



Saudi Females Beginners' Attitudes Towards Full-online Learning Through EFL Virtual Classrooms During COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract.

Mastery of English is indispensable for students to pursue their university major in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it is mandatory for Saudi undergraduates studying at the preparatory year programs to get high scores in the EFL course to be eligible to enroll in the Bachelor's degree programs. However, the sudden shift to distance learning worldwide to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic affects the university beginners' attitudes to learn EFL. This article examines the general perceptions of Jubail University College EFL female students' towards learning English through full online mode. Also, the study displays the benefits and drawbacks the EFL students have encountered while using the virtual classroom during the pandemic. Their views were investigated through in-depth one-on-one interviews and focused group discussion done virtually by the author. The results reveal that the majority of students have formed negative attitudes toward EFL virtual classrooms and preferred traditional classrooms. In addition, the results present solutions suggested by the participants to enhance the quality of full-online English language teaching, which could be useful for EFL language instructors.

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Full-online Learning Through EFL Virtual
Classrooms During COVID-19 Pandemic**

By

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Abstract

Mastery of English is indispensable for students to pursue their university major in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it is mandatory for Saudi undergraduates studying at the preparatory year programs to get high scores in the EFL course to be eligible to enroll in the Bachelor's degree programs. However, the sudden shift to distance learning worldwide to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic affects the university beginners' attitudes to learn EFL. This article examines the general perceptions of Jubail University College EFL female students 'towards learning English through full online mode. Also, the study displays the benefits and drawbacks the EFL students have encountered while using the virtual classroom during the pandemic. Their views were investigated through in-depth one-on-one interviews and focused group discussion done virtually by the author. The results reveal that the majority of students have formed negative attitudes toward EFL virtual classrooms and preferred traditional classrooms. In addition, the results present solutions suggested by the participants to enhance the quality of full-online English language teaching, which could be useful for EFL language instructors.

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Chapter One: Introduction

English as an international language has become essential to those who wish to pursue university education in many countries. Saudi college students in all departments are required to obtain high scores in English courses at the preparatory year programs to be able to join the Bachelor's degree programs. COVID-19 pandemic has imposed negative effects on the how university courses are delivered, especially EFL teaching courses. In early 2020, many students all over the world were required to adopt full-online learning as the only source of learning available to proceed with education due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. This learning type can be beneficial when online learning is the last resort (Francisco & Barcelona, 2020). Educators with no prior preparation and knowledge of full-online learning have to provide online education resources and deliver the lessons fully virtual. Nevertheless, the education system is constantly evolving since the electronic inventions of the 1980s, which made it possible for teachers to meet with their students online through virtual classrooms (Keegan, 1998). Online education is a form of training that does not require a specific place, time, and a person to meet with for learning to occur (Keegan, 1995).

In Saudi Arabia, the preparatory year is expected to prepare the college students beginners with the basic knowledge needed to equip them with the essential learning tools to be successfully enrolled in their favoured study disciplines. The EFL students at the preparatory level are expected to achieve an excellent English language proficiency level. However, some EFL learners are not motivated to learn the language and still find it challenging. Currently, the EFL students must accommodate the changes that the COVID-

19 pandemic made in the education process. The undergraduate students are going through a challenging situation when the education worldwide is shifted to fully online learning, leaving no choice of preference for the learners. The college students at the Saudi universities are taught through asynchronous and synchronous learning management system at web-based platforms such as Blackboard.

According to McBrien et al., (2009), synchronous learning provides online interactive opportunities between students and teachers and allows immediate communication that stimulates traditional face-to-face meetings. Both instructors and learners can meet online through virtual classrooms, exchange messages or audio files instantly through multiple online platforms and applications. However, asynchronous learning is more flexible and takes place through media use that does not require students and teachers to meet online. Thus, online education occurs through e-mails and discussion boards (Hrastinski, 2008). Some researchers have argued that the students' attitudes towards virtual classrooms differ at the end of the course, and they established a more positive attitude than the one they had at the start of the course (Erarslan & Topkaya, 2017, as cited in Male,2020; Knowles & Kerkman, 2007; Şen, 2013)

The students' attitudes are mostly correlated with academic performance. For example, learners with low academic achievements build a negative attitude to learning and perceive that the learning outcomes will not be attained in the future (Candeias et al., 2010). Therefore, the novelty of this study is to determine if the EFL full-online learning through the virtual classroom positively increases the undergraduate students' academic performance or it negatively hinders the EFL learning process.

