



Online Teachers' Attitudes toward Using Technology in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

Online learning is an educational instruction that is delivered via technology and internet to the students. Online courses can be delivered through different learning platforms. This study intends to investigate the benefits and drawbacks of the online instruction with the use of Telegram, a mobile application which is widely utilized by Iranians. The study aims to investigate the new insights into online language courses through modern technology. To this end, a channel was created on Telegram with 280 members as learners and 15 members as tutors. The tutors, being the subjects of this study, were invited to have collaboration in a group on Telegram for online teaching/tutoring. A descriptive qualitative method was used for data collection. An interview was conducted with the tutors about their perspectives toward the online tutoring course.

Keywords: technology, mobile application, Telegram, online learning, teaching English

INTRODUCTION

Online Teaching and Learning

Feldman and Zucker (2015) define online teaching and learning as a new faculty-delivered instruction via Internet. They state that online instruction includes real-time (synchronous) and anytime, anywhere (asynchronous) interactions. They also believe that two parallel processes take place in an online environment.

Firstly, students become more active and reflective learners. Secondly, students and teachers engage in learning through the use of technology and become more familiar with technology by using it. Teachers in their subject matter are able to deliver an effective online learning atmosphere and curriculum. Ensuring that online learning is “delivered” by teachers who are fully qualified and interested in teaching online in a web-based

environment will make the connection between online education and the values of traditional education.

Approaches to Online Learning

In turning to approaches to online learning, Feldman and Zucker (2015) introduce two approaches to online learning namely synchronous and asynchronous learning. Synchronous learning is defined as the instruction and collaboration in “real time” via the Internet. It typically involves tools such as live chat, shared whiteboard, audio and video conferencing data and application sharing, virtual “hand raising”, joint viewing of multimedia presentations and online slide shows. Asynchronous learning methods, on the other hand, use the time-delayed capabilities of the Internet. It typically involves tools such as e-mail, threaded discussion, file attachments, newsgroups and bulletin boards.

Integration of Technology in Teaching Online

Over the past few years, Educational management has been focused on using internet and communication technology tools (ICT). As Balaji and Chakrabarti (2010) assert the ICT has been widely used in distance and online mode of education. It is being increasingly used along with the face-to-face lectures to augment and support classroom learning. They also believe that there is a mechanism that instructors often use to promote learning in online discussions. This mechanism has been linking the student participations with assessment. The learning process is faster and more effective when the students are provided with the feedback of their current performance and what might be needed in order to promote. A Web-based platform is the result of the modern technology that has been integrated in teaching online within educational institutions proving a virtual learning environment (VLE). VLEs generally allow members to be classified into companions, classes and roles; provide for means, practices and communications within a course framework; present the disparate steps of valuation; record on cooperation; and have some level of integration with other institutional arrangements. Therefore, interaction and the nature of interaction among the students and instructor are examined as a necessary unit of the scholastic step which allows learners to progressively contact with other members, instructor, course elements and resources via VLEs.

Social Networks

Technology is evolving at a very fast rate in education and changing traditional ways of learning more and more. Since their introduction, millions of users have integrated social network sites (SNSs) such as MySpace, Facebook, Cyworld, Bebo into their daily uses. Scientists from different fields have studied SNSs to discern the utilities, significances, experience, and contents of the sites, as well as users’ engagement with them. Danah et.al (2007) defines the social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (a) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (b) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (c) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. Yeboah et.al (2014) introduces What’s App as one of the changes in technology that is commonly used on specific mobile phones and computers. Smart phones have become popular and many messaging

services have been launched but What'sApp has become the most highly demanding App among them.

Most of the institutions prefer to incorporate modern technology into their studies. Most of professionals acknowledge that the technology application in the learning settings as the means of improvement on regular bases can be beneficial and motivational. Instructors are seeking for advanced methods to motivate students and facilitate the learning procedures. Social networking sites are considered to facilitate the learning objectives instructed by experts and course designers. Technological innovations are changing the communication ways day by day. Shyamlee states: "The growth of the internet has influenced the learning of the new languages especially English as the most used language on it" (2012). It is proved that the multimedia technology plays a positive role in promoting activities for the students in teaching effective English class. There has been a strong tendency to emphasize the significant role of technology to the extent of ignoring human part of teacher. Therefore, we cannot neglect or ignore the positive effects of technology integration with educational system. The high and rapid development of science and technology is the origin and foundation of multimedia technology and its application to English teaching. Teachers can use Multimedia Technology to give more vivid, appealing lectures (new Horizons). Social networks have been viewed as means of interactions in the virtual world for meeting people from different countries with no boundaries, exchanging opinions and sharing mass of information in different groups, creating online platform between instructors and students for collaboration and communication.

