

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**  
**MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**  
**UNIVERSITY OF ABDELHAMID IBN BADIS - MOSTAGANEM -**  
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**The Use of Moodle Versus Google Classroom in EFL Teaching**

**During Corona Virus Pandemic**

The Case of Teachers and L2 Students at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis

University of Mostaganem

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirement of a masters' degree in  
didactics and applied linguistics

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2021/2022

## **Dedications**

I dedicate this humble work to my lovely family, my dear parents, my source of success.

My brother and sister, for their unconditional love and continuous support.

I also dedicate it to my friend Sofiane who encouraged me and helped me to complete my  
research.

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to thank my supervisor, **Ms. ADNANI Rajaa** for directing this work. I will be eternally grateful to you for allowing me to pursue my passion and for your unwavering support, patience, guidance, and reassurance. I am indebted to her for being a continuous source of encouragement and optimism, and for her immeasurable time spent reading and providing assistance with the work.

I would also like to give a special thanks to the board of examiners, **Ms. SAADI Fatima Zohra** and **Dr. OULD SI BOUZIANE Sabria** for their time, interest, and insightful comments.

Appreciation also goes to all my teachers for their endless support and tolerance, and for the valuable information and advice, they provided me during the master cycle.

My acknowledgement would not be complete without giving much appreciation to the participants who took part in this particular project. Especially the teachers at AbdelHamid Ibn Badis University. You all have been a great source of inspiration, and I have learned so much from you.

Thank you very much, everyone!

## **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has left a lasting imprint on modern history and caused permanent changes in the sector of education. Online learning has soon been thought of as a means of managing critical situations. Eventually, the Algerian ministry of higher education decided on a shift from on-site teaching and learning to distance education. Universities have to use Learning Management Systems (LMSs) to facilitate communication between teachers and students. The current study attempts to investigate the use of both LMSs—the Moodle platform and Google Classroom—by students and teachers. By taking the University of Mostaganem as a case, the study tends to show the level of effectiveness of both platforms according to EFL teachers and students. To fulfil this study, a mixed-method approach has been adopted to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. A questionnaire is designed for EFL students, and an interview is conducted with EFL teachers at the aforementioned university. Findings elucidate that Google Classroom outperforms Moodle in terms of accessibility and usefulness. Furthermore, the study provides several relevant recommendations to make online LMSs more productive and well-utilized by teachers, students, and administrators to enhance the quality of online teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** learning management systems, Moodle, Google classroom, online teaching, EFL context, COVID-19 pandemic.

## **List of Abbreviations**

CALL Computer-Assisted Language Learning

CMS Course Management System

CVP Corona Virus Pandemic

EFL English as a Foreign Language

GC Google Classroom

HE Higher Education

ICT Information and Communication Technologies

LMS Learning Management System

MALL Mobile Assisted Language Learning

OSS Open-Source Software

Q Question

VLE Virtual Learning Environment

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## **General Introduction**

The unexpected emergence of the devastating Corona virus disease obliged the Algerian authorities to shut down almost all the activities including the educational institutions and to take emergency precautions to prevent the spread of the deadly and highly contagious virus among the students and the teachers as well. The most important precaution that was taken is the online education. This act was taken not only to prevent the spread of the virus, but also to ensure the continuation of educational and academic activities.

The process of teaching and learning through ICTs from distance – or e-learning- was the safety precaution taken by the Algerian authorities. The shift from the traditional face-to-face teaching and learning to studying and teaching from home guaranteed the health safety for both teachers and students. The process of online learning played a vital role in keeping the education going despite the challenges that faced the students and teachers to adapt. However, this was not an easy task.

Online education is based on different digital platforms ranging from online conferencing applications to learning management systems. The Algerian ministry of higher education imposed on universities the platform of Moodle. However, teachers did not stick to one-platform instruction. They invited their students to join online classes in other Learning Management Systems (LMSs) platforms and applications like Zoom meetings; Microsoft Teams; Google Meet; Google Classroom, and social media platforms are examples of platforms and applications available and used.

Mostaganem University represented a cross-section of Algerian teachers; they depended on Moodle and Google Classroom as the major e-learning tools. The researcher, as a student in the aforementioned university, I noticed that Google classroom has been used alongside –or even instead of- Moodle among several teachers at different branches and levels. Further, at the department of English, there have been some preferences among EFL teachers for the choice of platform.

This research attempts to compare and contrast the use of Moodle platform and Google Classroom by EFL students and teachers at Mostaganem University. Based on the opinions of

teachers and students; this study tends to show the level of effectiveness of both platforms. To achieve these objectives, the following questions have been raised:

1. To what extent has Google Classroom outperformed Moodle in terms of effectiveness according to EFL students at Mostaganem University?
2. What are the reasons behind alternating Moodle with Google Classroom by EFL teachers' at Mostaganem University?

As tentative answers to these questions, the following hypotheses are suggested:

1. According to EFL students at Mostaganem University, Google classroom has proved its effectiveness more than Moodle has.
2. EFL Teachers and students prefer Google classroom because of its accessibility, interactivity, and usefulness.

The present research takes place at the department of English, Mostaganem University. The target populations are both teachers and students. The selected samples consist of (1) thirty-seven second-year License students and (2) eight teachers. This study adopts a mixed method approach. Two data collection tools are implemented: (1) a questionnaire designed for the students and (2) a semi-structured interview for teachers. Data collected from both research instruments are to be quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed.

The present research is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter explains the basic concepts related to the study mainly, online education, learning management software, and Moodle and Google classroom. The second chapter gives a clear description of the study in terms of the methodology, the research design and the tools used in the data collection. The third chapter provides analysis of the data gathered and interprets them in an attempt to give a clear answer to the research questions.

# **Chapter One**

## **Literature Review**

## 1.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the main subheadings and the key concepts, associated with the term “learning management system” (LMS), such as Google sites, blackboard, and others. Moodle and Google classroom receive special attention as they represent the heart of this research. It begins by defining both LMS platforms. Then it focuses on their use, features, advantages, and limitations. Finally, it tries to explore the similarities and the differences between them.

## 1.2 Learning Management Systems

Technology enables peer interaction and is becoming increasingly significant and pervasive in higher education. Learning management systems (LMSs) are critical to education nowadays, and serve two major purposes (Ullman & Rabinowitz, 2004). First, (LMS) can supplement a conventional course experience. Second, (LMS) might be useful to organize a course experience. In addition, Web based systems such as learning Management systems (LMS) allow instructors and students to share instructional materials and make announcement, as well as submit and return course assignment and communicate with one another. In an educational context, a learning management system (LMS) is a software application that is used to deliver content, track student engagement with the course, and manage training and education. These system have been known as Course Management Systems (CMS), virtual learning environments (VLE), and collaborative learning which are “Internet based, software allowing instructors to manage materials distribution, assignments, communications and other aspects of instructions for their courses” (Abu Shawar, 2009, p. 3).

The integration of technology into the educational environment has facilitated the communication between students and teachers, but at the same time, raised new challenges (Pishva et al., 2010). The learning management systems have been used widely by many universities in Algeria to manage and administer courses and often track the learners’ progress. However, employing a learning management system is only one part of the process. Another key component is the LMSs effectiveness, as it assists students in making their learning process go more smoothly. both professors and students frequently complain about connectivity issues or the

lack of mastery of ICT tools and online platforms such as Zoom, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams. Similarly, even those who were familiar with ICT did not feel they were previously equipped with training to conduct their classes online due to the deficiency in understanding complicated assignments in the system to access the platform.

Within the spectrum of these systems, many online platforms have been designed for educational institutions namely, Blackboard, a comprehensive online education and web-based learning platform that is used for communication between teachers and students ([www. Blackboard.com](http://www.Blackboard.com)). A free, customizable website with settings for accessing and sharing information such as Google Sites ([sites.Google.com](http://sites.Google.com)) , and a free online platform that manages online discussion like Schoology ( [www.schoology.com](http://www.schoology.com)).

In this respect the current chapter shed light on examining two web-based learning platforms. Google Classroom and Moodle, which are the focus of this study since they are the dominant LMS platforms used in Algeria universities and specifically at Mostaganem University in the Department of English.

### **1.2.1 Moodle Platform**

Research and experience strongly suggest that platforms are critical in online education. More than one million teachers around the world use Moodle platform as an online tool for their courses. Martin Dougiamas of Curtin University of Technology in Australia is known as the creator of the open–source Moodle in 2002. The term Moodle stands for “Modular Object-Oriented dynamic Learning Environment”. It is an open - source known as a Learning Management System (LMS) or a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that is designed to assist teachers in creating an online classroom environment and allows for rich cooperation and discussion with their students to support the learning process. (Kurti, 2008, p. 3)

Moreover, according to Beabzberg (2005), Moodle is an open-source program (OSS) defined as ”software that is freely available for anybody to use and change”. In the academic world, Moodle is the most popular media platform that is used in universities to create an interactive learning environment. It has a number of design elements that enable instructors and students to communicate, collaborate, and engage in online learning in a variety of ways.

Moodle can be used to enhance traditional classroom instruction or to conduct entirely online courses. Similarly, Su (2006) argued that Moodle is a free online course management system (CMS) that is particularly beneficial for language instruction. It contains many helpful and user-friendly tools for creating and running courses.

