

## **ICT and Student Learning during Covid-19: Some Experiences of English as Second Language Learners**

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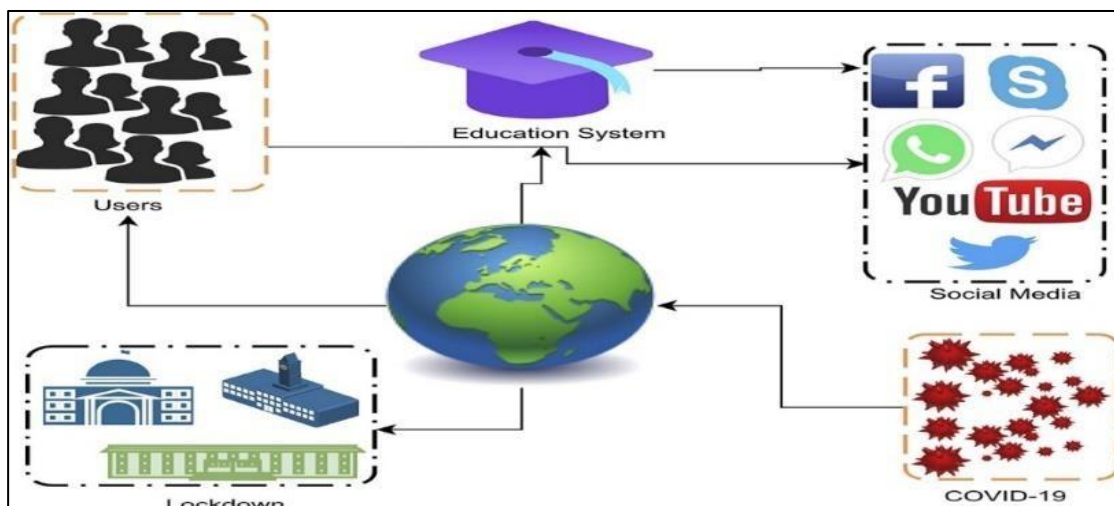
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***Abstract-** The outbreak of COVID-19 had a tremendous impact on almost all facets of schooling and caused substantial disruptions. Education was transferred entirely to the global shift towards online education due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and e-learning emerged as the most viable solution for the continuity of education, particularly in the context of K-12 schooling. This study is designed to investigate the experiences of English as a Second Language (ESL) students during the lockdown period. The primary goal of this research is to assess the students' novel encounters with online education and gauge the viability of virtual learning approaches. This will be accomplished by analysing the feedback and responses provided by 50 learners at the senior secondary level. The method of data collection is based on the questionnaire for students. Through data collection, the analysis will be done on the problems faced related to technical, academic, and communication challenges, and how they impacted online learning. This study on ESL education during the COVID-19 pandemic aims to determine whether ESL students found online learning satisfactory and whether they were able to meet the expected language learning performance standards. The study's outcomes will reveal the level of satisfaction and progress achieved by ESL learners in the context of online education.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, ESL students, learning challenges, Online learning, ICT facilities, ICT skills.

### **Introduction**

Every country in the world in 2020, a new coronavirus pandemic significantly impacted many areas of life, including education. Many educational institutions have transitioned to remote learning in order to ensure that students continue their studies during the pandemic. Though it ensured that by and large studies were not adversely affected, in many cases, it was experienced that loneliness can result in demotivation, stress, and boredom.



**Figure 1** social media for Knowledge Acquisition and Dissemination Source: <http://surl.li/hefer>

Information and communication technology (ICT) technologies allow teachers and students to maintain communication and ICT plays a crucial part in running the educational system. They also had an impact on how teachers and students felt about their studies and how motivated they were to teach as well as learn. Yet, as language learning is a communicative process, it may be challenging for students and teachers to learn the language while doing it at a distance. This study aims to share the experiences of students learning English through various ICT tools online. There hasn't been much research done on this topic yet, however, related sources have been studied and reviewed.

### Literature Review

Since the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, individuals have experienced various forms of impact. Widespread lockdowns have significantly disrupted the lives of people of all ages and professions. The global outbreak has also had repercussions on the education system, leading to profound changes in the lives of 1,576,021,818 students across 188 countries (as reported by UNESCO in 2020). The lockdowns presented an unparalleled challenge for governments to ensure the continuity of education (as emphasized by Chang and Yano in 2020). Many countries have implemented diverse strategies to address the educational challenges posed by the pandemic.

In their research, Chang and Yano (2020) discussed how, in response to challenges brought about by the pandemic, including those in the education sector, national educational ministries and various stakeholders made significant decisions. Countries such as Egypt, France, Italy, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) opted for online distance education methods using the internet and digital platforms to ensure continuous learning. On the other hand, China, Korea, Mexico, Rwanda, Iran, Peru, and Thailand employed massive open online course (MOOC) formats for lessons, which were delivered through various means, including apps, television, and other media. These approaches also included teacher training opportunities. To ensure ongoing student education, collaboration between the telecommunications industry, educational networks at various levels, and the education

ministry proved essential, as highlighted by UNESCO (2020). Governments, such as those in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, launched awareness campaigns aimed at educating parents, teachers, administrators, and students about distance learning. Language teachers have a good opportunity to learn through ICT, like the Internet. Relationships and language learning, communication with people from other cultures are crucial. Also, ICT relates to accessibility, taking part in global class projects, and using software that is increasingly popular for video conferences, such as Skype, Zoom, and Google Meet. (Dudley & Hockly, 2014). ICT integration into education is important, according to many academics (e.g., Mwalongo, 2011; Garrett, 2009), they suggest that it enhances student autonomy. Also, research demonstrates (Mwalongo, 2011; Garrett, 2009) that ICT may be used by students to change their learning, for instance, by providing them with assistance in a variety of ways.

