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*Advantages and Disadvantages of Teaching
Translation Online during COVID-19 : English
Department at Bechar University as a case study*

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ABSTRACT

Students of the Tahri Muhammed University of Bechar have shifted to the virtual platforms using E-learning platforms when the lockdown started due to Coronavirus. This paper aims to explore the advantages and inconveniences of online learning and teaching translation in EFL classes at Tahri Mohammed University. Additionally, the paper will analyze feedback from both teacher and learner sides after experiencing online EFL classes during the lockdown. For this investigation, a questionnaire was addressed to EFL students to know their views, problems they faced, and their expectations about online classes and an interview arranged with EFL teachers. Data analysis was obtained from 09 teachers and 70 students. After the investigation, the results show that some of the most applied educational technologies and applications are used to turn the online EFL classes effectively exciting, thus, EFL classes became more interactive and learners will learn easy to accept any “new method” not only during a pandemic emergency but also in future to get the best out of the worst. Although learners give positive viewpoints about online learning and teaching translation they prefer to learn in class.

Keywords: Advantages& Disadvantages, Challenges, Interpreting, Online Learning / Teaching, Translation, TMU of Bechar.

INTRODUCTION

Now people's life has extremely changed all around the world owing to the novel corona-virus epidemic. As a result, education has become online because of COVID19. In Algeria, higher education has changed rapidly to the worst way with the appearance of covid-19 pandemic. Online learning and teaching have become more difficult for both teachers and students because it was very hard to adjust after the traditional learning environment. They were unable to adapt the new learning environment especially during the sudden change of Covid-19 pandemic because the lack of tools and materials needed. Furthermore, Algerian teachers face numerous challenges, including internet access and student motivation, a dilemma like this may have a negative impact on the students, for example rejecting their studies(Li & Lalani, 2020,p25). However, this pandemic forced schools and universities to be closed thus the use of technology is promoted and online courses are created and planned with a variety of instruments and platforms (Dignan, 2020,p12). Additionally, online education was very important for them because both learners and instructors need to enhance their lives and understand the world around them. Thus, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of online learning and teaching translation?
2. What challenges do teachers and students at TMU encounter during online translation classes? And how these problems can be overcome for effective teaching and learning during pandemic?
3. Is e-interpreting as effective as face-to-face interpreting?

The objective of this study is to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of online learning / teaching translation and interpreting, the problems of online classes during pandemic emergency, to evaluate the online classes at Tahri Mohammed University and to show educational software/applications to ease and spice up online classes of translation and how the COVID-19 pandemic has forced education systems to find alternatives to face-to-face instruction.

The result is teaching / learning translation/interpreting online with the use of the net can facilitate learning for students and teaching in distance for instructors. However, students prefer the traditional method, because they faced problems such as lack of internet, technical problems, and the materials needed.

1. Literature Review

Due to the global crisis of the coronavirus pandemic , many countries close schools, affecting millions of students (UNESCO, 2020,p5). In March 2020, Algeria started the shift from in-person to distance learning. Within one week of the country’s first confirmed coronavirus case, the Algerian Ministry of Education (MoE) moved to an online environment, with nationwide distance learning beginning the day after universities closed. Due to this emergency-characterized change, it is essential to move to online learning/teaching translation at TMU. Many lectures were delivering and conceptualized by teachers with different instruments for example, Moodle, Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, etc. Teachers started communicating with students for better guidance. In this context, Radcliffe (2020,p112) said that launching online classes is very important during the pandemic, and it is essential to record these classes for future consumption. Some of the practical methods and techniques of online teaching within the international crisis provide ensuring digital equity, training, as well explanation, and taking time to prepare and build a regular schedule, and the most essential factor is selecting the right instruments (Snelling and Fingal, 2020,p15). Therefore, TM University of Bechar has shifted to the Moodle-based online learning Platform where teachers deliver curricula, courses, lectures, and activities. Nevertheless, teachers and students were dissatisfied with this new platform because they faced many technical problems. While implementing this rapid virtualization process, students have crashed into many tedious challenges and benefits as it is explained below:

2.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Learning / Teaching Online

Online learning provides opportunities to access and share information easily. With virtual classes, students can work at their own place and pace and participate appropriately online and meet deadlines, they are fine with less intensity. Additionally, it provides time and space, as well as effectiveness and flexibility. Learners can engage in active and innovative learning with collaboration with other education providers. It costs a lot of money to attend classes physically like to pay for residence, transportation, cafeteria snacks and meals and many other expenses.