The focus of the present study is to explore the female college beginners' attitudes towards learning EFL fully virtual during the pandemic. Also, to draw the benefits and drawbacks that EFL female students might encounter while using the virtual classrooms for teaching English. Moreover, it attempts to offer solutions suggested by the EFL students to enhance the quality of full-online language learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data of the study were collected qualitatively through a focused group discussion and one-on-one interviews with EFL female beginners of Jubail University College (JUC).

Therefore, the EFL students' current attitudes to learning English entirely online after a full academic year are essential to enhance the future of full-online learning in Saudi Arabia and follow the steps that lead to the Saudi 2030 vision progress. The following chapter provides the literature review section and reviews related study that tackle the issue of investigation examined by the current study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter, previous studies' findings pertaining to the EFL learners' attitudes towards online learning and whether they prefer traditional classrooms or virtual classrooms are reviewed. The author reviews previous studies that revealed positive attitudes towards learning EFL online and sketches out the studies that showed traditional learning is more convenient for the EFL students.

Positive findings obtained from studies related to online learning variation in the asynchronous assessment encourages the students to have more positive attitudes towards virtual education. In Hong Kong, a study on applying an E-learning system to an information technology course was conducted by the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK). It indicated that both learners and instructors have a positive attitude towards E-learning; however, the tutors have some concerns about the overloaded work that online education imposes due to its different learning responsibilities. Also, some participants find it dissatisfying, and it delivers a teacher-centered learning system (Ng, 2007). Moreover, Tolosa et al., (2017) revealed that after an experiment of shifting the learning to virtual classrooms, the results indicated the students' positive attitude in learning a foreign language online in New Zealand. Also, it led to a significant development of the learners' writing skills in the foreign language classes. Alhawiti (2017) compared the performance of students who received online learning through virtual classes with students who were exposed to traditional face to face classroom. Results of the achievement test indicate that the experimental students who received online learning significantly outscored their peers who studied using traditional methods of learning. In a recent study, Alahmadi and

Alraddadi (2020) point out that EFL Saudi students had positive attitudes to full-online learning and had a significant high level of interaction when they measured the effect of virtual learning on communication at the virtual foreign language classrooms. Another recent study, conducted in UAE, explores the undergraduates' high satisfaction level and positive attitudes towards full-online learning through the virtual classrooms at UAE University. The university consistent enhancement of the technical services and training courses for both learners and instructors contributed to its success in online learning through the COVID-19 pandemic (Bawaneh et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, some other recent studies contradict the previous study findings which showed positive attitudes towards virtual classrooms. Education worldwide turned unexpectedly to fully online learning, and that sudden shift has posed challenges and obstacles that can hinder the learning process. Khoshaim et al., (2020) stress the consequence of the recent changes that the COVID-19 pandemic on Saudi college students' psychological well-being. This study's findings state that 35% of the participants encountered moderate to extreme levels of anxiety due to the stressful spread of the pandemic and the sudden shift to full-online learning. Some challenges are rapidly observed when learning on fully online learning associated with educational, technical, and communicational complications. Most EFL learners who participated in the study stated that they were not satisfied with the E-learning. Moreover, it does not meet their language learning expectations (Mahyoob, 2020). According to Hakim (2020) regardless of Saudi EFL instructors' positive attitudes to use virtual classrooms and access to various platforms and online resources, they still face challenges such as limited accessibility to recent equipment, unstable internet connection, and low interest. Male et al., (2020) carried out

a study on undergraduate students in Indonesia, they argued that despite the learners' different learning preferences, they agreed that traditional learning is more favorable than online learning. The results showed that students felt boredom when learning was fully done online, and some prefer more interactive teaching strategies. As Evişen et al., (2020) asserted that EFL learners preferred traditional education to online education due to exploring their attitudes and feelings towards distance learning at Gaziantep University.

