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**YARMOUK UNIVERSITY EFL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS'  
ENGAGEMENT WITH E-LEARNING TOOLS IN LEARNING  
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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**Abstract:**

This study aims to investigate English as a foreign language students' engagement in using e-learning tools in learning English language. A mixed method approach was employed comprising 30 students who study English language and literature at Yarmouk University, Jordan in their first year (16 males and 14 females). The respondents of the study were selected randomly, and all of them were selected from the department of English language and literature of Yarmouk University, Jordan. The instrument of the study was a survey questionnaire consisting of 24 items. The data were analyzed using SPSS. The findings of the study have documented that e-learning tools entail a great degree of flexibility and variability, visual knowledge compared to conventional teaching materials and lectures, which are most often unsatisfactory and might not relate to EFL learning. 87% of the respondents revealed that using e-learning tools (MOOCs) affected their language skills' development positively. In addition, the findings indicated that 90% of the respondents pointed out that these e-learning tools /MOOCs assist language learners and make language-learning fun and meaningful. The findings of this study revealed that the foremost factors affecting EFL students' approval and use of e-learning tools were facilitating conditions, social influence, effort expectancy and performance expectancy. Such findings revealed the significance of e-learning tools from the point of view of this mixed-method research. The findings indicated that past experiences relevant influenced EFL Jordanian undergraduate students at Yarmouk University use of e-learning tools / MOOCs when learning English language.

**Keywords:**

E-learning, EFL, MOOCs and Engagement.

**Introduction**

Technological developments have become the essence of the era and the 21st century. Many developments appeared in different fields in human life due to the rapid emergence and excessive use of technology. Therefore, the 21st century was marked as the age of Information and Computer Technology (ICT) in which a lot of changes were felt in the field of education (Cho & Tobias, 2016). Consequently, adapting and adopting e-learning tools in language teaching in particular and other fields in general assists in advancing the process of transmitting knowledge to learners, retrieving information and as a medium of communication (Choi, 2016).

Due to the industrial revolution experienced lately in different regions in the world, e-learning resources have become a main source of knowledge by means of providing images, animation, video and audio, e-books that give the educational setting a real shape and genuine classroom environment. Therefore, the contemporary trends in using e-learning in learning and teaching EFL have effectively affected the achievement level of the students positively as a result of the availability of these tools. This is because e-learning tools possess the potentiality to enhance the quality of the teaching strategies and educational tools used by teachers and learners, particularly in EFL context (Donnelly & Hume, 2014).

E-learning is a variety of ICT techniques that can be used by a creative manner to enhance the teaching methods and improve the learning styles of both teachers and learners. These tools are implemented to provide effective and inspiring learning environment for EFL learners. Also, they are used to make students more excited about learning and achieving knowledge. Such e-tools are providing a remarkable mixture or blend of digital technologies and English language learning (Purva, 2012). Consequently, the current study claims that the use and engagement of Jordanian EFL students can help teachers deliver greater information, interaction, communication using electronic amenities, and upsurge their assistance and collaboration. Also, the use of E-learning delivers educational improvement through simulations in English lectures, simulated involvements, and graphical demonstrations (Fedynich, et al., 2015). Both English as a foreign language teachers and students are proficient in selecting the most appropriate applications that are flexible enough in time and place, personalized, reusable, and adapted to specific fields, none the less it is cost effective and cost efficient.

**Literature Review**

Research on linguistic issues at the role of ICT in learning languages developed very quickly in the latest few decades. Investigations of e-learning tools concerning the acquisition and learning of language skills are one of the most specific fields that have gained prominence (Demirkan, Goul, and Gros 2010). The significance of such past research, particularly e-learning tools, cannot be denied, as linguistic knowledge can be a helpful insight to provide solutions to language based-problems.

In the investigations of students' foreign language learning, many language acquisitions and learning techniques have been used to examine the use of e-learning tools with the aim of providing a solution to language skills learning issues such as developing students' language

abilities and skills, so that they are able to speak and use the language effectively (Soltani & Tabatabaei, 2012). Thus, the significant development of e-learning at the tertiary education level has been discussed by many scholars throughout centuries in varied contexts and perspectives.