Furthermore, according to Dharmendra et al, Moodle “is a Course Management System (CMS) - a software package developed to assist instructors to create great online courses.” (2011, p. 34). It has been praised as a free and open-source learning management system, and a huge number of educational institutions throughout the world have adopted it (Costello, 2013). Similarly, Oproiu (2015) defines it as an open-source learning management system that allows for an online collaborative and virtual learning environment (p. 427).

In addition, teachers can use this free e-learning application to construct web-based courses and an interactive learning environment with their students by employing communication tools like chat rooms and forums. Students, on the other hand, can utilize the platform to enroll in classes, gain access to their teachers’ activities and assessments, and collaborate with their classmates on various assignments. As a result, students are drawn to Moodle for a variety of reasons.

Additional information, such as assignments, activities, books, and videos, can be provided by professors to students. It allows teachers and students to engage in and share learning while also helping the teacher to direct and verify “the deadlines and time frames for assignments- quizzes, forums, chats, and other activities” (Cole, 2005, as cited in, Suppasetserree & Dennis 2010, p. 33). Moodle badges are also a terrific motivator and engagement tool for rewarding students for their hard work and achievement. Krasnova and Ananjev (2015) state that Moodle can engage learners through “highly motivating activities that positively affect students’ performance and promote their progress because they can work not only with course materials but also access any web resource. “Boguebs (2019) indicates that thanks to Moodle, motivation to learn is boosted since students can study at their own pace. (p.4).

### **1.2.1.1 How It Works**

Nowadays, Moodle is being employed in a variety of fields, including education. Moodle is the principal platform used by many higher education institutions throughout the world to develop an Internet-based learning system. In Algeria, many colleges have adopted the Moodle platform in order to fully utilize modern technology and create an e-learning interface. When the implementation of e-learning became necessary owing to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in March 2020, the University of Mostaganem deployed the Moodle learning system to accomplish the academic year. The platform is accessible through the university's academic web portal. <https://www.univ-mosta.dz/universite-abdelhamid-ibn-badis-mostaganem/>

### **1.2.1.2 The Major Features of Moodle Platform**

Moodle platform provides three levels of use, each feature with its own set of use and access it provides a guide to show the role of each user, and what users can and cannot do in specific areas of Moodle. Therefore, the user can play a variety of roles, including administrator (the manager of the platforms) , teacher who may also be known as (trainer, facilitator, promoter) and the student (learner, participant, among others).

### **1.2.1.3 Administrator**

Administrator has full and absolute authority to go everywhere in Moodle and can access everything. A site administrator has access to every element of a Moodle site, including all courses, reports, and user data. An administrator has the ability to change the appearance of the complete website, as well as create and delete pages, courses, and so on.

### **1.2.1.4 Teacher**

A teacher has the second-highest level of education, and limited control, not like administrators. That is to say, they make crucial decisions concerning a subject they teach for example, once a course has been created by the administrator, the teacher of a particular course may set it up, upload course materials, enroll and unenroll students, etc. They can upload many lectures,

lessons, and activities for their students. At the same time, they can organize online learning, online exams, and tests they can also have a notebook for each class where they can submit the marks.

### 1.2.1.5 Student

Students have a lower authorization level; Students' role is to participate in a course and download the lessons easily. On Moodle platform, students can participate in all the activities of the course and see the resources but cannot modify or see the notebook of the class. That is to say, students obtain only materials that are provided by the teacher to enroll in classes and collaborate with their classmates on various assignments. Furthermore, when the teachers evaluate their work, students can only see their personal grades.

These roles and their features are represented in the following table:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Function</b>
Administrator	Manages the whole environment
Teacher	Create events, courses, or subjects based on the defined top-ical areas. Create training or events That are specific.
Student	Accesses and interacts with a specific event and participates in the subjects they are subscribed

Table 1.1: Roles and Functions in Moodle Platform

Moodle has a simple interface that looks more like a portal of information. In general, course sites are divided into three columns that the teacher or the course can personalize by adding components such as a calendar, online users, and a list of activities, among other things. These elements are organized in columns to the right and left of the screen, allowing the user to move from one teacher to the next. In the center column, we find a range of possibilities that might be the result of the class, such as a list weekly subjects that are numbered or dated, or areas to organize information or similar activities. In courses that use Moodle as virtual environment, there are generally living areas for recording course –related news, discussion forums, content areas to enter text, images, and presentations on the theme, activities areas, to direct the tasks to be performed or delivered to the teacher, or the central column, which is the place where resources and activities are available.

## **1.2.2 The Activities Available in Moodle**

Moodle offers different activities that are advantageous to its various users and their needs including:

### **1.2.2.1 Chat**

The chat is an activity that allows participants to communicate synchronously. This is a good way to acquire different perspectives on each other and the topics being discussed. The way a user communicates in a chat room differs from normal internet forums. Live chat has several tools for organizing and reviewing chat conversations.

### **1.2.2.2 Database**

The Database is an activity that allows participants to create, maintain, and search a set of record entries. images, files URLs, numbers, and text can all be included in the format and the structure of these entries. Participants can submit their own entries which can be moderated by editing teachers. This provides students more autonomy over their learning and allows them to collaborate with their peers in order to develop their own knowledge. Even though the database has difficulty exporting data for multiple modules, it can be useful to store and exchange data with all participants. The database composed of various fields that one must create. One can also specify how many entries each participant must write in to access other entries.

### **1.2.2.3 Forums**

Forums activity allows participants to communicate asynchronously. Through the use of “Moodle Forums”, both educators and students can collaborate. Participants who subscribe to a forum receive copies of each new post through email. Teachers can create discussion topics and use a forum to communicate with all students on a course. Forum also enables students and teachers to leave comments in a central place to simulate discussion. All Moodle courses automatically include a news forum which cannot be deleted. For new courses, participants and all course participants receive email announcing that new content has been submitted to that

particular forum.

#### **1.2.2.4 Glossary**

The Glossary activity allows users to create and maintain a list of terms and definitions, like a dictionary. It can be used to create a list of useful websites or FAQs that is annotated. The definitions can be found in variety of formats and can be linked from other parts of the site.

#### **1.2.2.5 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire in Moodle is a type of activity that allows teachers to construct a surveys or questionnaires using a variety of question types for students to get their feedback, for instance a course evaluation or activities .

#### **1.2.2.6 Scheduler**

A scheduler is a Moodle activity that allows the course instructor to post available meeting times for students to sign up for. This is useful for student – professor when necessary. It is used for advisory days or just for elective office hours.

#### **1.2.2.7 Lesson**

A lecturer can design conditional pathways across the material using a lesson. It is made up of several pages, each of which ends with a question and a list of possible solutions. Depending on the student's response, they will either move on to the next page or be redirected to a prior page. Students are led to website you want them to see next. This is based on the way they answer the questions. It can be a useful tool for studying, practicing, and testing.

#### **1.2.2.8 Assignment**

Students can submit work online, including uploading any file type, using assignments (Word document, PowerPoint, video clip etc.). Teachers can grade and provide feedback. Uploading files in a more advanced way this option should be used if you want your students to

submit many files or files that are very large. You can set the maximum file size and number of files submitted per student in this sub-module, as well as whether or not you want students to work in groups, whether or not students can delete files after they've been uploaded, whether or not students can write notes to you online, and when the assignment is due. You may also choose whether or not you want to be notified when a student uploads a file through email. This assignment also allows teachers to offer feedback in the form of a file, allowing for the return of an electronically updated work.

### 1.2.3 Moodle in EFL Teaching and Learning Process

Moodle allows EFL instructors to combine traditional classroom methods with new technical teaching methods. Teachers can add newer means of teaching to their old methods (board and chalk) or e-learning (with internet and learning platforms). Some of the students may feel nervous while studying in the presence of the instructor. However, this is dependent on the situation and the personality of each learner. According to Lehman, Conceição, 2010 claim that when using online learning (Moodle), the teacher is present online rather than in person, which can benefit the learner-teacher connection. (Munro, 1998) EFL students can use Moodle to continue their education outside the classroom.

The teacher's role is critical in the learning process, but students can also benefit from working with technological media as well. Cuadrado-Garcia and Ruiz-Molina (2009) found that teachers can develop effective online learning communities. It makes the learning process easier for students because they do not have to come to the university to take classes or participate in activities. There are a variety of exercises on the Moodle platform that can help EFL students enhance their learning skills. It includes exercises in grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening, and writing.

### 1.2.4 Moodle Resources

Moodle provides a suite of tools that enables teachers to integrate any form of file in their courses. Here are some basic materials that teachers might use in their classes:

**The label:** It allows users to immediately enter content like texts, photos, and videos into a

section of the course. To view the content of the label, pupils do not need to click on the link. The label's information is always visible on the course's home page.

**The folder:** Instead of posting links to each file, it is possible to view the list of the folder's files. Users can see and download the desired files by clicking on the link for each folder.

**The File:** Users access the file's content by clicking on the link (the name of the link or the folder).

**The book:** It makes it possible to create a resource with many pages of material and a table of contents. Users merely need to click on the book's link to see the contents of the first page and the table of contents.

**The page:** Through using HTML editor, it is possible to create a Web page. The content of the Web page Moodle is viewed by clicking on the link (the page's name).