As reviewed earlier, determining the EFL students' absolute preference, benefits, and drawbacks of both online learning and traditional learning is controversial. Therefore, this study investigates the EFL students' attitudes after an entire academic year taught virtually and whether they have the EFL virtual classrooms more fitting to their needs than the traditional classrooms. Moreover, the next chapter will introduce the study participants, the instruments used to conduct the study, and the procedure followed to analyze the data collected.

Chapter Three: Method

3.1 Participants

The sample of this study is based on JUC EFL undergraduates' students at the preparatory level for the academic year 2020/2021. In the first academic year of Jubail University's college-female branch, all students from all majors are required to attend EFL classrooms when they are at the preparatory level to enhance their English language. The EFL classrooms are essential for JUC undergraduates to build a language foundation for the later studying years that are taught fully through the English language as a medium of instruction except for religious and Arabic courses. Twenty-one students participated in the focused group discussion, and four students were interviewed in a one-on-one interview, and both were conducted and analysed by the researcher.

3.2 Instruments

Semi-structured focused group discussion and in-depth one-on-one interviews were conducted to collect data about the students' attitudes towards online English learning. A deductive approach was used to group the data based on the research questions. The focused group discussion was conducted online through the Blackboard platform since it is familiar to the students and used for their current EFL full-online learning while the one-on-one interviews lasted for 40 minutes and were conducted through WhatsApp. All the participants confirmed their voluntary participation by agreeing to the consent form that contained the purpose of the study and their rights statements in the research. Focused group discussion and one-on-one interviews participants were conducted to elicit their opinions freely, assuring them that their viewpoints were not disclosed. The students were

asked to use their mics or type their answers whenever they want to comment, and a comfortable atmosphere was created and maintained through the discussion and the interviews.

3.3 Procedure

The discussion was audio-recorded and lasted for one hour approximately, transcribed and translated into English. The interviews were synchronous and scheduled according to the student's preference. The data collected from the one-on-one interviews were translated when needed and transcribed when the participant preferred to respond through the voice-recording feature. Both focused group discussion and one-on-one interviews were carried out and coded by the researcher. However, it was challenging to translate the students' responses from the Arabic into English without changing the responses meanings. Also, it was difficult to identify their sincere attitudes since the nonverbal communication such as body gestures and facial expressions were missing in the virtual meetings with the participants. Furthermore, a descriptive investigation is carried through a thematic content analysis of the participants' responses. The focused group discussion and the one-on-one interviews consisted of three parts for each.

• Focused Group Discussion

Part I explored the general opinion of the participants regarding the full-online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part II inquired the EFL students whether they find full- online learning more convenient than traditional learning during the pandemic.

Part III requested the participants to mention the difficulties they encounter when using the blackboard's virtual classrooms.

• **One-on-one Interviews**

Part I inquired the participant as how she finds the EFL virtual classroom improving her four English language skills through full-online learning.

Part II questioned the interviewee about the new EFL learning activities that full-online learning enabled to conduct during COVID-19.

Part III asked the participant to provide suggestions to enhance the quality of full-online EFL language learning during the pandemic.

Furthermore, the results of the focused group discussion and the one-on-one interviews are presented as they are ordered above in chapter 4.

Chapter Four: Results

4.1 Focused Group Discussion

4.1.1 General Opinion of Full-online EFL Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The overall response to this question was unexpectedly negative towards the full-online EFL learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. One participant said she feels distracted during the full online learning because of the interruption in her surrounding environment. Another participant added that the educational environment of the traditional environment can be more engaging. Also, a third student commented that she feels lazy during full-online learning, and she prefers traditional EFL learning because she can ask her classmates for clarifications if she missed any point. Furthermore, one participant declared that in the EFL full-online learning, she encountered time management difficulties. She stated that traditional learning is more organized than full-online learning and time managed since she wakes up on the alarm, has her breakfast and goes to college. Unlike the full-online learning where she wakes up when the lecture starts and then she has her breakfast, and one more participant agreed with her.