### **Need for the Study**

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a significant change in the global education system, necessitating a swift transformation in the way teaching and learning take place. This transition had its merits and demerits. On one hand, students embraced online education through various platforms, including virtual classrooms and radio programs, as traditional schools shuttered. However, a significant portion of students, lacking the necessary resources, grappled with the digital divide.

The pandemic's impact on education spanned all levels, necessitating educators and institutions to adapt swiftly to meet students' evolving needs. Challenges emerged for ESL (English as a Second Language) learners, including abstract presentation of language materials, unclear examples, curriculum overload, and a lack of engaging online classroom environments.

In response to these disruptions, this study aims to explore and understand the experiences of ESL students during covid-19 pandemic. By delving into the challenges and opportunities that emerged in this new educational landscape, we can gain valuable insights into the evolving field of online language education.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- a) To Study the English language learner's opinions about ICT integration in ESL classes during covid-19 pandemic.
- b) To study the experiences regarding the transition from in-person to online teaching-learning.
- c) To study the teachers and students while incorporating ICTs in English Language Teaching.
- d) To study students' motivation through the integration of ICTs in their ESL learning during Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Methodology**

To ascertain what motivates students to learn the English language while under lockdown, the researcher adopted a qualitative study with Structured interviews with twenty qualitative

questionnaires whose content validity was checked and were asked of 50 Jamia Senior Secondary School students belonging to class 11 and 12 in English Language learning. Responses were collected from all the students and percentage analysis was done.

## Results and Discussion

The data was collected and analyzed using statistical analysis and qualitative analysis was done. Fifty students (50) from the school Jamia Senior Secondary School from class XIIth. Students participated by responding to the questionnaire provided to them. There were 17 qualitative about the motivation of students to learn English during the lockdown. Students' thoughts about whether they would prefer to continue their studies using ICT tools during surveys have been created to gauge the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Question-wise analysis

**Table 3** *Role of Technology in Learning*

Responses in no. (50)	Responses in %
25	50.0%
15	30.0%
7	14.0%
2	4.0%
1	2.0%

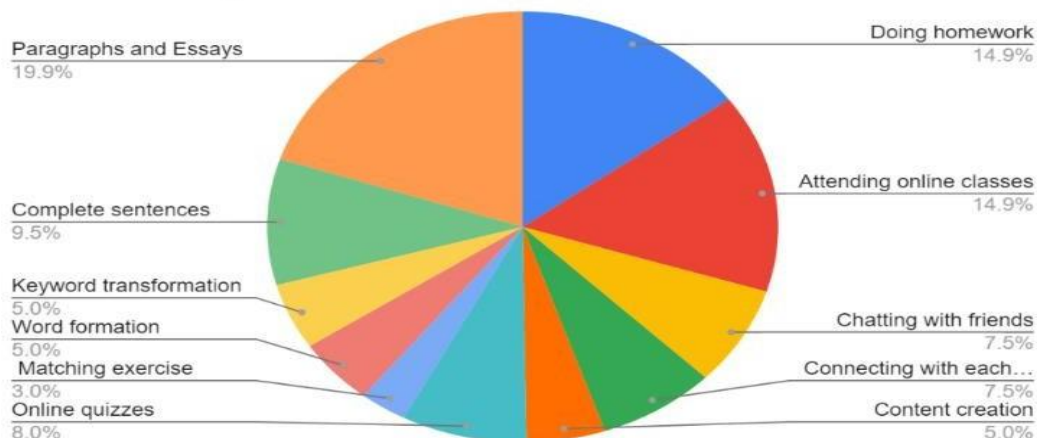
On continuing to learn during the pandemic, students were inquired about the extent to which technology positively influenced their language learning experience. Obviously, a substantial of the students in according to Table no.3, 50.0% replied ALWAYS they benefitted from the technology, whereas 30.0% of the participants mentioned that they were VERY OFTEN benefitted from ICT tools. 14.0%percent said that it was SOMETIMES for them to believe that technology played a fruitful role in their life. However, 4.0%, a small percentage of students, specifically 2.0%, expressed the belief that technology either rarely or never provided meaningful support in their learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

❖ Purpose and to the extent were ICT used during the COVID-19 pandemic

**Table 4: Purpose and Extent of ICT Use**

	<b>Responses in no. (50)</b>	<b>Responses in %</b>
Doing homework	30	14.9%
Attending online classes	30	14.9%
Chatting with friends	15	7.5%
Connecting with each other and learning	15	7.5%
Content creation	10	5.0%
Online quizzes	16	8.0%
Matching exercise	6	3.0%
Word formation	10	5.0%
Keyword transformation	10	5.0%
Complete sentences	19	9.5%
Paragraphs and Essays	6	19.9%
Any other response, please specify	0	0