**The URL:** It allows external website links to be added. Users can only access the external website if they click on it.

### 1.2.5 Advantages and Limitations of Moodle Platform

The main reasons for using the system are that it is available at a relatively low cost, that it offers a wide range of capabilities that instructors and administrators can use to teach, and that it is, to a certain extent, easy to implement. However, another benefit of Moodle is that it allows a wide range of content formats to be uploaded and made available to students and instructors. Moodle not only allows students to learn online or from a distance, but it also makes resources available to students in instructor-led classes. Moodle also has different options and tool available for use. It is provided for communication between the instructor and student as well as student-to-student contact. Forums, blogs, chats, and messages are all ways for people enrolled in a course to communicate with each other in Moodle. This is a benefit because, in an online or distance learning course, communication is critical to guarantee that the lesson is effective and that, if a problem arises, tools are available to enable for effective dialogue.

On the other hand, there are several of drawbacks to utilizing Moodle that should be considered. The first major issue is that Moodle is not yet fully designed to handle large projects. While it may be appropriate for small to medium-sized colleges and universities, the approach

may not be appropriate for larger institutions or as a means of conducting all classes in a city. Another common Moodle issue is that it can seem confusing, inaccessible for users that do not have experience and training. Assessment abilities are often limited in Moodle, and there are some space issues.

### **1.2.6 Google Classroom Platform**

There are a lot of online social learning environment and educational tools that are accessible for both students and teachers, such as, Google Docs, Google Scholar, and Google+ social networking .it was shut down in 2019. Google launched an e-learning tool named Google Classroom. G Suite for Education includes Google classroom. It is a blended learning platform with interesting and simple features for schools. It has a user-friendly interface and can be accessed with a Google account. It encourages students and instructors to work together to improve communication. Only the institution's database can invite students to classrooms. Google Classroom is a free program that helps students and teachers communicate, collaborate, organize, and create assignments. It also makes learning paperless. Since its launch in 2014 as an exclusive tool for school systems to utilize for E-learning, Google Classroom has been used by millions of teachers and students at institutions all over the world. By "assisting students in researching, organizing, and collaborating for assignments, as well as turning in work through the apps' built-in sharing features," (Sweeney, 2013, p. 34).

Google Classroom is designed to improve communication between students and teachers and help students stay on task with course work in an inclusive environment. Students can also communicate with one another in the online environment. Teachers can use Google Classroom to create, organize, and have students submit work. It also allows teachers to post "class resources, assignments, and announcements and due dates" (Government of, 2015, p. 5). Furthermore, it is characterized as an application that may educate self-learning and encourage both students and teachers to stay engaged in the academic community. Further, Google Classroom may be a tool that encourages students to become active participants. According to Halverson, spring, Huyett, Henrie, and Graham (2017), Google Classroom (GC) is superior to other platforms because it encourages face-to-face interaction. It is a digital tool that facilitates student

and teacher collaboration. Google Classroom is often considered as one of the best platforms for improving teachers' workflow. It provides a set of powerful features that make it an ideal tool to use with students. It is available to anyone with Google Apps for Education, a free suite of productivity tools including Gmail, Drive and Docs. (2015)

Moreover, Google Classroom saves all of the teacher's class resources in Google Drive, allowing teachers to "create and manage folders for each of their classes" (Australia, 2015, p.5) and students to access assignments from anywhere with an internet connection. Instructors may utilize Google Classroom to build dynamic courses that are student-centered, collaborative, and memorable since it provides easy-to-use learning elements with students of all categories able to collaborate as it is beneficial to all types of learners, even adults. It also has some advantages, such as being paperless, being accessible from anywhere as long as there is an internet connection and from any device, allowing professors and students to communicate, providing feedback to students, and individualize learning. It offers a learning component that allows professors to actively develop and manage assignments. Teachers can manage their students' work more easily and in an uncomplicated way with Google Classroom. Due of its ease of use, it is immensely beneficial to both teachers and pupils.

### **1.2.6.1 How It Works**

Highly competition within companies in the worldwide develop applications and software for Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). These services were immensely savers for universities to complete their work during the Corona Virus epidemic. In Algeria, different universities have adopted Google Classroom as another means for keeping learners and teachers connected. The university of Mostaganem successfully used Google Classroom as an alternative platform.

Some folks may still be unfamiliar with Google Classroom. As a result, here is a step-by-step explanation of how to use Google Classroom effectively for improved understanding (Google, 2018). To begin with, login in using [classroom.google.com]. Log in: sign in using your account and your organization's e-mail address. Click the "+" button next to the e-mail address to create the first class. "Create class" will appear, and then click on it. Add a class

name after that. On the "about" page, the teacher can enter information about the class, such as a description and instructions for students, as well as a Google Drive folder for classroom resources and a course and lesson plan. Finally, the class is complete, and students with institutional Google accounts can join at any time by looking for the class code in the "stream" tab.

### **1.2.6.2 The Major Features of Google Classroom**

When Google Classroom is well-managed, it may be used for a variety of activities. One can start by making an announcement. Educators can use this section to make announcements about class updates. They may schedule announcements, control replies and comments, and attach files and class materials to each announcement post. The second step is to make an assignment. This is Google Classroom's most important feature. Teachers can upload assignments for students to submit on time, which means that educators can either hand out the learning activity (assignment) right away or plan it for a specified day. Additionally, students can complete their work by downloading resources that have been provided by the teacher. Finally, ask a question. Educators can use this section to invite students to participate in a question-driven discussion. Students can also ask and generate questions to be discussed with the teacher. Hence, it's a good technique to improve learning and keep students interested

### **1.2.6.3 The Advantages and Disadvantages in Teaching and Learning**

Google Classroom includes a lot of features that are helpful to its customers. A couple of them are simple to use, cost nothing, are compatible with cell phones, and save time. Google Classroom is quite simple to use. Based on Janzen, M. (2014), "Google Classroom's design purposefully simplifies the instructional interface and options used for delivering and tracking assignments; communication with the entire course or individuals is also simplified through announcement, email and push notifications". He further concluded that Google Classroom was developed to reduce time by integrating and automating the use of other Google applications like Docs, Slides, and Spreadsheets.

Furthermore, there is no cost associated with using Google Classroom. Anyone can use it

for free. Despite having an institutional Google Account, users can still use it for free. Because Google Classroom is designed to respond quickly, anyone can use it on any mobile device as long as they have an internet connection. Google Classroom can also be accessed via Google Chrome from any computer or from any mobile device, regardless of platform. All files uploaded by teachers and students are stored in a Google Drive classroom folder. Users can access classroom at any time and from any location, implying that Google Classroom is responsive and easy to use on any mobile device. As Janzen, M (2014) state that "Mobile access to learning materials that are attractive and easy to interact with is critical in today's web connected learning environments". Both the teacher and the student can save time by using Google Classroom. As a result, the classroom is a significant time saver, as all resources are saved in one place and the students have the ability to access classroom anywhere.

Keeler, A. (2014) goes on to list a several other advantages to using Google Classroom. She describes how Google Classroom facilitates counseling by just posting an announcement. She also claims that Google Classroom encourages student collaboration. Google Classroom. Similarly, according to Crawford, A. R. (2015), fosters collaborative learning. Teachers can publish resources and provide feedback to students in this area. Students can also post resources and leave comments. Students can also collaborate with one another. They can share their documents and assignments, resulting in the best possible assignment. It incorporates other Google programs such as Docs, Slides, Drive, and Spreadsheets, according to Iftakhar (2016). Nonetheless, the entire assignment, grading, formative assessment, and feedback process is streamlined and simplified.

Despite its many advantages, Google Classroom has several drawbacks. According to Pappas (2015), some of them include limited integration options, too much googlish, no automated updates, and tough learner sharing and editing issues. Because Google Classroom is not synced with Google Calendar or any other calendar, it is difficult and challenging for teachers to manage instructional materials and establish deadlines for tasks. Some of the buttons in Google Classrooms are only familiar to Google users. It can leave new users perplexed and confused, or it can make them need additional time to deal with it. As a result, Pappas considers Google Classroom to be excessively "googlish." Google Classroom does not have an auto-update fea-

ture, which causes learners to miss key announcements because they must reload it on a regular basis. Also, without the consent of the teacher, pupils are not permitted to share their materials with others. After creating and distributing an assignment to Google Classroom, students can only edit it. They have the ability to maintain or delete any section of the assignments. Despite certain flaws, Google Classroom is a wonderful thing for students and instructors since it is simple to use, efficient, effective, and environmentally friendly, and it makes teacher-student communication easier. Learning can be more successful and efficient using Google Classroom because students and teachers can access it from any electronic device with an internet connection.

### **1.3 Comparing and Contrasting the Platforms**

Though these two platforms serve a similar purpose, both helps us understand the different approaches towards online learning. Both Moodle and Google Classroom have been designed to help the teachers engage students outside of their usual classes. Both of them have specific features that are utilized by the teachers and students to derive teaching-learning benefits. Similarly, Face-to-face interactions are avoided on both platforms. However, there are adequate collaborative connections between students and teachers in virtual environment. Both platforms can be used to build as many classrooms and courses as needed, and the teacher can manage them to the best of his or her ability.