Tsai (2016) states: "Modern technology has shaped a new form of relationship through social networks. Social networks have changed the life style and communication ways. Individuals are able to make contact with their relatives, colleagues and strangers through social networks. Virtual world of cyber space has affected today's life. Scientists demonstrate SNSs such as Facebook have been universally accepted by scholars as the modern technologies used for communication which have the potential to support educational communicative objectives by which teachers and learners can collaborate in a virtual environment. According to Barbara Means (2007), online learning overlaps with the broader category of distance learning which encompasses earlier technologies such as correspondence courses, educational television and video-conferencing. Earlier studies of distance learning concluded that these technologies were not significantly different from regular classroom learning in terms of effectiveness. Barbara Means (2007) also mentions that Policy-makers concluded online education could be accepted on the basis of being inexpensive in comparison with face-to-face instruction. They also reasoned face-to-face classroom learning is more effective than online education since students could perform better in the former method.

Characteristics of online learning can be defined as the following ones:

1 - It provides different kinds of education 2 - The online computer assisted learning is either asynchronous or synchronous. 3 - The online learning can be substituted with regular classroom setting or can be used as supplementary tool. 4 - Online learning can be used in different settings such as formal or informal, academic or non-academic. 5 -

There are different types of technologies which can be applied for online learning such as: internet call, smart whiteboard, cell phones, and podcasts.

MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION

Edward (2007) believes that Universal applications of mobile phones, tablet PCs, laptops, PDAs and computers for learning purposes are obvious. Global businesses use mobile technologies to enhance their benefits and find costumers in different countries. Mobile applications providers know the importance of their jobs as big helpers to the business progress. So, we can see new applications coming to the market day to day. According to some research results, mobile learning may help with the improvements in some areas as the following ones as Edward (2007) points out:

1. Mobile learning helps learners with their talents recognition.
2. Mobile learning can be effective for both independent and team-based learning acts.
3. Learners can identify their weaknesses or strengths through mobile learning.
4. The gap between the application of ICT and mobile phone literacy can be bridged by mobile learning.
5. Learning experience can be achieved in an informal environment through mobile learning which may satisfy some students with new learning experience.
6. Learners have more time to focus on learning experience through mobile learning.
7. Mobile learning helps with the raise of self-confidence and self-esteem.

According to Fattah (2015), the application of virtual learning has been favored in daily interactions. It has also been integrated into practicing new languages. The most recent popular social network is WhatsApp application. WhatsApp Messenger is a proprietary, cross-platform. Telegram Application almost has the same characteristics as What'sApp Messenger. In this study we evaluate Online Teachers' Attitudes toward Using Technology in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

E-learning timeline

The concept of online education is over 170 years old and has its origins in a correspondence course where teachers and students were in contact by mail in Great Britain. Distance learning was founded in that time and today's online courses are modern forms of that. The drawback of mail transit time was solved. Students were able to interact with their teacher and classmates at the same time. The "e-learning" term has been used since 1999, when it was utilized in a discussion about CBS structures. The terms like "virtual learning" and "online learning" came into existence since that time as the equivalents of "e-learning. The philosophy behind e-learning has been thoroughly organized throughout history. According to some evidence, Initial practices of e-learning began in the 19th century.

At its early stages, distance courses were offered to the learners for the instruction of specific topics or skills. Isaac Pitman was the one who instructed his students via correspondence in the 1840's. Pitman sent the assignments to his pupils via mail and they

sent them back through the same system after completing. Learning the writing skill amongst secretaries, journalists, and other individuals through the same method was popular at that age. In 1924, a great success was achieved in e-learning field after the invention of testing machine which allowed the students to test their knowledge in some particular subjects. Later on in 1954, BF Skinner, a Harvard Professor, invented the "teaching machine" which was of noticeable importance for schools to manage the instruction and utilize that new invented machine to teach their students in a purposeful programmed way. The first computer based training program was invented in 1960. PLATO- Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Operations was the other term for this computer training program. It was firstly invented for the students of Illinois University, but resulted in being used in other institutions throughout the region. At its prominence, PLATO conducted thousands of terminals all over the globe. PLATO was regarded as the basis of several notions of social networking such as: chat rooms, screen sharing and message boards.