7. For what purpose and to what extent did you use ICT during the Covid-19 pandemic?

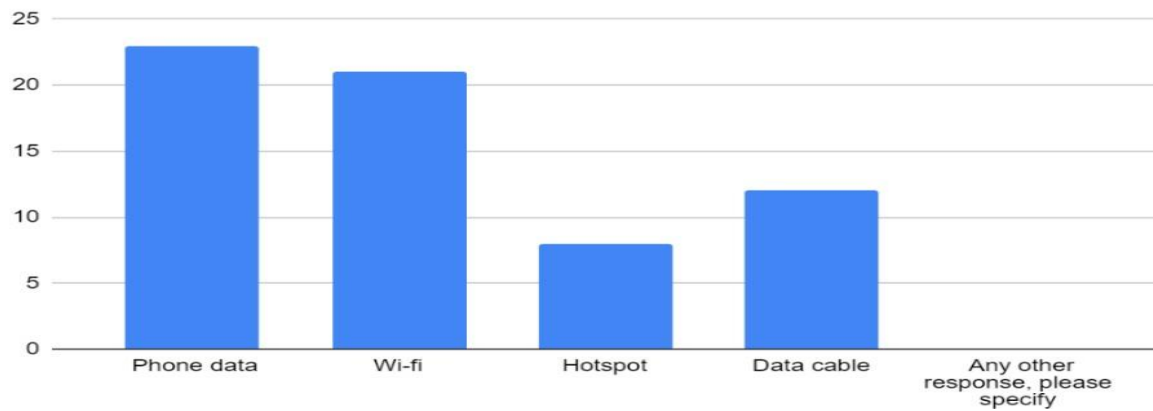


**Figure 4: Purpose and Extent of ICT use**

Based on Table No. 4 and Figure No. 4, during the COVID-19 pandemic, students' ICT usage varied in purpose and extent. Notably, 19.9% employed ICT for writing paragraphs and essays, 14.9% for homework, and 14.9% attended online classes. Smaller percentages engaged in activities like keyword transformation (5.0%), chatting with friends (7.5%), and solving online quizzes (8.0%).

❖ **Services Used by students during Covid 19 for English Language Learning**

8. What were the services used by you during Covid 19 for English Language Learning?

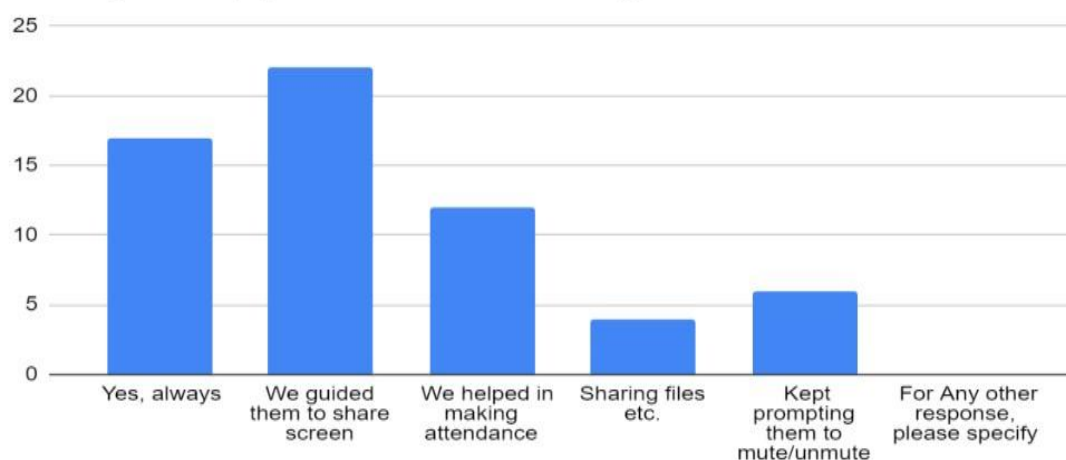


**Figure 5:** *Services Used by students for English Language Learning*

According to Figure No. 5, the analysis suggests that students were questioned about whether they had access to services like phone data, wi-fi hotspot data cable, or any other type of data connector they utilized to continue studying a language during the pandemic. Since everyone could easily obtain phone data from their smartphones at the time and Wi-Fi was only available to those in urban regions, the majority of students were dependent on it. Some students used other people's phone hotspots to access their online learning. Students who simply required data connections and possessed devices like laptops and tablets used data cables as well.