However, Keshavarz, Rahimi, & Ismaili (2013) found that in the academic achievement of the students of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, e-learning is more effective than the average. Students of the e-learning process learn the content deeper and their personality and self-esteem increase in a positive direction. Ja'Ashan (2015) surveyed at the University of Bisha a sample of (130) English learners by using a questionnaire to measure the students' attitudes towards blended learning. The result of this study indicates that students' attitudes were positive. Also, Khasawneh et al., (2015) researched to investigate the comprehensive model of factors influencing consumer attitudes and acceptance of SMS advertising in Jordan. The sample of the study comprised 220 Jordanian mobile phone users and was analyzed quantitatively. The results of the study revealed that SMS in formativeness, entertainment, credibility, clarity, incentive, personalization, relevancy, as well as subjective norms have a positive significant influence on consumer attitude and acceptance of SMS advertising, whereas message irritation and brand.

Further, Moreno, Cavazotte, and Alves (2017) explained university students' effective use of e-learning platforms: Effective use of e-learning platforms. The sample model of this study was tested using 251 students enrolled in distance learning Business Administration programs. The findings of the study supported the given hypothesis. More than 71% of the variance of intention uses an e-learning platform were explained. In addition, the results showed that students used e-learning in a useful, effective and positive manner in which they revealed the usefulness the online system in terms of students' cognitive absorption and self-efficacy, as well as by system interactivity and facilitating conditions (FC).

Also, Mutambik (2018) investigated the role of e-learning in studying English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia from students and teachers' perspective. The study aimed at examining the adoption and use of E-learning in studying EFL, in particular, is one such area that has experienced such fast-paced development for some time now. As a result, the government all over the world is committing many resources to keep up with this technology advancement. In this light, the government of Saudi Arabia through its Ministry of Education has recently made commitment, both as the practical and policy levels, with the hope to also benefit from using E-learning in studying EFL in Saudi Schools. However, little is known about the perception of students and teachers regarding the role of E-learning are studying EFL in the Saudi context. In an attempt to contribute to this research base, this paper draws on an empirical investigation using group interviews with students and teachers in order to gain insight into their perception about the role of E-learning in studying EFL in Saudi Arabia. The findings are presented and discussed in four thematic areas: promoting key learning skills, independent learning, flexible learning and interactive learning. The paper also highlights the limitations of the research and concludes by making a number of recommendations.

Similarly, Mathew, Sreehari and Al-Rubaat (2019) investigated the challenges and implications of virtual e-learning platform in EFL teaching-learning contexts. The study was conducted in Jouf University, Saudi Arabia. The study used a questionnaire and captured the insights and perceptions of 20 EFL teachers. The findings of the study revealed that the e-

learning platform is a potential tool that can facilitate the learners to feel at ease and create a stress-free environment. Moreover, the platform puts the teaching-learning situation. Shadiey and Yang (2020) reviewed technology enhanced language learning and teaching. The study aimed at summarising the content of review as based on the following categories; (1) the number of articles published by journals and by year; (2) languages and skills; (3) technology used; (4) promising technologies. The researcher reviewed 398 research articles. The highest number of articles was published in 2017 (n=80), whereas the lowest number was published in 2014 (n=53). The Computer Assisted Language Learning journal published the highest number of articles (n = 100), whereas the lowest number of published articles appeared in IEEE Transactions on Learning Technologies (n = 3). The most common target language was English (n = 267). Writing, speaking, and vocabulary gained the most attention in published articles. Twenty-three different technologies were identified and they were used 406 times. Based on the results, a considerable of implications and suggestions for further future research were made. This review study can serve as a guide for teaching and research communities who plan on designing language learning and teaching activities supported by technologies. The previous studies formulate an important data base that the researcher obtains benefit from; all of the previous studies approve the positive influence of e-learning on teaching EFL so the researcher is sure that using e-learning / Moodle in English departments affects positively on learning EFL if the instructors use e-learning inside their classes. The present study is different from the previous related studies because it has different purposes, samples and procedures.

The review of the literature has shown that much research examines teachers' use of technology across basic and tertiary education (Mashhour & Saleh, 2010). However, to the best of these researchers' knowledge, no research has been conducted on the effect of e-learning tools / Moodle supplementation on EFL learners' language learning basic skills at Jordanian universities. Thus, even though the study is investigative in nature and, henceforth, generalizability is not required, its conclusions are anticipated to contribute to the research on the role of use of e-learning tools / Moodle in EFL learning at higher education stage in Jordan. The present study adopts Model adopted from TAM (Davis, 1989) and Wigfield and Eccles (2000) Framework Models to analyse Yarmouk University English as a foreign language students' engagement in using e-learning tools in learning English. Since their use of e-learning tools plays a crucial part in the process of language learning, the researcher wishes to conduct a detailed investigation on the use of e-learning tools such as Moodle in learning English as a foreign language in a Jordanian setting.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The use of computers and Internet has become part and parcel of every aspect in our personal communications, including learning and teaching (Zare et al, 2016). Learning using technology (often termed e-learning) has become a popular approach within higher education institutions due to the continuous growth of Internet innovations and technologies. In fact, the growth of various technological tools as part of the development of ICT strategy, immensely contributed to the growth of the knowledge and economy in developing countries (Khasawneh, 2015). With this development, many universities and colleges across the world have incorporated e-learning resources in their learning systems. E-learning resources are often supplemented or replaced traditional methods, allowing students to engage with their learning alongside or instead of face-to-face delivery through various web technologies (Almarabeh, 2014).