These platforms make it simple for teachers to enroll students in an easy way. They allow the teacher to add resources such as PowerPoint presentations, PDF files, Word files, photos, audio, video, and animations in their lessons. They also give teachers the ability to create assignments and grade the assignments submitted by the students. Once the resources are in place and developed, students and teachers can use them at any time, seven days a week as long as there is an internet connection. They can be accessible once they've been made. Both are available for free and can be adjusted by individual teachers. However, institutional registration may be necessary for Google Classroom and certain school package of Moodle may be cost-bound .Students instantly gain benefits in both the platforms because they can follow the teachers' instructions, submit their tasks as directed and receive feedback from the teachers on the work

they have completed and the plans they have carried out.

However, several previous studies highlighted the differences between both LMSs. Among these studies, we mention Rohman et al. (2021), Prasetya (2021), Wiradharma (2020), and Octaberlina and Muslimin (2020). The following table demonstrates a summary of the major differences mentioned in these studies.

<b>Google Classroom</b>	<b>Moodle</b>
training is not essential for course creation and enrolling the students	trained educators with good experience in Moodle environment can create courses and enroll students and teachers effectively
It is designed in a simple and efficient Way.	It is relatively bigger and has many options to work with and complex in its operation
It can be used to create private websites and has limited number of options that can be edited	It includes a lot of modifiable options based on our need and it is often used to create private websites that can only be accessed by people registered in the course
It is device independent due to its simplicity and works well on both computers and phones	The Moodle app functions well on different smart phones but it's more complicated. It is rather user friendly with desktop computers and laptop
It has about 10 add-ons that can be used to extend and improve the functionality of the resource	Functionality of the resources. Despite the complexity, it offers more than thousands of add-ons.
The course titles are not displayed on the middle of the page	The course titles are available even in the middle of the page for easy access
To sign up, the institution should register for the education package. If the free version is used, it has limitations	It is an open-source platform free to download and install. However, paid plans can be opted when more users need to be added

Table 1.2: Differences between Google Classroom and Moodle

## **1.4 Conclusion**

The first chapter highlighted the essential concepts related to the term Learning Management Systems (LMS) for online learning namely Moodle and Google classroom, including definition. Part of it was concerned with comparison between the two by introducing their utilization. The focus of this chapter was also on their features, advantages and limitations. The last part explored the similarities and differences in terms of efficiency.

# **Chapter Two**

## **Methodology**

## 2.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter has covered the literature review of the research, the present chapter represents the practical part carried out in the collection of the data including the methods and approaches that have been selected to conduct this study. Moreover, it describes the participants included in this study. Finally, for this research necessity, it highlights the data collection tools employed including teachers' interview and students' questionnaire.

## 2.2 Research Design

A research is planned activity, aimed at establishing new facts and information about a particular phenomenon. The research process involves the identification of a particular problem or area of interest. This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent has Google Classroom outperformed Moodle in terms of effectiveness according to EFL students at Mostaganem University?
2. What are the reasons behind alternating Moodle with Google Classroom by EFL teachers at Mostaganem University?

The following hypothesis was proposed in an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. According to EFL students at Mostaganem University, Google classroom has proved its effectiveness more than Moodle has.
2. EFL Teachers and students prefer Google classroom because of its accessibility, interactivity, and usefulness.

Given all these aforementioned assumptions, the present paper aims at investigating the challenges that Algerian teachers and students face regarding online learning and teaching LMS platforms, namely Moodle and Google classrooms experienced during the COVID-19 lockdown. The paper also attempted to assess how effective and convenient the online platform was for the teachers as well as how satisfied students were with their academic learning achievement, bringing to the fore their sense of well-being and under what circumstances.

The research method used is a comparative survey research. It provides a comparison between two well-known online learning platforms, viz. Moodle and Google classroom in terms of efficiency and simplicity.

### **2.3 Research Approaches**

In fact, there are two basic approaches in this research namely the quantitative approach and the qualitative approach. The former is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data that can be transformed into useable statistics. Whereas the latter is based on categorizing and describing data. A mixed-method approach is used in this study to find answers to the research questions and to verify the research assumptions.

### **2.4 Participants**

Some sample decisions should be made earlier in the entire planning process. A sample according to Fink (2003, 01) “is a proportion or a subset of a larger group called a population ... a good sample is a miniature version of the population of which it is a part- just like it, only smaller” and it chosen in order to generalize the final results. Similarly, sampling can be defined as an act of choosing a suitable sample from a large population (Trachoma, 2006).

Moreover, using sampling in research can help to find an unknown piece of information and realize the maximum accuracy in the estimation. It is vital to choose the group of participants that fits one’s study and aims of research.

#### **2.4.1 The Description of the Study Samples**

In order to investigate the issue raised in this study and to gain more credible information, we addressed sample population in an attempt to gather the necessary data and accurate results. The participants selected for the present experiment were teachers and students.

### **2.4.1.1 The EFL Students**

This sample was selected through a non-probability sampling method to find out the respondents' opinions about the online learning platforms (Moodle / Google Classroom) aforementioned above and also because their teachers were included in the study.

Thirty-seven (37) is the number of the participants in the study. The informants are second year license students who study at the department of English Abdelhamid Ibn Badis , Mostaganem during the academic year 2021-2022 .The sample consists of (27)females and (10)males

### **2.4.1.2 English Teachers**

For the sake of reliability and objectivity, the sampling technique by which the population is selected to collect data is non-random sampling. Hence, to gather a comprehensive overview about the two major platforms used by Algerian Universities, this sample was selected based on:

### **2.4.1.3 Purposive Sampling Type**

The purposive sampling method is a non-random sampling technique in which the researcher determines sampling by determining specific characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives so that they are expected to answer the main research problem.

The total number of English participants who took part in this study is eight (8) EFL English teachers from different sides in Algeria are going to be interviewed taking their experiences in using online platforms during pandemic.

- Mostaganem: University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis
- Oran: University of Oran 2 - Mohamed Ben Ahmed (Belgaïd)
- Algiers: Université d'Alger 2 – Aboukacem Saadallah
- Sétif: Teachers' Higher College – Messaoud Zeggar

Given all these aforementioned assumptions, this research aimed to cluster data about the efficacy of the LMS platforms (Moodle/ Google classroom) in a matter of assessments, accessibility, time saving, etc. Therefore, Merely English teachers who were useful to the purpose of the research and meet its requirements were selected, since English teachers who do not use LMS platforms (Moodle / Google classroom) in teaching during COVID-19 would not be able to provide reliable answer.

### **2.5 Procedures**

The present study was conducted in teaching English as foreign languages at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Mostaganem. It took place during the academic year 2021-2022. Conventionally, information can be gathered through several means also, called research instruments such as interviews: questionnaire. The current work intends to use both a questionnaire and an interview to achieve the mixed method approach. The first tool used was a questionnaire. Then, it interviewed eight teachers, each questioned separately.

### **2.6 Context of the Study**

The study was conducted in the department of English language, at the University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis, Mostaganem with students of second year license, because this place serves the needs of our investigation.

To track different possible perceptions and different ways of thinking, a group of students was chosen to reply to a questionnaire in order to investigate the factors and challenges that affect their learning process. Also, some relevant questions were selected to teachers via interviews. This allowed the researcher to obtain the needed information in order to provide solutions to the discussed problem. The following section is dedicated to some relevant details concerning the methods used throughout the investigation.

## **2.7 Data Collection**

Data collection is one of the most important stages of conducting research, it is the process of collecting information using one or more instruments with the aim of evaluating the study hypotheses and confirm the research findings and control the variables within the study, thereby providing more sources of validity. It is usually starts with determining what kind of data is needed for the study followed by selecting the appropriate sample.

### **2.7.1 Data Collection Instruments**

Data collection tools are the instruments that researcher use to gather data. They facilitate the researcher in obtaining information needed to gather data about the research study. Besides that, there are different instruments in order to collect data such as tests, observation, questionnaire, and interview.

In order to complete this study and to reach the objectives of the research, two major data collection tools have been employed: a students' questionnaire and teachers' interview.

The rationales behind choosing these two tools depends on our study 's scope and the research methodology and objectives. Therefore, A mixed method requires mixed instruments in order to confirm or reject the hypotheses.

#### **2.7.1.1 Questionnaire**

First and foremost, the questionnaire is one of the first and most commonly used data collection instruments in the quantitative approach and it is considered as the most commonly used data tool to collect numerical data and probably the most effective instrument to gather information from respondents, compared to the other methods such as interviews or observation . Commonly, a questionnaire is research tool in the form of questions related to one topic to collect informative data in order to answer research question. It is defined as being “any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answer or selecting from among existing answers” (brown, 2001, p28). In this research, the first tool was chosen to collect quantitative data. Ideally, it is

one of the basic data collection tools that minimize time and effort.

### **2.7.1.1.1 The Description of Students' Questionnaire**

To achieve this objective, a formal standardized questionnaire was distributed to the learners of second year license. It aimed to collect quantitative and get deep understanding of learners' choice and opinions toward online learning between Moodle and Google classroom, and whether it was useful in comparison to the traditional way of teaching.