❖ **Help provided by students to teachers in using ICT**

9. Did you help your teachers in using ICT?

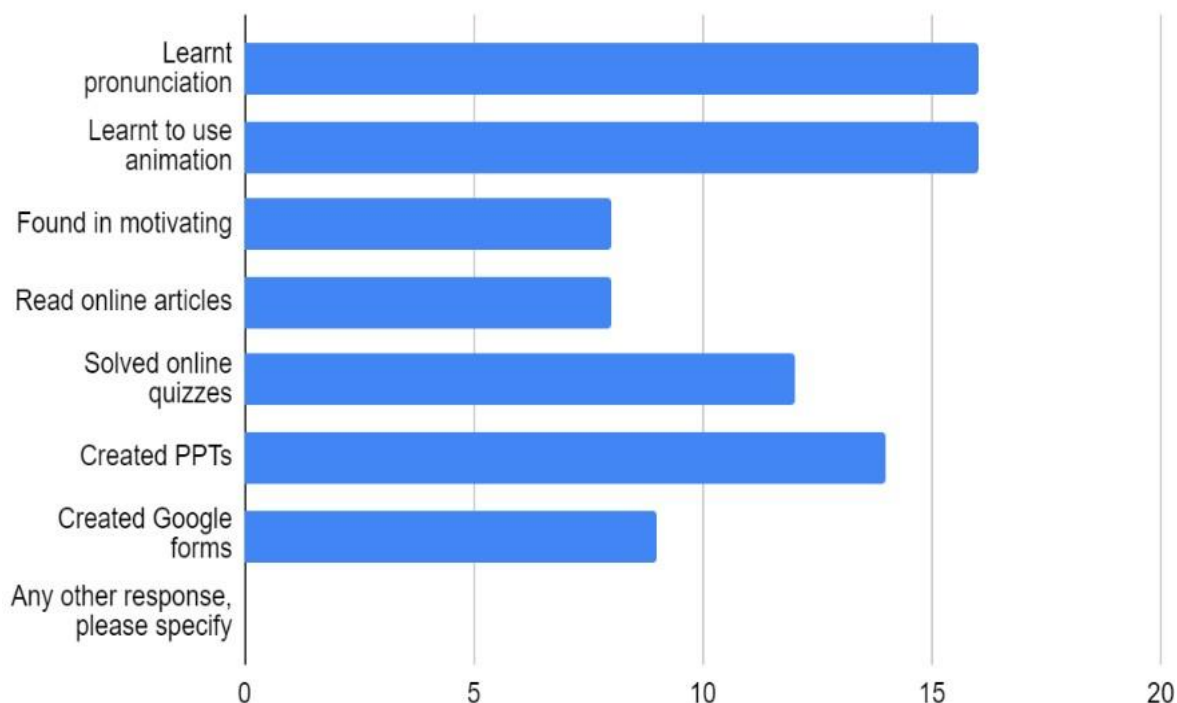


**Figure 6:** *Help provided by students to teachers in using ICT* According to Figure no.6, the

questionnaire data was whether students helped teachers in using ICT. Teachers used technology to adapt to teaching during covid-19 pandemic and meet the demands of the rapidly evolving era. Learning is highly dependent on signals while using Internet access for distant learning. Students said that many teachers had connection problems when they are in the middle of a lesson. Students guided teachers in sharing screens and files. Students helped teachers in making online attendance. Students also helped their teachers by prompting them to mute and unmute during online classes. Students helped their teachers in every possible way and made online learning continue in every possible way.

❖ **Experiences of Learners in using ICT in English Language Learning during covid-19 pandemic**

10. How was your experience in using ICT in English Language Learning during Covid-19 pandemic?

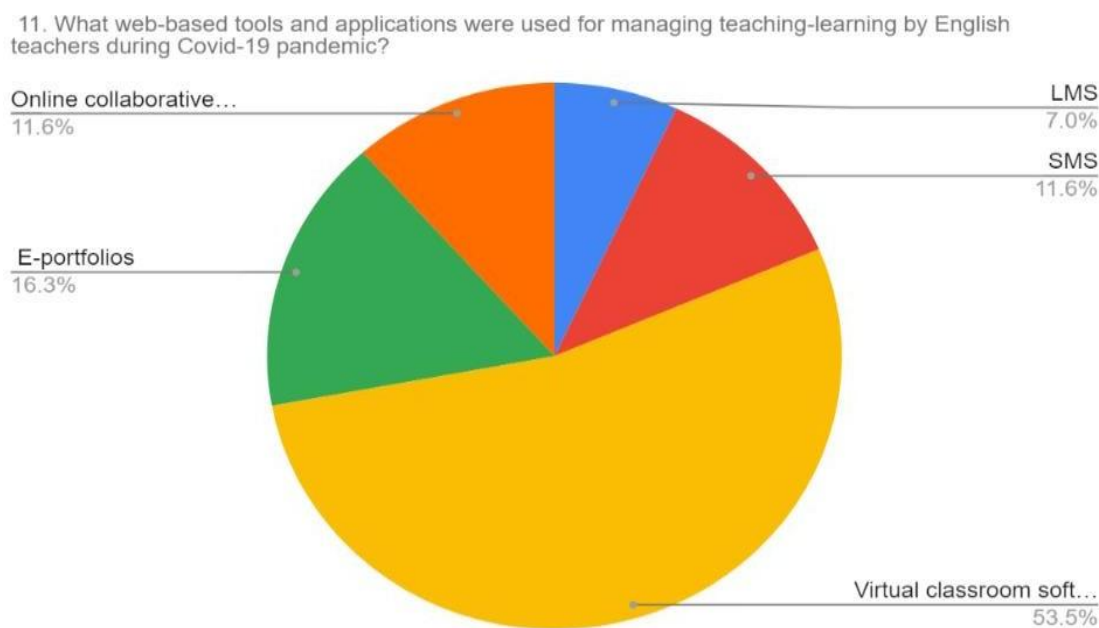


**Figure 7:** *Learner Experiences in Using ICT in English Language Learning*

According to Figure no.7, the student’s experiences were studied in using ICT in English Language Learning during covid-19 pandemic. It involves the use of cutting-edge technology to organize, prepare, and disseminate educational materials while also promoting two-way communication between students and teachers. Presentations, discussion boards, polls, and quizzes can all be used to support positive and simple approaches to accomplishing learning objectives. Students found motivation in using ICT during the pandemic. On a related point, one of the technologies used during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown was the creation of Google Forms for online tests, collection of data, document generation etc. Web-based tools and applications were used for managing teaching-learning by English teachers during Covid-19 pandemic.

**Table 8: Web-based tools and applications were used for managing teaching-learning by English teachers**

Item	Responses in no.	Responses in %.
LMS	3	7.0%
SMS	5	11.6%
Virtual classroom software	23	53.5%
Online collaborative	5	11.6%
e-portfolios	7	16.3%