However, the success of the implementation such resources in the field of learning requires an extensive understanding of the end user acceptance of resources which can be associated with their experiences in using the resources. E-learning was first introduced in Jordan by the Arab Open University (AOU) in 2002 (Abbad, Morris and De Nahlik, 2009). The e-learning system adopted by this university is blended e-learning not distance. The university is using Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as e-learning system for online exams, student authentication to its grades, and teacher authentication to its contents (such as module description, student's names, and student's grades) (Almarabeh, 2014). Recognising the importance of Internet and computers in the teaching and learning environment, most of the universities in the developing countries like Jordan were trying to improve their students' engagement in using various e-learning platforms and other computer related programmes.

The present study will seek to find the level of students' engagement on e-learning in the selected university and their variation ability to use e-learning materials. It will suggest to the tutors some ways to remedy the affected situation where there is need for intervention and planning to make education more effective using new technological tools in teaching English language skills to their students in various classrooms.

### **Objective of the Study**

The present study intends to examine the factors that EFL students at Yarmouk University face when engaging with E-learning tools in learning English language.

### **Question of the Study**

In order to achieve the objectives of this research study, the present study aims at addressing the following research questions:

1. What are the factors that EFL students at Yarmouk University face when engaging with E-learning tools in learning English language?

### **Methodology**

The sample of this study was selected randomly from the Dept. of English Language and Literature at Yarmouk University in Jordan. It included 30 EFL undergraduate students (1st Year Only). The students are those who enrolled in B.A. English Language and Literature program for the academic year 2018/2019 whereby each students were requested to respond to a set of questions (Questionnaire) on their engagement in E-learning tools in learning EFL in the classroom. The selection of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year students at Yarmouk University was motivated by the fact that they have completed their English language EFL skills course using e-learning tools. All the students selected for the pilot study are bilingual students (English and Arabic speakers) and not included in the main study. When this research study was conducted, the students had successfully completed their basic EFL skills e-course for one year as a compulsory subject as part of their B.A degree syllabus requirements. The researcher used two research instruments are questionnaire survey and an observation- checklist. The questionnaire survey composed of two sections. Section one seeks information on the demographic, educational and internet usage use. Section two, however, seeks information on students' engagement in the use of e-learning systems. It consists 22 items related to the engagement in e-learning systems.



## Discussion

Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means per respondents) of EFL respondents on EFL students' engagement in using E-learning tools in learning. The Analysis of the data elicited from this study was analyzed in terms of English. The ages of the 1st Year undergraduate students at the Dept. of English Language and Literature who participated in the study varied between 19-20 years with 1-year experience learning English at higher education level at Yarmouk University, Jordan. The respondents in this study included both males and females in which most of them possessed appropriate background of internet usage. Most of them stated that they have been using internet for 1 to 5 years. In addition, they said that they use internet five to six times a week indicating that they have moderate experience in using internet. Though, the respondents' responses on the questionnaire survey items (1-24) were collected to provide an answer to the study question to show the mean and the standard deviations of the questionnaire items.

**Table 1: In Indicates The Mean And Frequencies Of The Participants 'Responses On The Survey Items (1-24).**

Items	Mean	Responses
		( Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2) and Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
1	4.200	5
2	4.433	5
3	2.800	3
4	2.900	3
5	2.733	3
6	4.467	5
7	4.517	5
8	4.533	5
9	3.400	4
10	3.133	3
11	4.500	5
12	3.433	4
13	3.033	3
14	4.400	5
15	4.276	5
16	4.800	5
17	4.556	5
18	2.933	3
19	4.367	5
20	4.500	5
21	4.533	5
22	4.367	5
23	4.345	5
24	3.900	4

As illustrated in Table 1 in the previous section, the findings showed that 24 participants making about 80% (4.200 Mean) responded that they “strongly agree” that they can consult an online discussion group when you need help. 17 of the participants said they “strongly agree” that they can engage in e-learning systems and use the Internet together data, which reported about 56.7% of the overall number of the participants.