According to Epignosis (2014), the first e-learning programs were on the basis of information sharing without enough interaction among the students. In the 70s e-learning began to become more interactive. The Open University in the Britain conducted an e-learning system to take more advantage of its capabilities. With internet it offered a range of different interactive courses along with communication with students through email. The correspondence among teachers and students became more faster in comparison with the past when tutors and students used mail for correspondence. Hickey (2014) states: "The idea of learning in virtual environments was formed after the creation of educational game of Lemonade Stand in 1979. It was a part of Apple software packages throughout the 80s. It had a great impact toward online learning".

In the late 20th century, online learning has expanded in different ways with the use of the computer, Internet, e-learning tools and new methods. In the 1980's, people had computers at their homes and used them to learn particular skills and special subjects. The virtual learning environments were developed since individuals had more access to online information. Electronic University Network (EUN) was established before the innovation of the World Wide Web in 1986. Students had to communicate over telephone lines. The EUN had collaboration with America Online as its coordinator of higher education in 1992. It was founded with the purpose of assisting academic institutions with the integration of online courses.

By the early 90s online courses became more popular in several schools and colleges. The internet use brought a big change in education. People who were not able to attend to schools due to place or time constraints could make best use of online courses. The advancement of technology helped with the cost reduction of distance learning. Technological advancement opened a new horizon in the field on online learning. The number of online learning participants in educational institutions were increased everywhere. In 1994, companies like America Online, Delphi, CompuServe and some other internet providers caused a great change in the field of online learning through providing the accessibility and availability of information on stand-alone desktop

computers to the world. The greater number of people used internet for online educational purposes through the emergence of CAL-Campus.

California Virtual University (CVU) was founded in 1997 to provide information about all online courses available from accredited California academic institutions. The Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks (JALN) was a major progress in online education. It served a dedicated area for academic research focused completely on online learning. This distinctive factor made it more valuable in comparison with other publications that covered different types of distance learning. In the first decade of 20th century, e-learning use was becoming more and more popular among academic or occupational institutions. Businesses began to train their employees through e-learning. All workers had the opportunity to work on their skills via distance learning towards the expectations of their employers upon the knowledge of the industry. Individuals had access to the programs and materials which were offered to them online and they could get online degrees or certificates after course completion. At the end of the first decade of the twenty first century, the influence of online learning on education was undeniable. There were about 5.5 million students across the globes who were at least participating in one online course. The number of entire online programs was increased by different universities. Many small business holders and more than three-quarters of CEOs mentioned that the quality of online learning could be effective as much as traditional degree courses.

The future of online learning

So, what is the future of online education? While hard to predict that online learning would replace the face-to-face room settings, it's believed that most students are expected to take at least one course online in their institutions in the coming years. Online learning has proven to be a great and functional education choice for many students in regards to its effects. Each individual can play a role in the development of online education via taking part in one of online courses and shape and evolve the online learning for the prospective students of tomorrow.

Studies on Online Learning

Although there has been a great amount of study about the application of some modern mobile technologies in online teaching to get a general understanding of these studies a few of them would suffice. Many researchers pointed out that applying e-learning through some social networks is very useful in creating an attractive learning environment for learners.

The perceived high level of usage of social networking applications amongst students sounds inevitable. However, little is understood from empirical viewpoint about the intensity, of usage of WhatsApp messenger and its impact on the academic performance of students. Yeboah and Dominic Ewur (2014) conducted a research aims to empirically identify the impact of social network (WhatsApp messenger) on the performance of tertiary students in Ghana from the perspective of the students. To do this, 50 students from five tertiary institutions were interviewed and 500 questionnaires were administered to students from same institutions. This study revealed that, WhatsApp instead of making communication easier and faster thereby enhancing effective flow of

information and idea sharing among students, rather has impacted negatively on the performance of tertiary students. The study among other things unveiled the following: WhatsApp takes much of student's study time, results in procrastination related problems, destroys students' spellings and grammatical construction of sentences, leads to lack of concentration during lectures, results in difficulty in balancing online activities (WhatsApp) and academic preparation and distracts students from completing their assignments and adhering to their private studies time table.