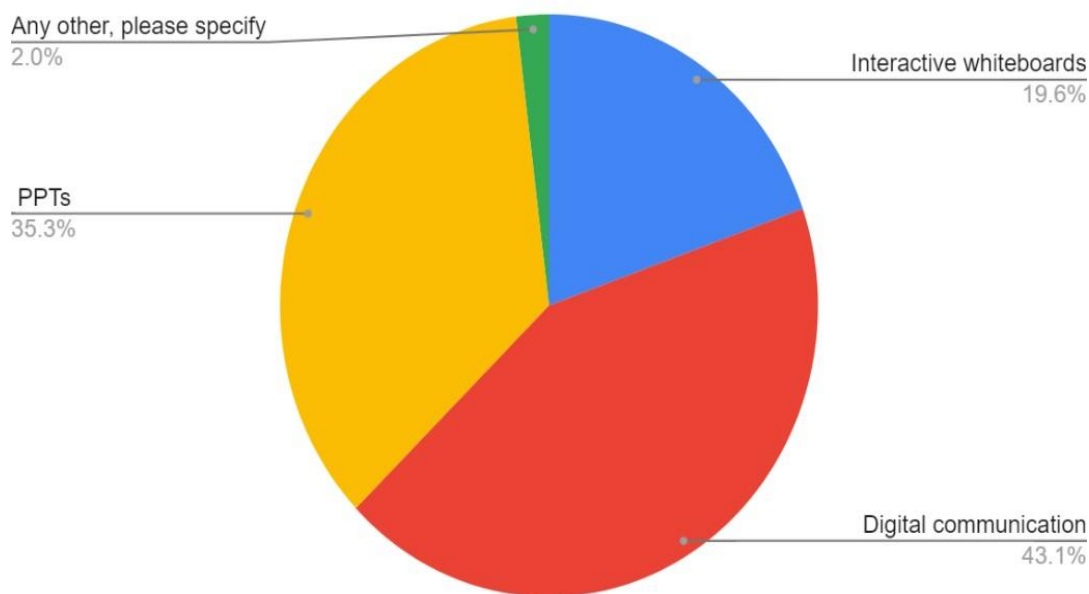


**Figure 8: Web-based tools and applications were used for managing teaching-learning by English teachers**

According to Table No. 8 and Figure No. 8, the web-based tools and their applications were used for managing teaching-learning by English teachers during covid-19 pandemic. The practice of teaching English during covid-19 pandemic was assisted by the use of numerous instructional resources. Social media and some learning management systems (LMS) gave

teachers and students the chance to participate in online discussions, presentations, assignment submissions, and other activities. By weighing its benefits and drawbacks, some learning platforms or applications, however, are emerging as students' or teachers' favorites. Several applications are used to practice English. Alternative methods were used by both students and teachers, including WhatsApp, Emails, Zoom, and Google Classroom. ICT Tools used for Teaching English by Teachers during COVID-19 Pandemic.

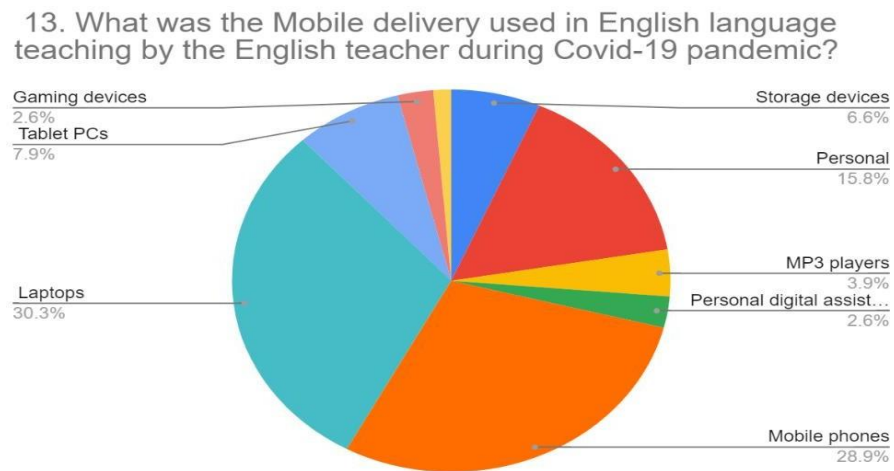
### 12. What ICT Tools were used for teaching English by teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic?



**Figure 9:** *ICT Tools Used for Teaching English*

According to Figure No. 9, ICT Tools used for teaching English by teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic were interactive whiteboards (19.6%), PPTs (35.5%) Digital communication (43.1%). Regardless of the type of chapters students were taught, the English language teachers used a range of tools as part of their classroom instruction. They used technologically advanced equipment in addition to basic didactic materials (such as visual or audio) and a variety of techniques for participant activation. There were also other interactive platforms with resources and apps that language teachers used. These included the digital coursebooks that the publishers provided for free to the teachers during the first school closure. Tools for asynchronous communication include Facebook Messenger, the school website, email, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, and electronic logbooks (such as Librus and BlueBoard). Video conferencing and the telephone are synchronous communication tools. Connected instructional resources such as digital workbooks, interactive whiteboards, smartboards, and worksheets Wordwall.net, Quizlet, Quizizz, Kahoot.com, etc.

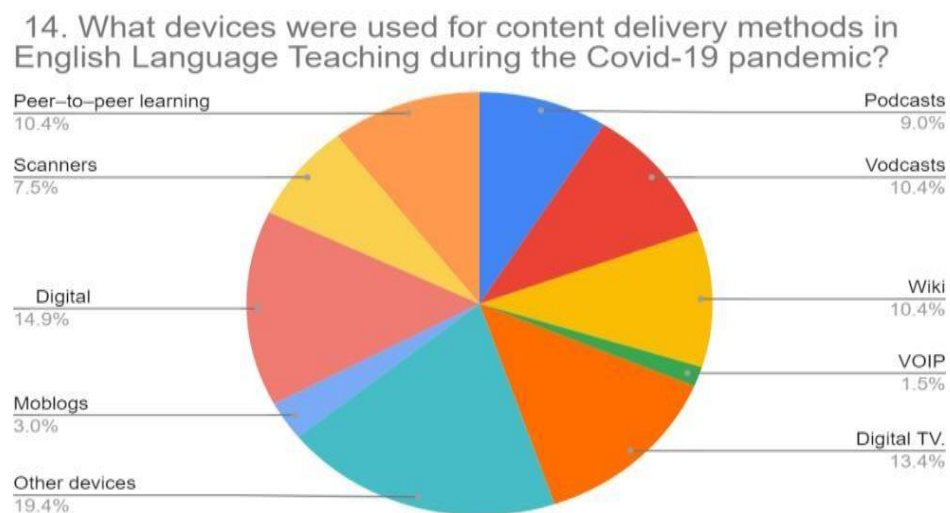
❖ **Mobile delivery used in English language teaching by English teachers during Covid-19 pandemic**



**Figure 10:** *Mobile delivery used in Teaching English*

Sintema (2020) observed that expanding the availability of mobile devices and promoting the use of learning and intelligent revision platforms, allows teachers and students to access courses through mobile phones and tablets. According to Figure no.10, mobile delivery was used in English Language teaching by English teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic like gaming devices, storage devices, personal computers, tablets, laptops, MP3 Players, Mobile phones, and personal digital assistants' apps. Teaching and learning techniques helped teachers deliver lesson plans and give students the skills they needed to learn on their own during the pandemic. In our daily lives, we use technology such as mobile phones and software.