As long as they are online attending is as simple as opening up their computer, smartphone or tablet especially during hard conditions when students cannot come to class like flood, snowfall, heavy rains, conflicts, strikes. Through online learning, students can offer globally recognized levels without having to attend classes because it helps students to learn wherever that has internet connectivity, it can help students to learn in a diverse and fragmented higher education environment where students deal with busy lives, and they are

frequently under pressure to work while learning (Shirley Bach. 2007,p50). They improve self-discipline, which works at other areas of life such as fitness, profession and even relationships. Furthermore, students can easily contact their educators during and after the class via email and other online academic platforms and they actually can have more of their instructor's attention. In virtual classes, students can watch the recorded class later again. Virtual classes will force to learn to navigate the lectures, download materials, communicate well digitally .Nevertheless, still there are some students who are comfortable with and believe only the traditional classroom.

However, being effective in delivering the course, replying to student emails, and getting used to online tools and infrastructure are all challenges that an online instructor faces. In addition to that online teaching and learning systems have not been able to convey instructor-student interactions; online learners face challenges such as the requirement of self-directed learning and self-discipline, both of this can affect success or failure. Krus said that, learners miss communication channels such as facial expression and peer-to-peer learning that is commonly taken free in the traditional classroom. Stelzer and vogelzangs added that when students are sitting alone in front of a laptop, they are more susceptible to distraction, and that if the online course material is interesting and provides enough engagement, the learner will become confused and may even quit. Another disadvantage is that online courses cannot handle thousands of students attempting to participate in discussions. Furthermore, if you are studying a discipline that requires practice, online learning is sometimes challenging.

The conclusion is that online learning and teaching should be viewing as a supplement and enhancement of traditional learning and teaching methods and the best online course cannot completely replace face-to-face interaction with a teacher or the interpersonal connections that form in a group. After analyzing the students' feedback in the interview, and exploring textual resources, some possible solutions to the online EFL class problems are found which can be helpful for both students and teachers which are using facebook, emails, and WhatsApp applications instead of moodle in this serious period in order to finish the academic year 2019/2020.

2. Methodology

This study focuses on 3rd year learners of English at Tahri Muhammed University. A questionnaire is given to them to collect data and some exercises in translation and interpreting. The questionnaire was given to students during the academic year 2019-2020 to provide information about their abilities and

opinions about the online learning of translation during pandemic of corona virus (Covid-19) .

2.1 Participants

The target students of this study were third year students at English department at Tahri Mohamend University of Bechar. All students were chosen randomly to complete a questionnaire to see their experiences, practices, attitudes and opinions about the impact of online teaching and learning translation during the COVID19 pandemic. They were 80 students.

2.2 Instruments used in this study were a student’s questionnaire after doing some exercises. The questionnaire was given to 3rd years students during the academic year 2019-2020 to provide information about their abilities and opinions about the online learning during pandemic of corona virus (Covid-19).

3. Procedure of Data Analysis:

Teacher of translation asked students to get the lectures from the e-learning platform of their university or from their Fb as they always did even before the pandemic. Then, students are asked to do the exercise of interpretation. The table below will present the descriptive analysis of using e-learning platforms and online learning via moodle by students of 3rd year:

Table 1: Online tools used by students

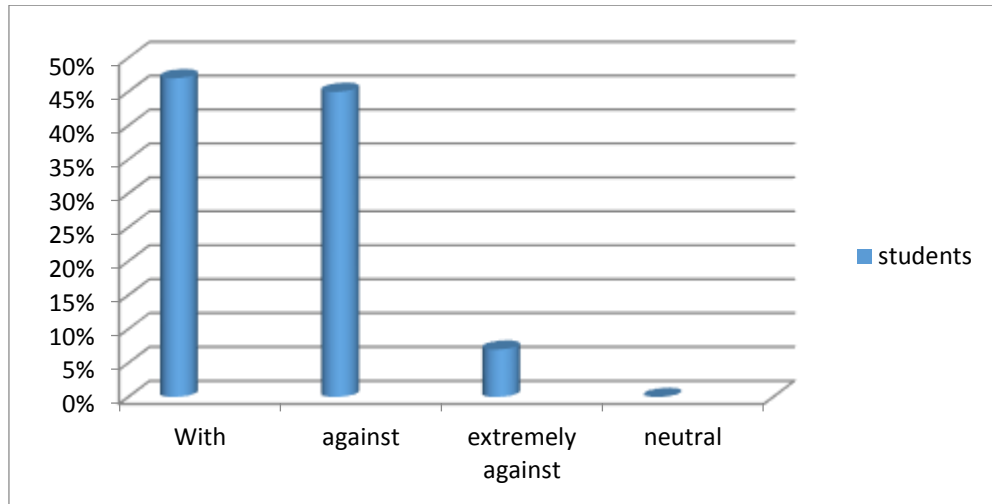
Items	Students	Percentage
E- learning platform of Tahri Med University of Bechar: How many times have you downloaded lectures from MOODLE?	No students access to the E-learning platform although the lectures of translation were not recorded but were documents.	00%
How many times have you downloaded lectures from facebook ?	All the students get the lectures from their fb and their E-mails.	-50% recorded the interpretation and send it to their teachers through her email. -50% presented them in classroom.

Source:Guessabi, 2021, 1

From the table it is noticed that students cannot access to the platform and they prefer to download the lectures from their Fb.

Before the interpretation of the videos from English to Arabic, the students were asked some questions about the online learning, the challenges and the advantages of learning translation online.

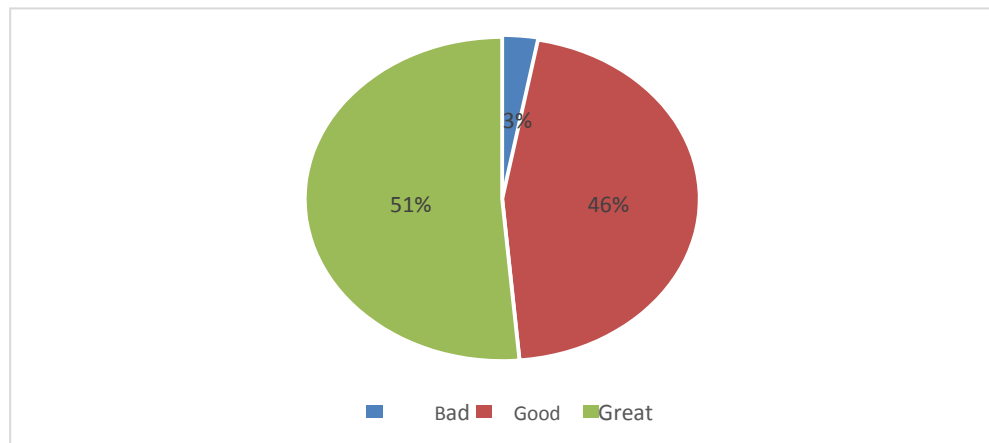
Fig.1. MOODLE is helpful and suitable pedagogical tool.



Source:Guessabi, 2021, 1

As it is shown above, 47% of participants are with studying online via moodle platform, 45% were against learning online, whereas 8% of students were extremely against studying online.