However, one participant disagreed with this argument by asserting that full-online EFL learning supports time management and said that in full-online learning, everything is recorded there at the blackboard, such as lectures, announcements, and assignments. Also, they can see how much time they took to finish exams. Moreover, the discussion moved to the importance of physical presence for the participants and their EFL learning teacher. A participant stated that full-online learning mixes between learning and their daily

life, she said they have not visited the college yet, but by going there and be around other students in a similar studying mood, they will feel more in an educational setting because the full-online learning is done at home and takes place in the middle of their daily habits. Another participant confirmed her claim when she stated that she does not feel excited and interested to learn. She added that she feels that it is boring and detached to learn fully online. One more participant supported this view, stating that she has observed that her English language has generally improved but being physical there would make even more improvements since she feels shy to use the mic because she does not feel that she is sure that her answers are correct.

4.1.2 EFL Students Choice of Learning during the pandemic

4.1.2.1 Students Favored Traditional EFL Learning

When the participants were questioned on the EFL learning preference, almost the majority asserted that they preferred traditional learning over full-online learning. Among the 21 participants in the focused group discussion, 67% were in favor of traditional learning, whereas 24% of the respondents preferred the current full-online learning, and only around 9% were neutral. A participant pointed out that the traditional classrooms make her feel isolated from any other distractions. Another participant supported her choice of traditional learning when she stated that it is more motivating, and it organizes their time. Furthermore, the participants stressed the significance of the EFL instructors' physical presence in learning a foreign language. One student said that the body language of the lecturer and the classmates would help her in learning English. Another participant stated that the English instructors' physical presence would help in making sure that they are

doing things right. For example, in writing activities, she can go around and check their papers. However, in the fully online learning, she argued that they are fully responsible for developing their writing skill.

One additional response clarified a possible reason why most of the participants do not perceive full-online EFL learning as convenient as traditional EFL learning. She said that poor internet connection can prevent them from attending to the EFL classroom. A participant added that full-online learning makes her feel more anxious to participate. She added that if she can see who is there physically in the traditional classroom, she would be more confident. She said that the number of students is greater in the virtual classroom. One more reflection on the argument is stated by a participant in relation to English language production confidence. She stated that the EFL students are less active in full-online learning because most of the girls are shy, and they just type the answers and rarely use the mic.

4.1.2.2 Students Favored Full-online EFL Learning

The minority of the focused group discussion's participants favored the current EFL full-online learning. A participant has identified some learning hindrances of traditional learning that can be prevented through the current full-online EFL learning. She asserted that learning is more guaranteed since they avoid many obstacles like getting sick, bad weather, and transportations. Three participants agreed with what one participant has stated regarding one of the full-online EFL learning benefits. She said that full-online learning allows her to study at her own pace. Another participant interrupted the discussion and claimed that she remembered something that is good about online learning and that it has

enhanced her computer skills and they were introduced to the use of online books, and they can highlight the books through PDF files. Also, she added that they had been introduced to Google Drive and Google Cloud. As a result, they are currently using more technical tools, and they exceeded traditional tools like papers and pens. She also said that they are using many platforms to help them in organizing their studying schedules, such as Class-up, Edmodo, and Blackboard.

4.1.2.3 Students' Neutral Preference of EFL learning

The responses of two of the focused group discussion participants showed neutral preference in learning EFL. A participant said that she agrees that they are using advanced technology and that she personally did not know how to use the Word or PowerPoint programs before the online learning and that being forced to use technology in learning fully online helped to develop her computer skills. But she thinks learning English could be more exciting if she were in a traditional classroom. She stated that the lecturer's body language and actual explanation on the traditional whiteboard would be more engaging in learning the English language. Yet, she said that online learning has provided them with recorded sessions on the blackboard, and she wished they would have this opportunity in the traditional education where the teacher could allow them to record the lectures. Later in the discussion, she added that if she wants marks, she will choose online, whereas she finds the traditional education is more engaging and fun. Another participant shared a neutral learning preference when she said that unlike most of the girls the online learning made her obtain lower grades, and she cannot focus. She added that it damaged her eyes, and now she is wearing eyeglasses. Moreover, she stated that she was a better student when

she had traditional teaching. However, now she becomes accustomed to it, and she is currently adopting it more and more through time = to improve her proficiency in English. She added that online learning allowed her to make mistakes and not to feel too shy about it, and she also felt that her physical presence would make her feel more pressured when she makes mistakes.