❖ **Devices Used for content delivery methods in English Language Teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic**



**Figure 11:** *Devices Used for content delivery*

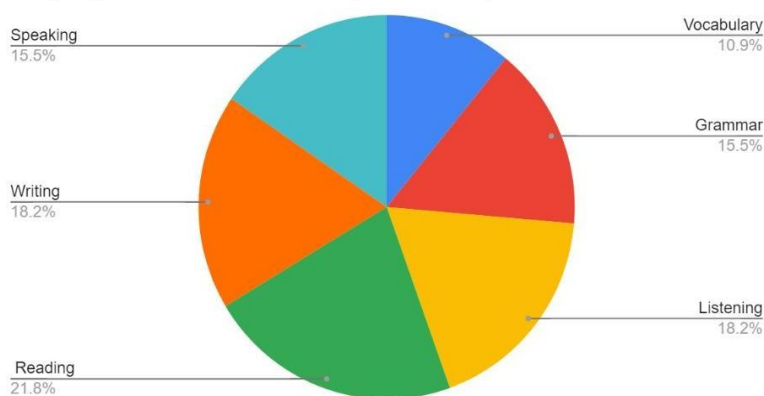
According to Figure No.11, the devices used for content delivery methods in English Language Learning Teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic were peer-to-peer learning (10.2%), podcasts (9.0%), vodcasts (10.4%), scanners (7.5%), wikis (10.4%), Moblogs (3.0%), VOIP (1.5%), Digital T.V. (13.4%) and other devices (19.4%). Furthermore, in contrast to many developed nations, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, had the benefit of infrastructure that was strong, dependable, and capable of offering the courses the tools they needed to make the delivery process as seamless as possible. Many developing nations encountered numerous difficulties during the pandemic in content delivery methods including lack of support, familiarity with tools and media, and financial constraints.

❖ **Aspects of language skills did you improve in the English language via ICT Tools during the COVID-19 pandemic**

**Table 12: Language skills improved via ICT tools**

Item	Responses in no.	Responses in %.
Vocabulary	12	10.9%
Grammar	17	15.5%
Listening	20	18.2%
Reading	24	21.8%
Writing	20	18.2%
Speaking	17	15.5%

15. What aspects of language skills did you improve in English language via ICT Tools during Covid-19 pandemic?



**Figure 12: Language skills improved via ICT Tools**

The most extensively spoken language in the world is generally English (Yen & Mohamad, 2020). Students go all over the world knowing the English language because of the demands for and value of the English language in the modern global era. The teaching of English in

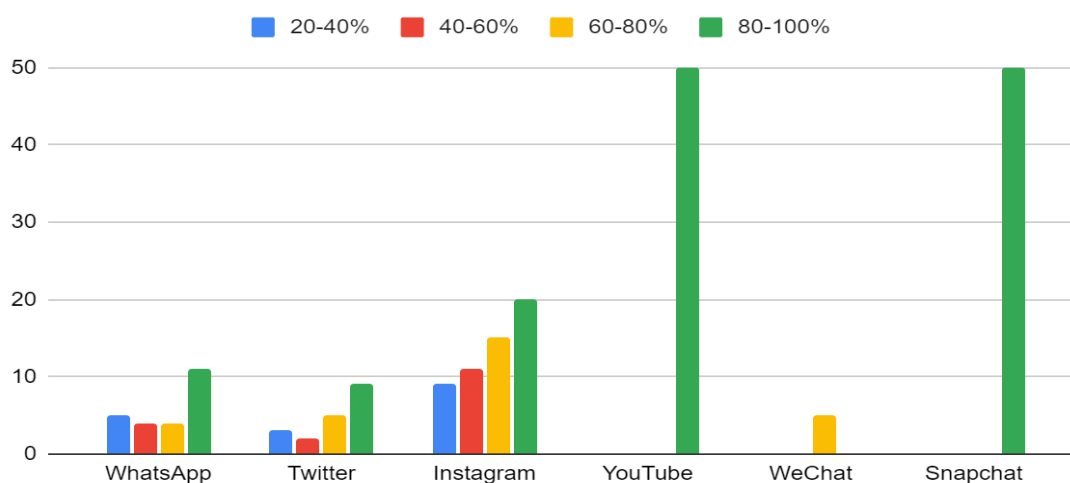
education has progressively moved away from grammar translation and towards a communicative approach as a result of societal globalization (Zakaria & Shah, 2019). According to Table no. 12 and figure no. 12, aspects of language skills improved in English language teaching via ICT tools during the COVID-19 pandemic were speaking (15.5%), writing (18.2%) vocabulary (10.9%), grammar (15.5%), reading (21.8%), listening (18.2%) these are the forms of skills utilized all over the world. Even while speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills are all crucial. ICT Tools by ESL learners during covid-19 pandemic was used for reading rather than listening and writing.

❖ **Utilization of social platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, etc., had a massive impact on English language learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.**

**Table 13: Effect of using social media platforms**

Social platform	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
Facebook	4	8	11	22
WhatsApp	5	4	4	37
Twitter	10	12	12	16
Instagram	8	11	14	17
YouTube				50
WeChat			50	
Snapchat				50

16. Did your use of social platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, etc, affected learning English pa...