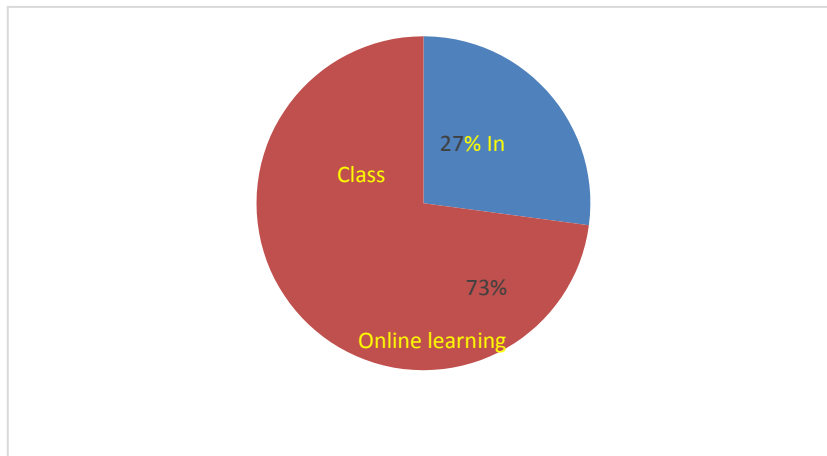
Fig.02: Studying during the quarantine



Source:Guessabi, 2021, 1

Regarding the student's answer 3% of participants said "it was great" during the quarantine, and 46% said that it was "good", while the others 51% states that it was "bad" experience.

Fig.03: Student’s Opinion about Online Learning and face-to-face Learning.



Source:Guessabi, 2021, 1

After the interpretation of the videos from English to Arabic online, students were asked some questions about the challenges and the advantages of learning translation online.

Table 02: Benefits of using of online learning in translation

Questions	Advantages	Students answers
Based on your interpretation of video by using technology tools for learning translation and interpretation from your home, what benefits do you gain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible learning and Freedom 51% • Confident 40% • Neutral 9% 	It allows me to present my work freely. I have time. I have enough time to interpret.. I did my interpretation correctly by listening and recording the video many times
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative learning 50% • Competence in using technology 50% • The students’ achievement in E- interpreting is better than their achievements in the classroom.90% • Easier to contact teachers. 	*I did the interpretation with my classmate at any time and very rapidly. *Using technology facilitate the interpretation. *I learn how to record my interpretation with the original speaker. *I can contact my lecturer for help quickly and online. I learnt how to send my work via email.

Source:Guessabi, 2021, 1

As presented in Table 2, online learning translation can help the students enhance collaborative learning, independence from instructors, self-confidence, getting high scores in limited time and flexible learning. Additionally, the students provide a wide range of information from E-interpreting. They also believe e-interpretation help them develop competence in using new communication technology. These findings show that although some students face certain challenges and are against e-interpreting, while others enjoy and benefit from using Web-based learning tools.

Table 03: Challenges and Disadvantages

Items	Disadvantages	Students' ideas
What challenges do you face in interpreting your video?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inadequate knowledge of recording the interpretation with the original one.50% 2. It cost very expensive. 3. Poor internet connectivity 4. Loss of login password to their E-mail. 5. Some students were not prepared for online learning because the transition to e-learning was sudden and unexpected.50% 	<p>I went to a cybercafé for recording the video 40%</p> <p>I paid for recording my interpretation. 40%</p> <p>I have not high-speed internet at home.64%</p> <p>I did not use my email for long time.</p> <p>I cannot record the interpretation I prefer to present it in classroom.</p>
What are the negative of interpreting a video online?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Cheating easily 7. The scores obtained by students in online interpretation were significantly higher than those they would have obtained in 	<p>It was impossible to prevent students from cheating. Online tests were propitious for cheating.</p> <p>I did a good interpretation better than those who presented the work in classroom in front of the lecturer.</p>

	<p>classroom.</p> <p>8. the e-assessment was not accurate.</p> <p>9. the instructors were not capable of assessing the students truthfully and justly.</p> <p>10. Moodle is a deficient platform that does not welcome test of translation and interpretation.</p> <p>11. Most of the videos were similar and the instructors discovered this during the corrections.</p> <p>12. The e-assessment was grossly unfair to the students because some of them had powerful, reliable internet connections while others did not.</p>	<p>Iam better than my friend but we had the same score!</p> <p>We prefer to do the test or exercises in classroom. We feel we are free students like those who learn by correspondence outside the university.</p>
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Source:Guessabi, 2021, 1

As shown in table three above, challenges faced by students when they did e-interpretation during the Covid-19 pandemic at TM University include inadequate knowledge of technology, poor internet connectivity, and inability to access and upload files from the platform, and loss of password. These findings are due to insufficient knowledge of using e-learning platforms by the students and they were not ready and having no previous training before on how to use learning tools and technical factors.