The questionnaire contains a mix of open –ended and close –ended questions which has been given to the students in order to collect the data needed. As a result, open –ended questions were used a few times so that learners could sound out their choices and express various ideas about online LMS platforms. Close – ended questions were used to get one specific, valid answer simply by ticking the box that contained yes no questions. Moreover, most of the questions were multiple choice questions with the “other” option in order to make students feel comfortable when they do not find the right answer in the suggested ones. they can add in the” other” option.

To make our questionnaire more organized and comprehensible, the students' questionnaire is arranged into three sections:

#### **Section One: Personal Information**

The prime section's objective is dedicated to gather the learner personal information with the purpose to get the general information about the participants. The first question (Q1) the learners are asked to specify their gender, in the second question (Q2); the learner have been asked about the digital device they use.

#### **Section Two: Students Interests**

The second section discusses the learner's interests in online learning. Question one to question three aim at obtaining a brief students' opinion. about their preference between Moodle and Google Classroom. The first question (Q1) is closed one. Its goal is to know which type of learning mode (face to face or online) learners prefer during COVID19. The second question (2) is open- ended. It is designed to see which learning platform is familiar to learners. The

participants were given a choice between Moodle and Google Classroom and the option of “other” for expressing themselves. The third question (Q3) seeks to discover which course management software is uncomplicated and easy to reach by giving to select the right answer and giving their justification.

### **Section Three: Challenges That Face Online Learning**

The last section, which is the important part of our study. It investigates the challenges that encountered EFL learners when using online learning platforms such as Google classroom and Moodle. It consists of four questions. The first question(Q1) is a multi – choice question intended to illustrate the online learning issues. The choices that have been suggested are as follow: (a) lack of training; (b) technical issues; (c) lack of motivation; (d) boredom. The informants were free to provide different answers. The second question (2) is closed question. The learner was asked about how the COVID affected their learning behavior whether it has demotivated them or pushed them to do better. Then, the third question attempts to gather learners ‘opinions about how time management affect their academic learning whether by made them more organized or disrupted their study time. The third (3) and the last question is concerned to explore how the learners perceive the future of education with online learning platforms, allowing them at the same time to justify their answers.

#### **2.7.1.2 The Interview**

An interview is a data collection instrument for collecting data which integrates questioning and answering among both the interviewer and interviewee. The former is the one who guides the conversation, while the latter is the one who answers the questions either by listening and taking notes or by recording. In this respect, the interview involves the interaction between the researcher and the participant, as Fox (2009) defines it as “an important data gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the participant “.

The interview is the most important instrument in the qualitative method and the appropriate tool to gather information about people’s opinions, feelings, and emotions about a particular research subject.

### 2.7.1.2.1 Description of the Teachers' Interview

In addition to the questionnaire, an interview has been selected as the second instrument used in this research to collect information from our informants. To gather more data with the students' questionnaire, semi – structured interview was utilized in our study. The interview was carried out with eight (8) EFL English language teachers at different foreign languages department of English in Algeria. The interview consisted of the following eight questions:

Questions	Objectives
How long have you been teaching English?	It aims to know the teachers' experience life in teaching English.
In your point of view, do you think online learning is as strong as formal, traditional learning in a classroom? Yes, no explain	It seeks to determine whether teachers prefer online learning modes over the traditional one.
Have you received any training to use course management software? Justify	Designed to explore and determine if the teachers received any training before to use Course Management Software like Moodle and Google classroom.
Since Moodle was the official university platform during the pandemic. How do you see it in terms of accessibility and usefulness? Justify	It aims to know if the official university platform (Moodle) is accessible and is simpler to use.
Which course Management Software have you used for teaching? Were they more useful than Moodle platform?	It seeks to learn about the alternatives course management systems used by educators during their teaching and whether they are more useful than Moodle.
Are you satisfied with teaching through course management software? Please justify	The aim is to examine the satisfaction of educators with teaching through course management software.
What obstacles have you encountered while teaching through course management software?	It aims to discover the challenges that teachers face throughout their teaching via course management software. It also aims to sheds some light on the problems they have encountered.
Based on what criteria do you consider Google classroom as the most effective teaching platform?	The aim is to know how teachers rate their effective teaching with Google classroom
Based on what criteria do you consider Moodle as the most effective teaching platform?	The aim is to know how teachers rate their effective teaching with Moodle

Table 2.1: Objectives of the questionnaire

## **2.8 Conclusion**

The current chapter highlights the practical side, the method used to carry out this study, and the data collection instruments that have been used in this study. The methodology followed describes the sample and procedures along with mixed methodology of two approaches: quantitative and qualitative. To gather data two tools have been used: a students' questionnaire and teachers' interview.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Data Analysis and Recommendations**

### **3.1 Introduction**

While the preceding chapters dealt with the theoretical part to offer the reader an overview of the research topic, the practical part was to present and describe the different tools used to gather the necessary data. The present chapter is devoted to the analysis and discussion of the obtained data collected through questionnaire and interview. Finally, it is carried out by recommendations at the end of this chapter

### **3.2 Data Analysis**

Data analysis entails “shifting, organizing, summarizing, and synthesizing the data as to arrive at the result and conclusions of the research” (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p201). After gathering the data required from the participants via the research instruments, a questionnaire, and an interview, in the current chapter the researcher discusses those data and highlights some shortcomings that have been encountered through this study.

#### **3.2.1 Analysis of Students’ Questionnaire**

This questionnaire was intended to study the learners’ opinions and choices between using Moodle and Google classroom in English language learning in higher education. The questionnaire was administered to 37 students at the department of English in Mostaganem. Besides that, it consisted of 13 questions ( closed and open ended questions ) which are used to either confirm or deny the hypotheses.

### 3.2.1.1 Section One: Personal Information

The first section shows general information about the participants, which includes their gender, their level, and the device they use to access the internet.

#### Question 01: Students' Gender

The Table below shows that our sample consists of 37 students with a rough female (72.02%). While male take merely (27.02%). This is because females were more present in classes and more willing to assist with questionnaire completion.

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	10	27.02%
Female	27	72.97%

Table 3.1: Students' gender

#### Question 02: what device do you use to access the Internet?

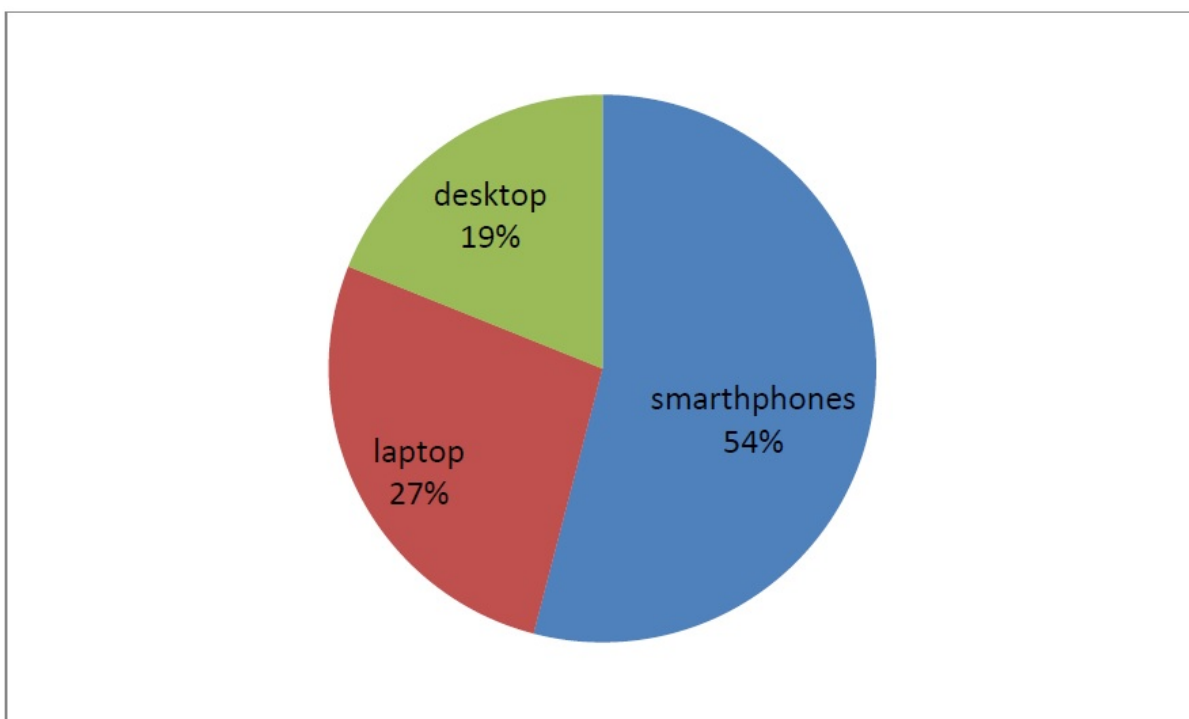


Figure 3.1: Digital devices accessibility

According to these statistics, all the 37 students have access to some sort of digital device, especially mobile technology with smartphones represented almost 54% of the overall percent-

age of learner's device possessions Laptops are found to be in the second place of the most possessed digital devices with a percentage of 27%. While only 19% opted for desktop PCs.