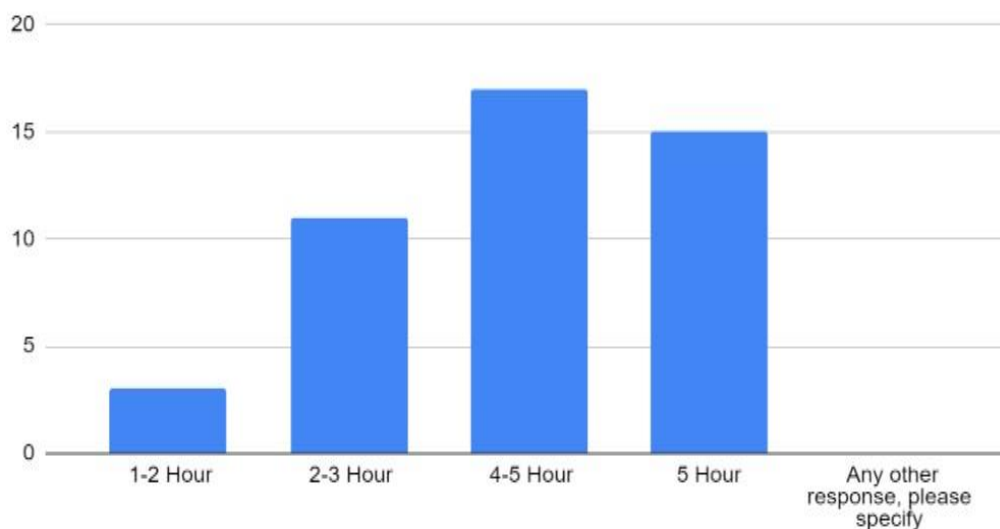
**Figure 13: Effect of Using Social Media Platform**

Based on Table No. 13 and Figure No. 13, the usage of various social platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Google, YouTube, etc., has seen fluctuations. YouTube and Snapchat have notably surged in popularity. YouTube, in particular, has become a crucial educational resource, allowing students to access global education content. Teachers have embraced platforms like Twitter for chats and discussions using specific hashtags. Instagram offers a unique space for visual content and digital storytelling. WhatsApp remains widely used for daily communication. Snapchat's ephemeral nature has made it a distinctive social media trend, with content vanishing after a short period. Duration of Online Learning during COVID-19 on a typical day.

**Table 14:** *Duration of Online Learning*

Hour	Responses in no.
1-2 hour	3
2-3 hour	11
4-5 hours	7
5 hours	15
Any other response, please specify	0

17. How long did you spend on online learning during covid on a typical day?

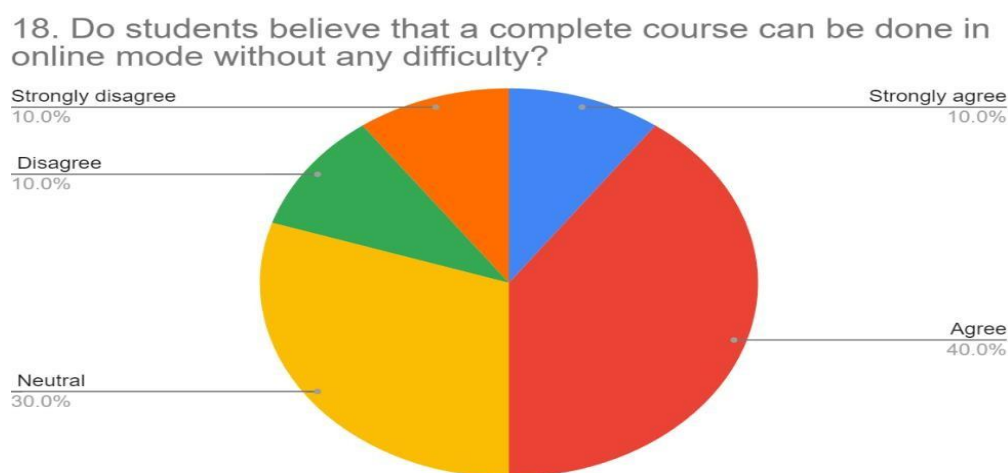


**Figure 14:** *Duration of Online Learning*

According to Table no. 14 and Figure no. 14, during the COVID-19 pandemic, on an average day, individuals spent around 4-5 hours engaging in online learning, with the maximum range being up to 5 hours.

Although studying at a computer all day is enjoyable, sitting at home is far more taxing. After two lessons, there should be a lengthier pause because many learners experience eye pain. Because of the issues with the Internet, we frequently can't even understand the teacher. The sound occasionally goes out. As the teacher can only see the child's face, if the child is fidgety, he or she may choose to play rather than study. Going to school is still preferable to taking online classes for learning.

❖ **Students' belief that a complete course can be done online mode without any difficulty**



**Figure 15:** Completion of a course in online mode

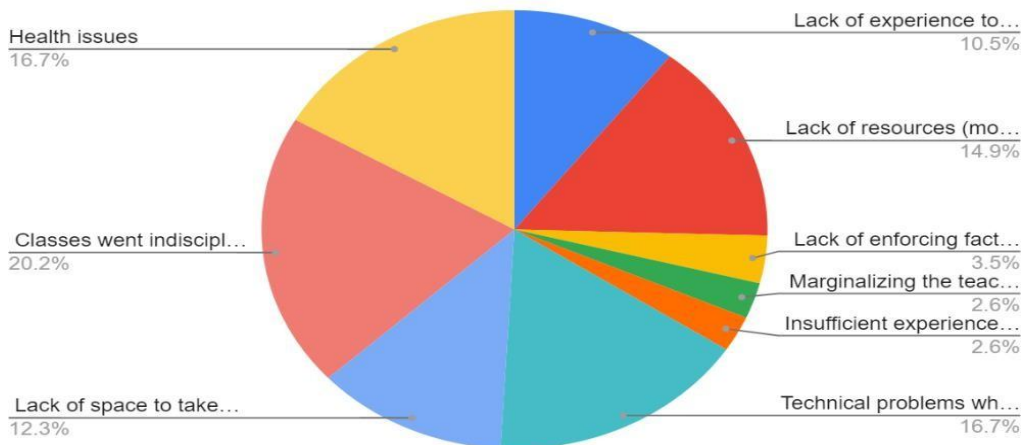
According to Figure No. 15, how students believe a complete can be done in online mode without any difficulty 40% agreed with online learning, 30% were Neutral about it, 10% strongly agreed, 10% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed with it that a complete course can be done in online mode without any difficulty. Student happiness is positively impacted by high-caliber instructors who are passionate about their students' learning. The teacher's comprehension of the student's needs contributes to student satisfaction (Kauffman, 2015). Consequently, this study included the premise that the effectiveness of the teacher has a substantial impact on the satisfaction of the pupils.

