning initiatives in Pakistan. *International Review of Education, 51*(2), 125–140.

Kotirde, I. Y., & Yunos, J. M. (2014). Quality assurance in higher education. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 140*, 337–342.

Lim, C. P., & Chai, C. S. (2004). An activity-theoretical approach to research of ICT integration. *Educational Technology & Society, 7*(4), 1–10.

Qamar, A. H. (2020). Quarantined-at-home teaching experience: My e-learning plan and implementation. Journal of Teaching and Learning, Special Issue: Digital Learning in Higher Education, 14(1), 120-132. https://doi.org/10.22329/jtl.v14i1.6250.

Sahoo, S. (2020). Online learning and teaching: Issues and challenges. *Journal of Educational Technology, 17*(2), 35–42.

Selim, H. M. (2007). Critical success factors for e-learning acceptance: Confirmatory factor models. Computers & Education, 49(2), 396-413.

Shifat, N. F. (2020). Dealing with mental health in online learning: A retrospect on ELT teachers and EFL learners during COVID-19 pandemic. REiLA: Journal of Research and Innovation in Language, 2(3), 101-107.