### 3.2.1.2 Section Two: Students' Interests

This section aims to get the students' impressions and their learning mode interests. Additionally, this section seeks to know whether their choice to study online is through Moodle or Google classroom and the reasons why they select one of these two learning management platforms. They are allowed to express their opinions concerning the most convenient and efficient one.

#### Question 2: which learning mode would you prefer?

Options	Number	Percentage
face to face	31	83.78%
online	06	16.21%

Table 3.2: Students' preferable learning mode

The data obtained in the Table above shows that most of the students (83.78%) agreed on the fact that their preferred mode was Face-to-face. However, only (16.21%) of them preferred to learn online

#### Question 3: Which online learning platform do you prefer to use?

The Figure shows responses to question 3 in same section about the most preferred means for e-learning among students The Figure above demonstrates students' responses:

The Figure above shows the commonly used online platform for conducting learning sessions during the distance learning that COVID-19 imposed. Approximately (78%) of the participants declared the use of Google classroom as the main hosting platform. followed by Moodle as the second platform in their preferences with a percentage of 17%. Surprisingly zoom was classed as the last alternative conferencing platform preferred with only 5% of usage.

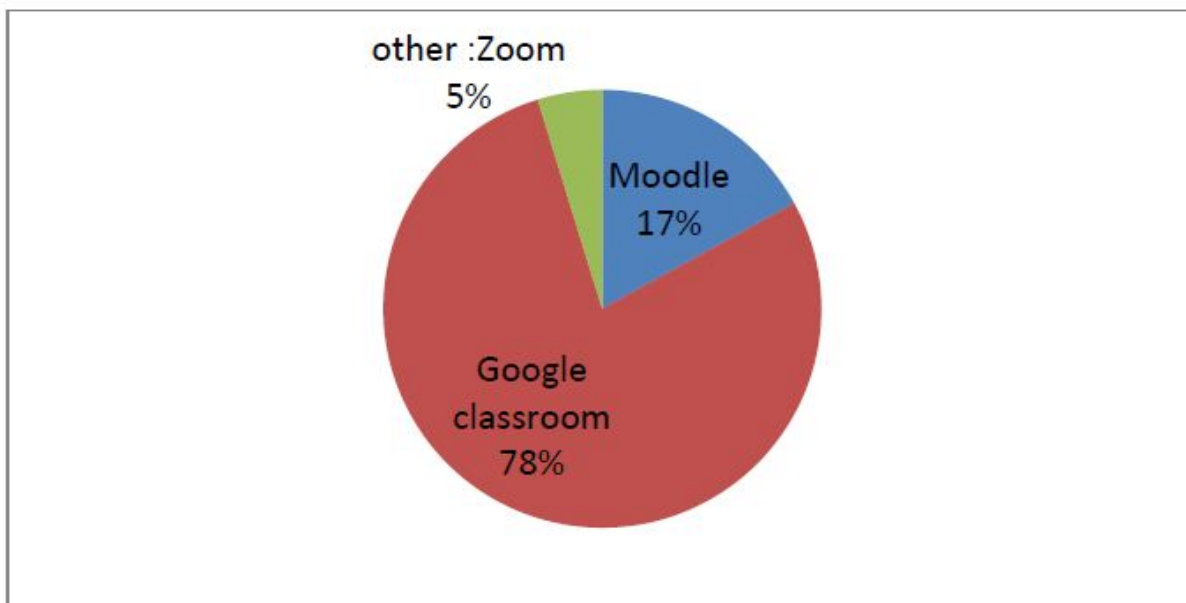


Figure 3.2: The online learning platform used by learners

**Question 4: Which of these two platforms was uncomplicated to reach? And why?**

Explain

Options	Number	Percentage
Google Classroom	32	86.48%
Moodle	05	13.51%

Table 3.3: Learners’ perceptions about the most user- friendly interface platform

The data obtained makes it clear that the majority of students (86.48%) pointed out Google classroom as an easy platform to use as it improved their access and attentiveness toward learning. They justified their answer by claiming that they are interested in the flipped classroom to become learner–centered through experiencing new platforms like Google classroom that promote a free space and accessibility from all devices where all members are present. In contrast, a few numbers (13.51%) opted for Moodle because it allows to share lectures, communicate with teachers, create groups, and get their instructors’ feedback in a formal setting which is safe and organized.

**3.2.1.3 Section Three: Challenges That Face Student Online Learning**

This section is intended to know the challenges that face students’ online learning and how the COVID-19 has affected their learning behavior and their learning time management, and

also the learner’s perception of their future learning in Algeria

**Question 1: What are the challenges you encounter when using an online learning platform such as Google classroom and Moodle?**

The present Table shows the analysis of question one in section three, which seeks to know if students had any challenges and issues for accessing the online learning platforms. The Table below illustrates students’ responses:

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes, I had	37	100%
No, I had not	00	00%

Table 3.4: Students having issues to access online learning

As can be seen, the common shared idea among students (100%) is that they had difficulty accessing online learning.

After students answer about the challenges, they are asked to tick the right difficulties they faced during COVID-19. The figure below depicts the difficulties and problems students encountered while accessing online learning.

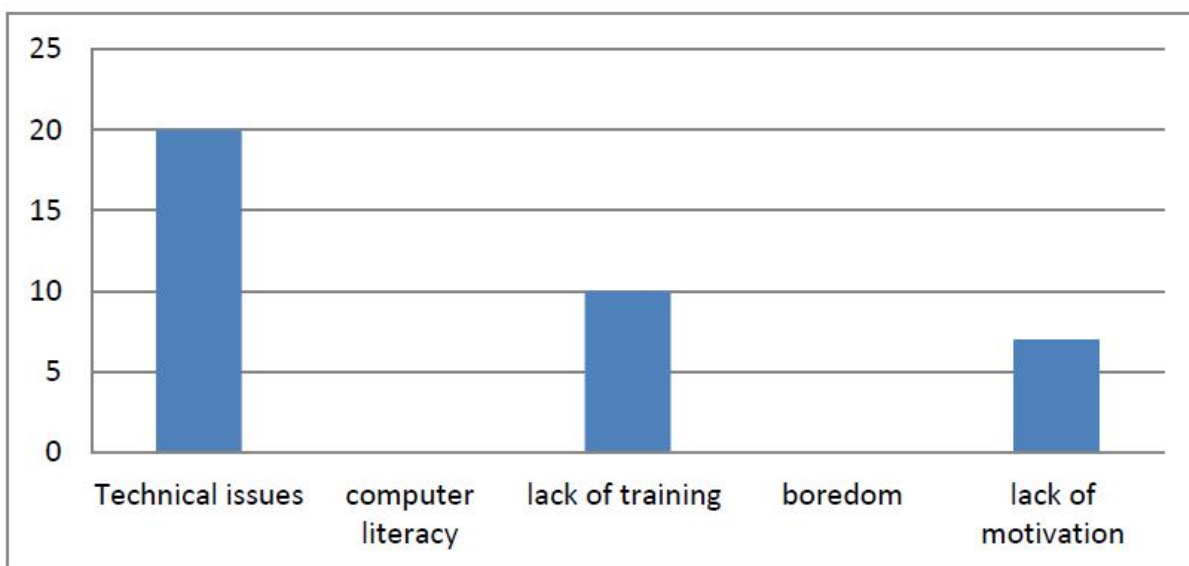


Figure 3.3: Challenges and issues to access online learning

As it is observed, a great number (54.05%) of students noted that their obstacles include technical issues. Lack of training was rated as the second issue with a percentage of (27.02%) as they claimed that they should train them with these platforms.

However, only (18.91%) of students said that they did not take online learning seriously and they were not motivated and engaged. on the other hand, computer literacy, boredom is not assessed online by all students.

**Question 2: How has the COVID-19 affected your learning behavior?**

The following Figure represents whether the COVID-19 affected students learning behavior

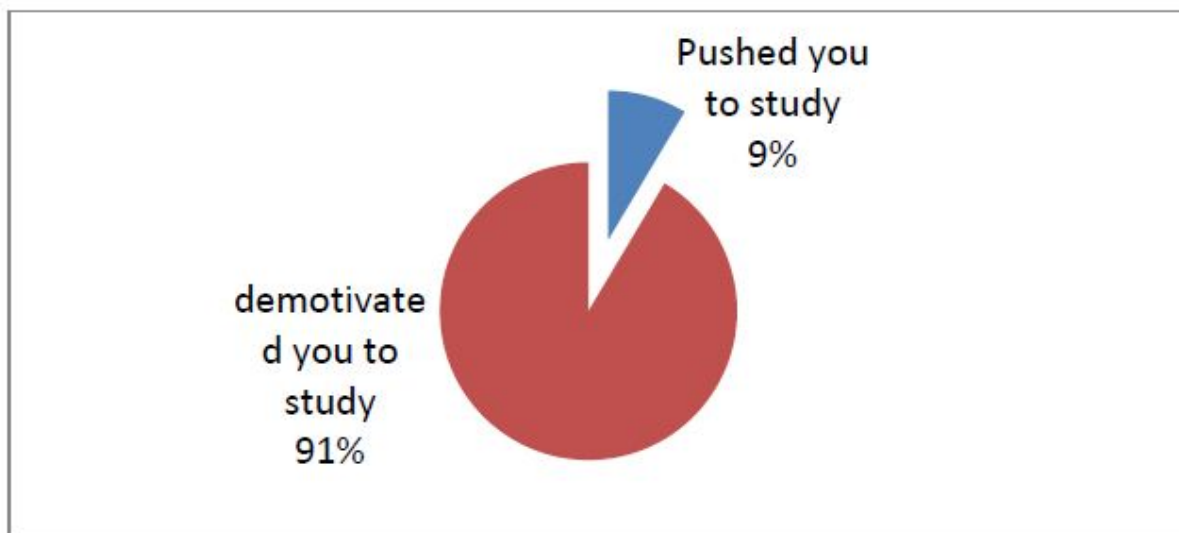


Figure 3.4: Students Attitudes towards online learning

Question was addressed to find out how the COVID-19 affected students learning behavior. The result showed that (91%) of respondents stated they were highly demotivated to study online and agreed that needs more development in terms of user interface to become motivated. On the other hand (9%) of responses confirmed that online learning pushed them to study.