### Technological difficulties in taking online English classes during the COVID-19 pandemic

**Table 16:** *Technological difficulties in taking online classes*

Item	Responses in no.	Responses in %
Lack of experience to use	12	10.5%
Lack of resources (mobile phone/laptop/PCs)	17	14.9%
Lack of enforcing factors for the use of ICT	4	3.6%
Marginalizing the teachers	3	2.6%
Insufficient experience with ICT by the teacher	3	2.6%
Technical problems while taking the class	19	16.7%
Lack of space to take an online class	14	12.3%
Classes went indiscipline	23	20.2%
Health issues	19	16.7%
Any other response, please Specify	0	0

19. What were the technological difficulties in taking online English classes during the Covid-19 pandemic?



**Figure 16:** *Technological difficulties in taking online classes*

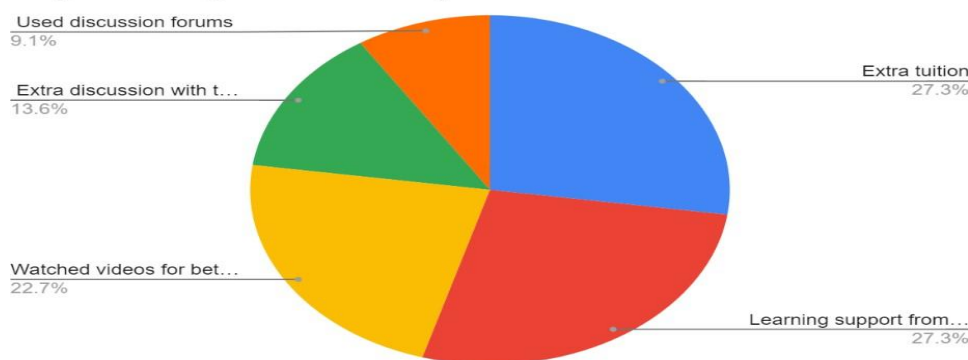
Table No. 16 and Figure No. 16 shed light on the technological challenges faced by students during COVID-19 online English learning. While online education presents opportunities for acquiring new skills, it comes with significant hurdles. Tang et al.'s (2020) study on engineering students revealed dissatisfaction, particularly concerning

communication and question-and-answer formats.

Three major challenges emerge:

1. **Low Motivation:** Many students lack motivation in online classrooms due to excessive content delivery and theoretical emphasis.
2. **Lack of Discipline:** Discipline varies among students, impacting their online learning experiences differently.
3. **Technical Issues:** A reliable internet connection is essential for online learning, yet inadequate internet speed remains a challenge in some regions. Additionally, the absence of in-person interaction affects learners' engagement and satisfaction in virtual classrooms. Strategies to cope with online learning of English during COVID-19 pandemic

20 .What were the strategies to cope with online learning of English during the Covid-19 pandemic?



**Figure 17: Strategies to Cope with online learning**

Figure No. 17 presents coping strategies for during COVID-19 online English learning. Students encountered various challenges, from technology issues to emotional distress. To address these difficulties, fostering strong learning attitudes, self-discipline, and motivation is crucial. Additionally, teacher training in effective digital resource use and online teaching methods is essential to maximize the benefits of information and communications technology (ICT) in education.

### Findings of the Study

Based on the study's findings, most of the students have a favorable attitude towards integrating e-devices into classroom teaching and learning and are aware of the usage of ICTs in ESL learners. Most of the students were found to be familiar with technological tools, and they have positively accepted that they integrate ICTs into their classes, and most of the students believed that they could integrate technology into their classrooms. Their classes should also be supported by e-devices like computers, e-mail, internet, and mobile devices. Students believed that ICTs should be used in the classroom and that e-learning helps students improve their language abilities.

With regard to the difficulties in using e-devices and integrating e-learning in the classroom, it was found that a lack of resources, access to them, a lack of power, and an internet connection. Economic issues, and a lack of solid theoretical and practical knowledge in e-learning, blended

learning, online education, and other forms of tech-based instruction create issues when integrating e-learning.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The outcome of the current study supports that ICT tools help students to function well and feel a part of the contemporary, global community. Almost all of the participants felt motivated and independent. During and after the lockdown, students used ICT tools to continue studying their languages, increasing their self-dependency on their education (Mwalongo, 2011; Garrett, 2009).

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the motivation levels of ESL learners remained unaffected by the pandemic, given the convenience provided by ICT tools for accessing learning materials even during the closure of libraries and information services. However, the widespread shift to virtual education and communication during the lockdown made people heavily reliant on technology, prompting some individuals to consider halting their language learning journey due to the overwhelming virtual presence. At the beginning of the lockdown, both students and educators faced challenges and a decline in enthusiasm, particularly who were less familiar with utilizing Information and Communication Technologies, as the education sector underwent significant experimentation to adapt to a fully remote learning approach.

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