A mobile social network allows groups of friends to be accessed and engaged with from one's mobile phone. Humphreys (2006) conducted a research to seek the effect of mobile technology on the communicative strategies. This study uses the participant observation, user observations, and in-depth interviews of 9 women and 12 men, ranging in age from 23 to 3. Dodgeball is a mobile social network system (MSNS) that seeks to facilitate social connection and coordination among friends in urban public spaces. Based on a year-long qualitative field of the current study, it reports on the social and behavioral norms of Dodgeball use. The comparison between social network sites and Dodgeball highlights some of the communicative differences of mobile technology and the Internet. The findings of this study suggested that Dodgeball use can influence the way that informants experience public space and social relations therein. At times Dodgeball can facilitate the creation of third spaces, which are dynamic and itinerant forms of "third places." Moreover, exchanging messages through Dodgeball can lead to social molecularization, whereby active Dodgeball members experience and move through the city in a collective manner.

Recently, the expansion of digital technologies, multimedia, and social networks, dramatically transformed our lives. Education in general and the area of foreign language teaching and learning have also benefited hugely from those developments and advances. As a result, the face of language learning is changing and new technologies provide language learners and teachers with tools and opportunities unimaginable before. Xodabande (2017) conducted a study examining the effectiveness of using social media network Telegram in teaching English language pronunciation to Iranian EFL learners. Participants of this study included 30 Iranian EFL learners (in two experimental (N = 14) and control (N = 16) groups) who received different treatments over the four weeks. The results revealed that the pronunciation of participants in experimental group improved significantly in comparison with control group but there was no significant improvement in pronunciation of participants in experimental group from post-test to delayed test which was administered four weeks later. The results of current study also revealed that using social media networks in teaching language features can be very effective and promising.

Romana Correa (2014) conducted a research investigating teaching speaking using computer-mediated communication tools such as Skype conference calls. The research was carried out with a group of 12 English as foreign language adult learners in the language institute of Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá, Colombia. This research project was carried out under the features and conditions of a qualitative research. The data collection instruments chosen for the development and application of

this project were the researcher's reflection journal, surveys, and focus groups. The action research focal group consisted of 12 EFL adult A1 learners whose ages varied from 18 to 40 years old. Four of the participants were men and eight of them were women. The learners' educational backgrounds also varied as they came from different socio-economic groups and academic backgrounds. The study population consisted of students from different faculties of the university, professionals of different vocations, and self-employed people who wanted to learn English for varied reasons. At the moment of implementation and development of the research study, its target population was taking an introductory I English course. The findings of the study suggest that Skype™ conference calls might be considered as an influential computer-mediated communication tool in order to promote English as a foreign language adult A1 learners' speaking skill, especially for social interaction purposes and oral reinforcement of both language fluency and course contents outside of classroom settings. This social interaction need was evident in a high number of occasions all through the students' surveys, focus groups, and the teacher's reflective instrument. More specifically, it was found that learners seemed to notice a relevant connection between language and social interaction practices.

Along with the development of smart phones and smart phones operating systems, users of smart phones are able to install software, games and other programs provided by third-party providers. WeChat as a third-party software that exists in the current market, is an instant messaging application. Being a new application, the user acceptance of WeChat has not been studied. Mei et.al (2013) aimed to establish that it would enable users to send voice, video, pictures and text to their contacts through mobile network. WeChat has 300 million users in China, 200 respondents from one company in the mobile application field and one university were the target sample of this survey. The chosen company for the survey was Baidu Online Network Technology (Beijing) Co., Ltd. It was an Internet technology-based company that provides search engine service. The chosen university was Wuhan University of Technology located in south of China. The respondents from those two organizations were general WeChat users. The results showed that effort expectance of WeChat can positively affect the user's intention to use WeChat, which means that the more relaxed users feel when they are using WeChat, the more they are willing to accept this application. Besides, social influence is the factor that has the strongest impact on the WeChat users' behavior. The users are affected by the important people around them when they consider to use WeChat or not. Facilitating conditions|| can also positively influence users' attitude towards using WeChat. This means that the more comprehensive support system WeChat have, the more users are willing to use it. Also, social influence has the strongest impact on WeChat users' acceptance, which indicates that most respondents in our survey are using WeChat because people who are important to them think they should use it.