**Question 3: how has COVID-19 affected your learning time management?**

In the same vein, the following table represents whether COVID-19 affected their learning time management

Options	Number	Percentage
Made you more organized	29	78.37%
Disrupted your study time	08	21.62%

Table 3.5: Students time management during the pandemic

Surprisingly, the table above reveals that approximately (78.37%) agreed that learning through

online platforms made them more organized in learning. However, merely (21.62%) stated that it disrupted their studying time.

**Question 4: Do you think that learning process can rely more on online learning platforms in Algeria?**

The following Figure shows responses to question 4 in the same section about the student view concerning the future of education if it is going to rely on more online platforms. This section opens space for students to add any comments

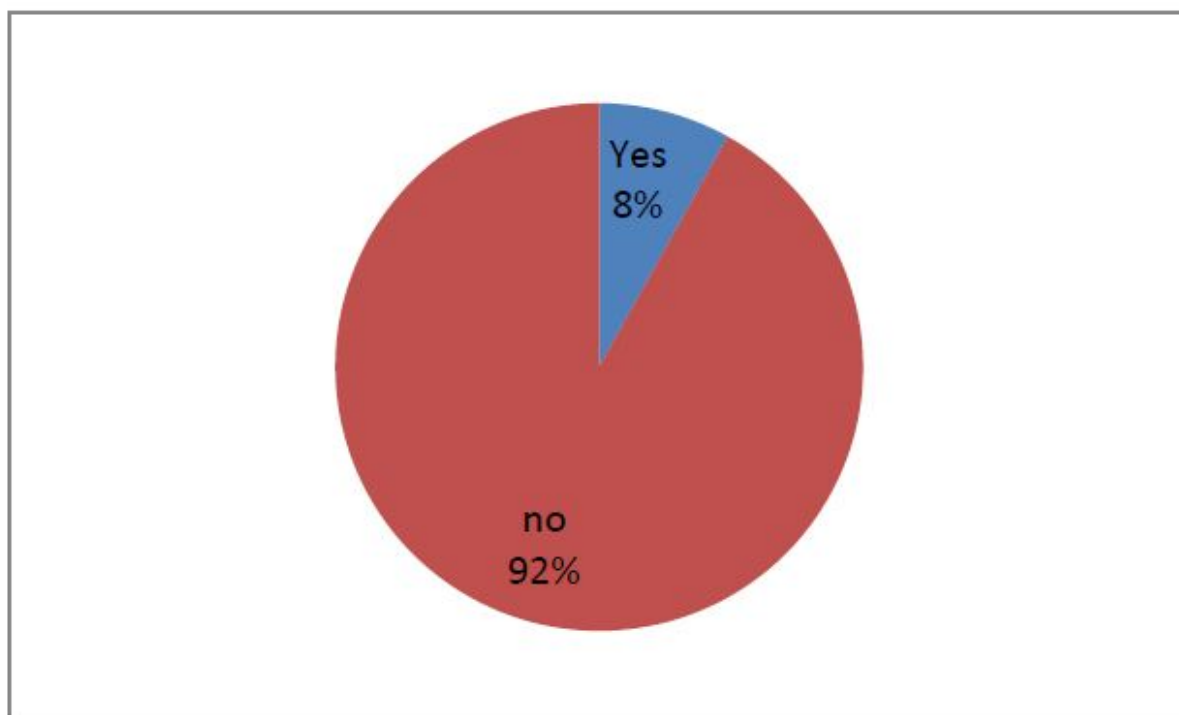


Figure 3.5: Students' perception on the future of education

The above analysis reveals that the majority (92%) replied "No". As they supported their answers by claiming that with regard to the challenges that the Algerian universities are still facing in terms of the lack of proper internet facilities and IT infrastructure, the affordability of laptops and computers to students and teachers as well, one of the respondents in this respect complained that " *at first I was excited to study online because it was new experience for me , but with time I realized that we missed the sense of communication and interaction in the real classroom , this has taught me that online learning platforms will not be for me in the future* " " *I think the transition to entirely online teaching and learning wouldn't be easy* "

On the contrary, the remaining ones (8%) replied “Yes” which means that they will rely on online platforms.

### 3.2.2 Analysis of the Teachers’ Interview

The analysis of teachers’ interview aims at discovering EFL teachers’ perception and their experiences with online platforms during teaching. For this reason, it is important to analyze the responses that were collected directly from teachers through an interview.

#### **Question 1 how long have you been teaching English?**

The majority of the teachers have been teaching English from seven years or more. This means that most of the respondents are experienced teachers.

#### **Question 2 in your point of view, do you think online learning is as strong as formal, traditional learning in a classroom? Yes No explain**

All reply that the virtual learning can never be replaced with e- learning, rather, they complete each other. Only one teacher preferred to combine the traditional and the online teaching systems. Some of answers they provided were: *“As a teacher in my opinion, a classroom is the first learning environment, when we talk about interaction, it can never replace the traditional classroom, because students feel more at ease to exchange ideas and I have some kind of freedom and students are present all time”*

*“..... When it comes to the Algerian context, I believe that the traditional classroom is more effective because not all students have access to the internet”*

*“from my perspective, traditional learning comes first; e- learning could be a plus, as an additional tool to test student and provide them with knowledge because The lack of face-to-face communication makes it even harder to get my message across and be understood by my students so for me It sounds superficial and lacks humanity” “We cannot replace the traditional teaching, no matter how advanced e-learning can get”*

*“I prefer combination of both, using both would facilitate the processes of teaching and learning in the classroom”*

**Question 3: have you received any training on how to use course management software like Moodle and Google classroom Justify?**

The common shared idea among EFL teachers that they had never received any kind of training. Since the e-learning is new to the Algerian universities, one should ask how the majority of teachers have not received any training for the use of online platforms. One respondent from Oran claimed that *“we have never been trained or prepared to do that, we have never had that, we have just informed about example lessons to students and unfortunately the majority of students are unable to access the platform “*. Another respondent from Mostaganem said that *“I remember that we had training for one hour it was useless, and the construction were chaotic, and we didn't have the chance to apply”* While only two teachers from Sétif University justified their answers by claiming previous training. As one respondent said *“yes I received extensive training and tutorials on how to use Moodle and exploit the many innovative features in it “*.

**Question 4: since Moodle was the official university platform during the pandemic. How do you see it in terms of accessibility and usefulness? Justify**

this question aims to give some space for the teachers to give their comments about the effectiveness of Moodle as teaching platform and about e- learning in Algeria in general and in Mostaganem more specifically. Teachers give different point of views about the Moodle platform according to their experience including pros and cons. Some of them are quoted:

*“To be honest I used it only once and it was not easy to access and manipulate due to its complexity I stopped. Weak connection played a negative role too. This platform requires a willingness to learn, patience and time “*

*“I didn't like the Moodle platform for teaching and learning English at university. I find it more complicated, unpractical and needs many materials that some student didn't have (internet , smart phones ),it cannot be used on its own , probably if combined with platforms (zoom, Google Classroom) it would give better results”*

While only two EFL teachers from Sétif agreed that Moodle was useful. Some of answers they were provided were:

*“Yes, it was accessible and very user-friendly to both teachers and students, especially the*

*computer version (desktop version) . . . I had my personal accounts on Moodle in which I can find all my information; I could even interact and discuss any ambiguities in the discussion forums with my students”*

*“Moodle is very useful tool, it had simple and easy interface to use mainly if we provide the appropriate conditions from both sides (teachers and students)”*

**Question 5: Which course Management Software have you used for teaching? Were they more useful than Moodle?**

The majority of teachers opted for Google Classroom as an alternative platform since it is accessible and user-friendly compared to Moodle. On the contrary, two teachers from Sétif agreed that they only used Moodle to teach and interact with their students. In addition, social-media and Zoom for some video conferencing to hold live sessions. The suggested electronic platforms and applications by the teachers confirm that. Those suggestions were:

*“Google Classroom is better than Moodle, it is much more manageable, less scattered and encourages students’ interaction”*

*“Facebook live is a much better alternative because the platform itself doesn’t work for everyone and these apps have been known and used for a long time”*