When the participants were asked about whether they can troubleshoot e-learning systems and Internet problems, 3.3% of them responded with “neither agree nor disagree”. But 5 participants making about 16.7 % who responded “neither agree nor disagree” and said they usually handle most problems that you find when engaging in e-learning systems or study online. Whilst, 3 participants presenting about 10 % who responded that they “neither agree nor disagree” when asked about whether they find most software applications / e-learning systems you have engaged with to be difficult or not.

In addition, Table 1 in the previous section depicts that 16 participants responded with “strongly agree” that they enjoy working with e-learning system in which 14 participants presenting about 46.7% who said that e- Learning system makes me much more productive, responding with “strongly disagree”. 14 participants said that they are convinced of your ability to take advantage of computers when you study making about 46.7%who “Strongly agree”. 8 participants presenting about 26.7% said that they think it is hard to make computers do what you want, responding with “agree”. Relevantly, 7 participants depicting about 23.3% said they “neither agree nor disagree” on whether they usually think it is simple to learn how to use new software applications. 15 participants said that using e-learning makes studying more fun which presented about 50% of the responses “strongly agree”. 11 participants 36.7% said that they “agree” stating that they always seem to be in trouble when you use E-learning. 1 participant said he finds it hard to use software representing about 3.3 % of the participants who responded with “neither agree nor disagree”. 18 participants of them said that they like working with E-learning applications, answering with “strongly agree” making about 60 %.

Also, 21 participants stated that some e-learning packages really make learning easier 70% responding with “strongly agree”. Similarly, 6 participants said that e-learning systems are good aids to learning, reporting about 20% responding with “strongly agree”. 12 participants said that e- Learning helps you save a lot of time, presenting 40% of the overall participants who answered with “strongly agree”. 9 participants stated that they get worried when using a computer thinking they might do something wrong and damage it, reporting about 30%responding with “neither agree nor disagree”. 1 participant said that using e-learning aids the learning process, making about 3% who responded with “neither agree nor disagree”.

Likewise, 15 participants responded that Using e-learning enhances your effectiveness in studying 50 %, answering with “strongly agree”. 14 participants stated that using e-learning in your study improves your knowledge 46.7%, responding with “strongly agree”. 19 participants reported that e-learning systems are good aids to learning making about 63%, responding with “strongly agree”. 19 participants pointed out that they find e-learning to be useful 63.3%, responding “strongly agree”. 6 participants they find e-learning to be useful, answering they “neither agree nor disagree” reporting 20%. Thus, 3.96% the overall responses of the participants on items 1 to 24 was they “neither agree nor disagree”.

In addition, as displayed in Table 1 in the previous section, 2 participants responded that e-learning systems are good aids to learning, reporting about 20% of the overall responses amongst the rest of the items, answering “agree”. 7 participants stated that e-Learning helps you save a lot of time 70% showing “agree” response. 3 participants said that they get worried when using a computer thinking that they might do something wrong and damage it, reporting about 30% with “strongly agree” response. 1 participant said that using e-learning aids the learning process, making about 30% (3.300 Mean), responding with “neither agree nor disagree”. 3 participants said that using e-learning enhances your effectiveness in studying, reporting 30% who “agreed” on that. 1 participant showed that 10% who “strongly agreed”. The findings of the participants’ responses on the quantitative data showed that 80% “strongly agreed”, 70% “agreed” and 30% “neither agreed nor disagreed” that they engage in using E-learning tools, particularly Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in learning English language at the Dept. of English Language and Literature at Yarmouk University in Jordan.

### Conclusion

To conclude, the findings of the present research showed that there is a variance in the use of e-learning tools in learning English as a foreign language. Also, the findings revealed that EFL teachers should give enough attention to the use of e-tools. This agrees with the findings of Alzu’bi (2018) who states that there are some issues that associates with the time spent in front of the computer and the necessity for providing adequate computer labs. Also, the findings of the present research are constant with Zare et al., (2016) who indicated in their findings that e-learning is effective for knowledge and creativity acquisitions among chemistry students and the greater e-learning opportunities should be provided for wider audiences. Thus, EFL learners and teachers in Jordan lack the knowledge and skills for effective use of e-learning tools and delivery. EFL teachers who desire to effectively use e-learning tools usually require support and assistance. This is particularly when it relates to the use of e-learning tools and teaching materials’ design. In situations where teachers and learners are not adequately aware of the use of e-tools aspects and course materials’ design, they should pay much effort thoroughly with e-learning specialists and professionals. This is very significant to confirm that the teachers can keep their focus on e-tools aspects related to pedagogy and e-learning tools and strategies, which are essential for following the theoretical framework of engaging e-learning tools.

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