Telegram as a teaching platform

This study was conducted on Telegram as a teaching platform. Telegram messages are heavily encrypted and they can be self-destructed. You can access to Telegram messages from multiple devices since it's Cloud-based. Messages can be delivered faster on

Telegram in comparison with other applications. Telegram servers are spread worldwide for security and speed. Telegram is free for everyone and messages can be kept safe from hackers. Telegram has no limits about the size of media and chats.

What can one do with Telegram?

The users of Telegram can connect from most remote locations and coordinate groups of up to 50000 members. Chats can be synchronized across all your devices. Users of Telegram can send any type of documents. It has self-timer for destructing the messages. It stores message in the cloud for future access. One can get feedback from customers easily on Telegram.

Telegram is a great app through which one can learn a new language or achieve some other educational purposes. Telegram has the same use as WhatsApp but it can be different from some other perspectives.

Telegram app can be used purposefully towards the educational goals. To learn a new language is one of the achievable goals which can be followed by an interested learner. There is a big gap of study on such app for learning the main skills of a new language. The researcher is going to focus his study on this online course to evaluate its effectiveness and teachers' approaches towards that. The online tutors have collaboration for preparing and sharing lessons of the course via Telegram in the virtual space since there is a big demand of online learning market. The researcher is going to find the teachers' approaches towards the online course on Telegram through the interviews.

METHOD

Research Design

A qualitative research was conducted to achieve the goals of the study. Bodgan and Bilken (2007) state that a qualitative research provides a very thorough insight about the feelings and thoughts of participants. The tutors were from countries like Iran, Turkey, Canada, The UK and The USA. The learners were from different cities of Iran. The present study was conducted as the "Online Teachers' Attitudes toward Using Technology in Teaching English as a Foreign Language" in order to evaluate the effectiveness of online collaboration among teachers who were from different countries. An interview was conducted as an instrument at the end of study. All teachers were required to answer ten open-ended questions of interview.

This study also aimed at investigating the drawbacks and benefits of Telegram application by tutors as subjects of the study who answered the questions of interview at the end of study. The study took place in September and October, 2017 as an online project of Hafez Language Center. The group of tutors was created on Telegram as "Online Tutors of Hafez Online Academy" and the channel of learners was created on Telegram as "Hafez Online Academy".

Participants

This research was carried out on Telegram with total 280 participants as the learners and 15 participants as the tutors of a Channel called Hafez Online Academy. The learners were

from different cities of Iran with pre-intermediate proficiency level. Their mother tongue was Persian. They were above 18 years old. The tutors were from different countries. They were selected either as the native English speakers or as the degree holders of English from non-English countries like Iran, Turkey and Oman after filling out the teaching application form.

Instruments

This research was based on the interview with eight open-ended questions. The interview questions were based on the objectives of the study in regard to the tutors' attitudes about the technology use, online tutoring and collaboration in an online environment with tutors from other countries. The interview was formed by the researcher and was sent to all tutors on Telegram. The interviewees were informed about the goal of research and they were asked to express their experiences and opinions freely in order to obtain in-depth information about the draw-backs and benefits of online tutoring with the use of Telegram. The questions of interview were as the following ones:

- 1- Have you ever taught online before? If yes, which soft-wares or applications have you used? Have long have you been tutoring online?
- 2- How did you find the experience of teaching English on Telegram?
- 3 - What features of Telegram are beneficial for tutoring English?
- 4 - What are the drawbacks or challenges of online teaching through the application of Telegram?
- 5 - What are your recommendations to hold an online English course more effective?
- 6- What do you think about the online collaboration among teachers who are from different countries?
- 7 - How can teachers improve their collaboration to teach an online course on Telegram?
- 8 - Which applications or soft-wares do you recommend for online tutoring?

Procedures

All tutors were asked to fill out the application form and sign a commitment to be active while the course was on progress. A group called Online tutors was created on Telegram and the teaching plan and materials were shared in that group. All tutors were assigned different roles in regard to their capabilities. Some tutors from Iran were asked to do the translation of English conversations since the most learners were of beginner's level. The native English tutors were asked to do the recordings of vocabulary, conversions and Reading texts.