4.1.3 Difficulties Encountered While Using Blackboard's Virtual Classrooms

In response to this question regarding the common challenges that the EFL students might encounter in learning English through blackboards' virtual classrooms, few responses were recorded among the focused group discussion participants. One student said that the virtual classrooms conducted via the blackboard experienced some connection problems. As a result, it sometimes made the voice of the language instructor not clear. Another participant added that the announcements alert on the blackboard's home page made her confused and distracted.

4.2 One-on-one Interviews

4.2.1 EFL Virtual Classroom Improving English Language Skills

In-depth interviews were carried on a one-on-one basis, and the interviewees' responses to the following questions were viewed chronologically as the order the interviews were conducted in. The first interviewee argued that she finds her writing skill has improved through online learning due to the comfortable environment that enabled flexible submission hours. Moreover, she said that the listening activities are similar to the traditional classrooms. However, she finds the grammar activities in the traditional learning

are better since the teacher would be physically there in front of her. Nevertheless, she was satisfied with her grades and her performance in learning the four skills online.

The second interviewee stated that she enjoyed full-online learning, and it was easy for her to understand the lessons. Also, she added that her speaking skill has noticeably improved, and she found herself confident to speak in virtual classrooms, and she observed that all the four skills had been generally improving through online learning.

The third interviewee viewed that she found full-online learning has enhanced her writing skill, and the fact that she is not using paper and a pen has helped her to discover the language correcting tools in the word document. Therefore, she can correct her own mistakes through the automatic correction feature in writing her assignments. Concerning the listening skill, she finds that she had to pay more effort since it was the first time for her to be taught by an English language teacher that does not share her first language. Hence, she said that she had to listen carefully to the teacher's explanation because it was hard for her to ask the instructor to repeat a word. I think what makes it more difficult is that she cannot see her EFL teacher's body language. Also, she added that learning online takes less time since it is hard to interrupt the other speakers at the virtual classroom because the voices will not be as clear as the real face-to-face communication.

Nevertheless, the fourth interviewee indicated that since she had spent her first year in college studying online through the virtual classrooms, from her point of view, she said that it improved her reading skills by participating in class to read. And she also stated that the full-online learning improved her listening skills because all her online classes enabled her to listen to the teachers. Similarly, the speaking skill has been improving

d when she participated through speaking activities with the teacher. But, when it comes to writing skills, she found difficulties at the beginning of the academic year but right now, she said she is doing well.

4.2.2 New EFL learning Activities Full-online Learning Enabled

The participants answered as follows when they were requested to mention EFL learning activities that full-online learning has provided. The first interviewee stated that she finds having full access to the PowerPoint and Word documents used for learning was very helpful. She said that the teachers uploaded the files for them to study for exams through the blackboard platform along with the recorded sessions to help them revise important points that they might overlook.

The second interviewee declared that learning the English language online has enabled the teacher to post links that can help them to practice some listening and grammar exercises. In addition, she stated that the recorded lectures helped them to review for their exams. For assignment submissions, she emphasized that they were allowed to submit their writing papers within 24 hours. She declared that it is more flexible than submitting writing work during the traditional classrooms.

Furthermore, the third interviewee asserted that learning online made it easier for her to search for a specific topic and to find more resources about it. Also, it allowed them to record and translate many words. She added that it quipped them to visit many English language learning websites to look for more information about things that they did not

understand. The interviewee believed that they would use the technology more than if they were in a traditional classroom.

The fourth interviewee said that in her perspective, she found online learning is similar to face-to-face learning in the activities they provide. She explained that it is due to the similar learning setting both the virtual and traditional classrooms offer.