4. Findings and Discussions

According to the findings, e- interpreting/e-translation creates ample time for students to revise and did other exercises in others modules. With this new way students became free and able to organize their own pace of study; they learned more information about technology of interpreting. Since the students have digital mobiles the exercise finds it easy and amazing. Nevertheless, the findings of this study showed also that, in e-interpreting, students faced challenges related to many reasons like lack of information about Moodle, digital literacy, poor internet connectivity, technical problems with the e-learning platform and loss of login passwords of their emails. in my interview maximum EFL students said that they enjoyed the lecture online. But not all students have laptops with internet at home. The problem of availability of internet network and the financial ability of different students are really the first obstacle in teaching/learning online. Additionally, Results of this study show that learning/teaching translation online has many disadvantages like reliable e- interpreting during this serious period. Thuy (2019) states that as the e-learning semester draw to a close, it is incumbent upon universities to assess students' academic performance and to scrutinize their learning outcomes. The vast majority of students were able to cheat in the exercises online, and many students acquired scores that they did not deserve. In online teaching/learning the instructor finds difficulties to verify student identity, to guarantee the validity and reliability of e-interpreting. The researchers analyzed the students' grades in their exercises they had taken in the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020, which was the first semester during which lockdown started, and e-learning was launched and compared them with their grades in previous semesters prior to the lockdown. It was evident from this analysis that the grades of the latest 'lockdown' semester were blatantly incongruent with the students' grades in all previous semesters. The later scores were significantly higher.

5. CONCLUSION

This study explored the disadvantages and benefits of online learning translation/interpreting among students at TMU during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study revealed that the students face challenges related to technical problems and lack of technological competence. However, e- interpreting/translation helps students to enhance collaborative learning, independent learning, flexible learning, and competence in using Web-based learning tools. The findings indicate also that although students of TMU face challenges, they benefit from using E-learning tools although they have an

inadequacy or lack of using MOODLE during the Covid-19 Pandemic period. Therefore, they need training.

Commonly, there is a highly lack of interest for technology use. They generally prefer keeping away from technology and its utilities. Nevertheless, there are some professionals making use of translation programs and they find technology and its utilities as an 'advantage'.

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5. Appendices

Teachers' interview

Dear teachers,

This interview is a data collection tool about the advantages and disadvantages of online teaching and learning. Your contribution will be a great help to make the research work achieve its objectives. You are generous required to answer the questions and completing your own information whenever necessary. Thank you!

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. Is your university excellently equipped in terms of technology? (Internet connection, computers, projector, interactive whiteboards).
3. How would you rate your own computer literacy? Poor or excellent.
4. Are you satisfied with the transition from teaching regular face-to-face classes to online teaching? Justify
5. Do you consider online teaching as a good way to teach translation? If yes why?
6. What is your opinion towards sudden virtual learning in the wake of COVID19?
7. Do you think you were ready to shift to sudden online teaching in the wake of COVID-19? Why?
8. Are you against or with online teaching? Justify
9. In your opinion the platforms have you used for remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic (zoom, google, Skype, email etc.) are they excellent way to teach translation? Justify
10. What are the negative sides of online teaching of translation?
11. Do you think that your university succeeded in online teaching?
12. What challenges have you experienced during remote teaching of translation?

Students Questionnaire

Dear students,

The main Objective behind this questionnaire is to inform you about advantages and disadvantages of online learning and teaching. You are kindly asked to answer this questionnaire to help us in order to achieve this study. We would appreciate if you spare some of your respected to fill in this questionnaire. Thank you!

Please tick (x) the choice that corresponds to your answer

A-Part One: General Background

2. Gender:

- Male

- Female

3. Age :

- 19/20

- 21 /22

- +22

4. Are you student?

-License

-Master

5. Are you with or against online learning?

-With

-Against

-Extremely against

6. How was your study during the quarantine as a student?

Great

Good

Bad

7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of interpreting online at home?