There were four native English speakers from Canada, The UK and The USA. Iranians tutors had Masters or Ph.D. degrees. The combination of non-native tutors' academic English studies and native authentic English accents has made the collaboration different. Students found the course very interesting. All lessons were shared on Channel from 21 to 12 at night by researcher and voices were shared later on. The researcher as the tutor

interacted with other tutors one by one to prepare the lessons and share them on Channel.

It was kind of self-paced learning plan for the students. They had all needed materials available. Conversations were created online and live by tutors on Channel to describe about their current situations and activities they were doing. Different tenses along with examples of real life of tutors were practiced on Channel. It was kind of online game for tutors to produce their desired texts with voices. The course consisted of 20 lessons. It was taught in four weeks. The collaboration among tutors was amazing. Sometimes if the researcher as the main tutor was busy, other tutors managed preparing and sharing the lessons.

Data analysis

The research was based on qualitative data collection through the interview with the tutors as the participants from different countries. The interviewees were asked to express their opinions about all questions of Interview in order to have a better collaboration with each other in the following online courses. All interview questions were analyzed carefully in order to achieve the study goals. The analysis of collected data showed different attitudes of tutors toward their online collaboration in regard to this online course. The study examined the drawbacks and benefits of this online course. All tutors were asked to express their previous experiences in online tutoring and give some recommendations for future online collaboration in order to conduct more effective online courses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are based on the following interview questions and their answers. The researcher is going to discuss in regard to the produced data from the interview answers. Ten out of fifteen tutors answered the interview questions. The other five tutors couldn't continue their collaboration with this online course due to the different time zones and some other reasons. The other ten tutors answered all questions with patience and in details.

1- Have you ever taught online before? If yes, which soft-wares or applications have you used? Have long have you been tutoring online?

Four tutors mentioned that they had not taught before any online courses and it was a new experience for them. Two other tutors used the Skype platform for online tutoring. One of them was from Turkey who had taught English on Skype for eight years. Another one was originally from Iran but since he was working in Oman, he used Skype to teach his Iranian students. He was happy with the experience of Skype use due to its quality in audio and video calls as he mentioned. Three of tutors had used What'sApp as a teaching platform. One tutor from Canada stated that he had used Café Mocha 10 years ago. One tutor only had the experience of tutoring on Telegram. So, for most tutors it was a new experience. They were willing to start the online course to evaluate the process and its effects.

2- How did you find the experience of teaching English on Telegram?

Nine of ten tutors found this experience interesting and useful and they said that were waiting for more collaboration on the next online courses. One tutor believed that Telegram had fantastic features in teaching any courses. He had found the Telegram the most powerful app among all other apps he had ever seen. He also stated that based on the needs of learners and teachers this app had been made, so it wasn't only for teaching purposes but the best place for marketing as well.

3 - What features of Telegram are beneficial for tutoring English?

Different features like creating Channel, adding large number of members in groups either as learners or administrators were interesting to the tutors. According to some tutors, the other features like sharing photos, audio and video files made the online course on Telegram effective. Two tutors believed that the voice recording feature was the best feature of Telegram since it could help the learners the best. One tutor found Telegram a great application for teaching listening and reading skills. One tutor from Iran mentioned that it was the most used application in Iran and learners were quite familiar with its use and contents. Taking polls was described as a great feature to get feedback about the effectiveness of a course and to run a course in a student-centered way. Tutors could teach in groups or on channels without any time and place limits. According to one tutor, pinning the topic in group discussion and sending voice without any trouble, editing or deleting them were the other great feature of Telegram. Recording short video was pointed out as another great feature of this app.

Teaching a large number of learners at the same time was regarded as the best advantage of this application. Students could receive different kinds of information in small or large quantities.

4 - What are the drawbacks or challenges of online teaching through the application of Telegram?

Most teachers agreed that lack of interaction between the learners and receiving no feedback from them were the worst parts of teaching on Telegram channel. Teaching in large groups had the same disadvantages. The learners could get distracted by other messages. Having no personal tutor was considered as one disadvantage of teaching on Channel.