4.2.3 Suggestions to Enhance the Quality of full-online EFL Learning

According to the first interview, the participant stated when inquired about suggestions to enhance the quality of full-online EFL learning that she would recommend offering a course or a workshop to introduce how the online learning would be conducted throughout the semester or the academic year because she finds it overwhelming. Also, she stated that she wished that in the English language learning virtual classrooms, there would be games or puzzles for learning to be more fun since sometimes it can be boring to sit in one place for a very long time.

In the second interview, however, the student said she hoped that English language teachers would have more varieties in teaching the four skills in a more entertaining way . Also, they have to consider the different students' levels of language proficiency.

The third interviewee asserted that she thinks it would be helpful if the focus is shifted to the speaking skill because it is an important skill in learning a language. She added that it is not easy to use the microphone through the virtual classrooms, , leading her to feel pressurized and she seems to be the only one who is talking and involved in the speaking activity. Furthermore, she stated that if they had more interaction with their classmates,

they would feel more confident since the teacher's high level of language makes them feel anxious to make mistakes when they talk.

In the last one-on-one interview, the participant proposed that since she had her whole first year taught fully online, she has of the idea to not recommend the English language to be taught fully online because she and her classmates faced many issues. For example, she noted that they have poor network connection when they take exams and the page keeps loading or sometimes their computers would shut off for no reason. Therefore, she suggested that midterms, quizzes, and final exams are better to be conducted at the college campus because it would be more convenient.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This study questions offers three primary contributions that intended to accentuate the EFL students' attitudes towards full-online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. First, it presents the overall EFL students' opinions regarding the current full-online learning. It also reveals whether they have been adjusted to the full-online EFL learning at the end of the academic year or not. Second, it provides in-depth investigations into the difficulties they have encountered in the EFL virtual classrooms setting. Third, the study results offer suggestions that can improve the efficiency of EFL full-online learning in the future.

As previously mentioned, Francisco and Barcelona (2020) stated that online learning can be the only resolution that can assure learning to take place in some circumstances. Therefore, the EFL students showed appreciations and satisfaction to the overall efforts done by the EFL instructors to meet their needs and expectations in learning a foreign language during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the answer to the first question of this study uncovered that the majority of the EFL students express negative attitudes towards learning EFL fully online. Approximately 67% were in favor of traditional learning where 24% of the respondents preferred the current full-online learning, and only around 9% were neutral. Yet, online learning provided great chances for some of the EFL students to get better grades and develop their performance. Alhawiti (2017) has stated that the online learning students' performance was better than the traditional classroom learners' performance in the experiment he carried to compare their results through English achievement tests. In the author personal experience, she confirms that full-online learning

through the second academic year of her MA in Applied Linguistics program allowed her to obtain outstanding grades.

The answers to the second question illustrated EFL Students' drawbacks and benefits that they have encountered while using full-virtual classrooms. One participant stated that learning is more certain through full-online learning as it avoids many challenging issues such as health problems, weather changes, and transportations. Also, another student asserted that their computer skills were enhanced, and they were introduced to the use of online books. She added that they are currently using many programs to help them in organize their studying schedules such as Class-up, Edmodo, Google Drive, Google Cloud, and Blackboard. One more student pointed out that one of the full-online benefits is the flexible submission hours of their assignments. Another participant added that when the teachers uploaded the PowerPoint, Word documents, and the recorded sessions, it helped them get prepared for their exams.

While others mentioned few drawbacks of the EFL full-online, like running some connection problems in virtual classes via the blackboard, and that it makes the voice of the EFL language teacher unclear to them. Also, another participant added that losing an internet connection means losing the chance to join the virtual EFL classroom. These responses agree with Ng's (2007) who claims of the rapid challenges of online learning that are related to the network connection and technical issues. However, the author suggests that EFL teachers must provide an alternative asynchronous assessment with flexible deadline submission timing to overcome these common connection problems. Nevertheless, another student confirmed her view when she stated that the students are less active in full-online learning and the fact that most of the girls are shy, and they just type

the answers and rarely use the mic. Likewise, Male et al., (2020), the results of this study reveal that the majority prefer traditional learning to online learning for its interactive and engaging educational environment.