The challenges were expressed as the following ones:

- Having no fixed curriculum for the online class
- Internet connection may be lost or has speed problems
- Different time zones for online discussion among the tutors
- Arranging the learners into the right levels
- Finding the time to contribute to the course because of being busy with other jobs
- According to two tutors, the item that needs to be explored is to find out if Telegram is banned or filtered in any country. For example, WhatsApp is not allowed in UAE for live chat or calling. Has Telegram been banned in any countries?

- Sending audio tracks instead of videos was mentioned as a drawback in this online course since many students could be visual learners.
- Happening unexpected problems to teachers without prior notice and

5 - What are your recommendations to hold an online English course more effective?

One tutor recommended explaining the words, phrases and sentences in English. The use of tangible examples focusing on a specific topic and the coverage of that topic with everything related to it was another recommendation by the same tutor. Some tutors emphasized on regularity of the online course at exact times and participation of learners through interaction with each other. Grouping the learners according to their right level was another recommendation. The use of video clips and pictures was considered as an interesting tool. Teaching in small groups in which all learners have their own personal tutors, was recommended by two tutors. One tutor recommended advertising of Telegram properly to student and making them beware of the easiness and advantages of this app. If students have a clear idea of this learning platform, they can make better use of its features.

6 - What do you think about the online collaboration among teachers who are from different countries?

All tutors agreed on the greatness of online collaboration. Being taught by native or foreign English teachers was considered as an effective tool in learning process. Sharing different ideas about teaching English in an online environment by tutors who had learned English either as an academic major or a mother-tongue was the prominent part of online collaboration. Some tutors found the idea of online collaboration useful and great and recommended more interaction among teachers to make the online classes more beneficial and interesting for students. The golden opportunity of online collaboration among teachers from different countries was due to the use of modern technology according to one tutor's opinion. According to one tutor, it is not an easy job to unite different nationalities, especially native speakers for teaching English through Telegram. That can be a good diversity in learning English if we get teachers from different nationalities and countries which can be effective for students and make them more interested with this unique experience.

7 - How can teachers improve their collaboration to teach an online course on Telegram?

One tutor mentioned that teachers should be committed to their work. Another interviewee stated that teachers should know about each other more first and then about the teaching skills of each other very well, for example native English teachers could help with pronunciation teaching more effectively. The better general planning was the opinion of another interviewee about the improvement of online collaboration among the teacher. According to one tutor, Planning and sharing ideas based on teamwork by tutors could enhance the effectiveness of such online courses. Structuring a set of directions was recommended by one tutor. Dale from Canada stated: "Having a set time for a group meeting is very difficult considering the differences in time zones that we all live in. If we chose a day, then we could start some discussions and teachers could post comments or open up new discussions throughout the day, and we all check in to see how we could

contribute to the conversation". Another tutor recommended genuine and professional plan along with timetable. There should be a leader, someone who can control everything. The leader has to make all arrangements for teachers and make them serious in this process.

8 - Which applications or soft-wares do you recommend for online tutoring?

WhatsApp, Telegram, Skype, Moodle were recommended by tutors for online tutoring based on their experiences. One of tutor was not sure about that and preferred face-to-face teaching.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated some teachers' perspectives toward online collaboration and analysis of the drawbacks and benefits of online tutoring through Telegram. The attitudes and approaches of online collaboration among teachers were positive towards the online course due to its uniqueness and positive effects on learning process. The tutors emphasized on the general setting and planning in advance and the commitment of tutors for conducting such courses. Lack of interaction and feedback from the students during the course progress were described as the main drawbacks of online tutoring on Telegram. Tutoring in small groups with the online support of teachers can make the online course more effective. Teaching in a natural way through conversations between teachers and learners or among learners in a controlled way was considered as a great help for learners who could overcome the obstacles of learning a new language. The support given by the native English teachers with the pronunciation skill was appreciated by learners and made them more interested in practicing audio files. More interaction among tutors before starting the online course could create a friendlier environment towards more effective tutoring. The results affirm that modern technology such as Telegram, WhatsApp, Skype or Moodle arouse students' motivation and interests. The findings show that the teachers see the use of modern technology as a golden opportunity for interaction and collaboration with other teachers for conducting online courses. According to this study, the more collaboration among teachers, creating a set of some directions and guidelines and general planning in advance based on teachers' skills are the prerequisites of an effective online course. The study recommends teaching in small groups on Telegram with teachers support as feedback givers, facilitators and analyzers.

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