Furthermore, the third question's answers present EFL beginner learners' suggestions to improve virtual learning for a more efficient full-online English language learning experience. A participant stated that EFL instructors should introduce the EFL full-online course teaching procedure prior to the start of the learning process to explain how to use the blackboard tools and join its virtual classrooms. Another participant stated that it would be preferred if the EFL teachers would assure the appropriateness of the materials to all EFL students' levels. One more participant added that the English virtual classrooms would be more engaging and fun if EFL lecturers could provide puzzles and games for learners.

As previewed, the three research questions answers were discussed in relation to the previous EFL studies, and the following sixth chapter will introduce the limitations of this study and the suggested recommendation for the EFL teachers, students, and further researchers.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

The current study results were reported using a qualitative approach investigation of the EFL beginners' attitudes in regards to the EFL Full-virtual learning. The findings of the study preview that the EFL students preferred traditional learning over full-online learning. Thus, despite their improved performance and the full-online EFL acquisition benefits that outweighed its difficulties, most EFL students favored traditional EFL learning.

It is recommended for the EFL students to make sure of having a high network connection before the virtual classroom starts. Also, EFL learners are advised to be fully prepared to join the virtual lectures on time and be responsible for interacting with their English language instructors to develop their language skills. Further, the English language instructors are highly recommended to use the cutting-edge technological devices to deliver efficient and engaging EFL lectures. Also, they are recommended to set breaks to energize their learners because sitting in front of the screens for long time can be exhausting and boring. EFL instructors should allow their students to have more practice of the target language and to equip them with speaking and conversational drills to overcome their worries about full-online learning.

Nevertheless, many limitations are raised for the current study findings. First, it has been conducted to a focused group discussion and one-on-one interviews of EFL learners at one university, and their responses are not generalized to the whole targeted population. Another limitation is that the analysis does not go beyond the participants' viewpoints. Future studies are advised to investigate the impact of full-online learning on the students' acquisition of the English. Also, it is recommended to examine the effects of full-virtual

learning on the production skills of EFL beginners. The virtual collection of the data collection has limited the study findings as the students' facial expressions, body language, and actual interaction remain unknown. Therefore, further research should conduct face-to-face focused group discussion and one-on-one interviews to have a better observation of the discussion. In addition, this study was limited to the females JUC undergraduates, and further research is advised to be generalized to both gender at similar preparatory levels.

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Appendix

• Focused Group Discussion

1-What is your general opinion of EFL full-online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2-Do you find full- online learning more convenient than the traditional learning during the pandemic? And why?

3-What are the difficulties you have encountered when you used the blackboard's virtual classrooms?

١- ما هو رأيك العام تجاه تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية عن بعد كلياً خلال جائحة كورونا؟

٢- بعد عام دراسي عن بعد بشكل كامل هل تفضلين دراسة اللغة الانجليزية عن طريق الدراسة التقليدية(الحضورية) ام الدراسة عن بعد بشكل كامل؟ ولماذا؟

٣- ماهي الصعوبات التي واجهتها خلال دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية عن بعد كلياً خلال الفصول الافتراضية في منصة البلاك بورد؟

• One-on-one Interviews

1- How do you find the EFL virtual classroom improving your English language skills (reading- listening- speaking- writing) during full-online learning?

2- What are the new EFL learning activities that full-online learning enabled to conduct during the pandemic?

3-Do you have suggestions to enhance the quality of full-online EFL language learning during the pandemic?

١ -كيف تجدين الفصول الافتراضية تطور من مهاراتك (القراءة- الاستماع- المحادثة- الكتابة) في اللغة الانجليزية خلال التعليم الكامل عن بعد؟

٢ -ماذا اتاح لك التعليم عن بعد في الفصول الافتراضية من نشاطات او تدريبات تساعد في تعلم اللغة الانجليزية خلال جائحة كورونا؟

٣ -هل لديك اقتراحات تساهم في تحسين جودة تعليم اللغة الانجليزية عن بعد خلال جائحة كورونا؟