*“Zoom and Google meet are great when it comes to long distance interaction”*

**Question 6 Are you satisfied with teaching through course management software?**

Please justify

Categories	Number	Percentage
Yes	02	25%
No	06	75%

Table 3.6: Teacher satisfaction about online Course management software

From the data shown in the table above, it is clear that 6 of the teachers do not seem to be satisfied with their online teaching experience online and it is not a surprise that the majority of the respondents were displeased and disappointed. While only two of them from Sétif showed their satisfaction with their experience. Some respondents from Mostaganem, Algiers and Oran justified their dissatisfaction by saying *“If you don’t have a perfect connection, you won’t be*

*able to teach therefore I would rather come to university to teach in actual classroom than struggling and wasting my time with online platform”*

*“I think distance learning platforms were best solution during pandemic, but does not serve as a good permanent solution”* Some teachers blame their students for not being serious as the respondent from Oran Claims that *“there is an observable carelessness on the part of students as they tend to use their phones and laptops for entertainment instead for learning”*

The two respondents from Sétif who opted for “yes” as answer to the question, had an optimistic view by saying that it was new experience for them and all of teachers and it was an eye –opening experience which remains us that life is long learning journey that never ends. *“... Teaching through online platforms is extremely worthy and I considered it as magnificent experience in my carrier “*

**Question 7 what obstacles have you encountered while teaching through course management software?**

8 teachers complained while teaching through online platforms. The prospective obstacle for teachers was the technical problems (poor internet connection) which are out of their control. others have faced difficulties manipulating the platform itself. In addition to, the limited time, a lack of interaction with students and the lack of training from subject matter experts in computers. Some of them are quoted: *“Based on my expertise I can tell you that the common difficulty that we my face during online teaching aspect is the technical problems and the lack of training. You may not be able to ensure whether your teaching methodology is suitable to the learners as you cannot know their backgrounds incomparable with teaching face to face inside the classroom”*

*“The major problem is that we had access issues, a slow internet connection makes submitting a single course particularly impossible. When it comes to online education, we cannot deny that our country is far from following the footsteps of developed countries, but we always aspire to achieve the best for our student”*

**Question 8 Based on what criteria do you consider Google classroom / Moodle as the most effective teaching platform?**

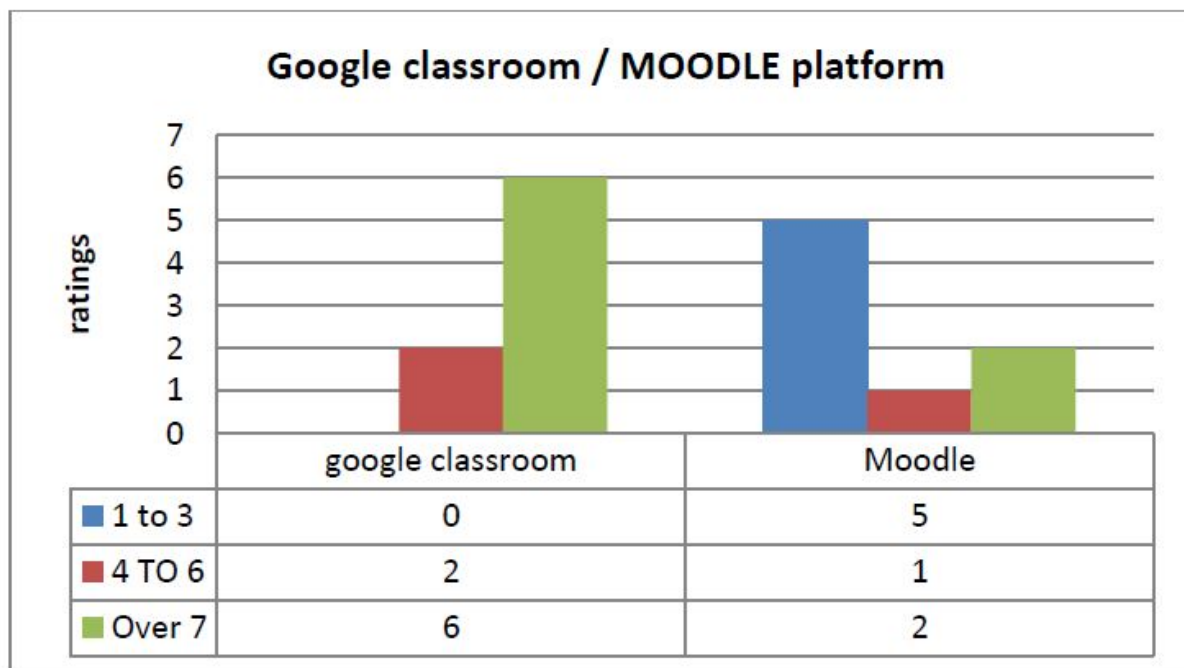


Figure 3.6: Rating Google classroom and Moodle

Starting with Google classroom, none of the teachers gave this platform a rating under 3, and two teachers gave it under a 4 rating. While the remaining teachers gave it a rating over 7 which means that Google classroom have proven itself useful compared to Moodle which was given under 3 rating by more than half of the teachers and only one of them gave it under 4 to 6, while two EFL teachers from Sétif university rated it over 7.

The results of question eight (8) compared to the results of question four (4) and five (5) seem logical in the sense that as long as not all the teachers know how to manipulate the Moodle platform, it is expected that not all students will use it. This led them to use Google classroom, which is better in terms of usability, ease of access, and efficiency.

### 3.3 Discussion of the Results

After analyzing the information collected directly from students through a questionnaire, the findings revealed that most students do not seem to be satisfied with their online learning experience (The results are shown in Table 3.2). Despite the fact that all students have access

to a digital device, it was obvious that they preferred the face-to-face conventional mode of learning in actual classrooms. They argued that online learning was not as efficient and useful as the traditional mode of instruction, and that it was just because of the unexpected health circumstances that it has become an obligatory.

Moreover, the data gathered from this questionnaire revealed that approximately 86.48% of those, students considered Google Classroom an easy platform to use in terms of its rich features and ease of accessibility. Unlike Moodle, which was thought to be a complex system, learning platform. In this regard, one of the respondents pointed that she found Google classroom fairly simple and user-friendly while Moodle was a little bit more complicated. Furthermore, all students claimed that they had difficulties and challenges using online learning platforms. These obstacles hindered their effective use of online learning; the learners believed that the reason behind their unpleasant experience with studying online was some technical problems in the first place or the lack of the necessary means to join online classes regularly, such as the weak Internet connection, expensive laptops. In addition to the lack of training on how to use learning platforms efficiently. As the results indicated, most of the students received no training to use such online platforms, especially the Moodle platform. These are some of the main challenges that students encountered when using online learning platforms.

Furthermore, according to the findings, and as we expected, the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected students. Most of them have lost their motivation for learning and have not been able to maintain their active engagement in class. Most surprisingly, the findings revealed that the majority of learners claimed that online learning through the institutional platforms during the pandemic affected their time management positively as this has helped them have more time for learning (Table 3.5). Finally, the vast majority of students (92%) argued that the shift to online learning would not be very helpful to their education, as a result of the poor Internet connection and lack of means in Algeria. In this respect, and to illustrate this point better, a respondent argued that although everything nowadays is done on the Internet, the very low and unreliable Internet coverage in Algeria poses great challenges and people just cannot take full advantage of the immense possibilities and potentials it offers.

This is evident throughout the analysis of the data collected through the teachers' interview

concerning the use of LMSs platforms (Moodle and Google classroom) as online learning. The data obtained reveal that the majority are experienced teachers. And as is expected all of them maintained that online learning is not as strong as the traditional one but just because of the current situation that obliged them to the shift. This made teachers face a kind of phobia that was named by Azarfam and Jabbari (2012) as technophobia. The main reasons for the increase of the techno –anxiety among teachers were a lack of materials, and the mastery of ICT which limited their experience of training tools.

The growth of online education has not been without challenges. As a result, when using online teaching platforms, the majority of teachers in Algeria face many pedagogical challenges when they apply online teaching platforms; they agreed that the major barriers are internet access and the need of technological devices. Apart from this teacher complain about the lack of training and interactivity with students. All these obstacles need to be taken into consideration for a better future of e-learning in Algeria. When it comes to e-learning some universities in Algeria have focused merely on the use of Moodle platform. This has generated stress among teachers that the e-learning use is not restricted to the Moodle platform only. They try to find other, more accessible –to –use alternatives such as those mentioned in theoretical and practical sections (Google classroom, Zoom, social media, and so on).

Furthermore, teachers were given two of platforms closely related to their experience with distance education. The reasons behind this recourse were to reinforce the research assumptions. Respondents were asked to react to the given two platforms using a rate scale to measure their selection more accurately. The finding revealed that Google Classroom was widely preferable than Moodle in terms of accessibility, interactivity, and workability. This reflects how Google services support their users to stay connected from any device; however, Moodle users have to re-login whenever they attempt to check the platform. The latter can cause discomfort and lead to profile inaccessibility and can trigger users to avoid or reduce using Moodle unless necessary.

The idea of platform imposition by the ministry of higher education has led many universities to create sub-websites for the e-learning platform. The server is not moodle.com so that it will use the university servers (as in univ-mosta.dz/e-learn). This will lead to fewer features to

benefit from. Although universities can afford a budget to buy institutional access to LMSs like Moodle, teachers have access problems in terms of the perception of ease of using the system frequently. Even students would react strangely since they are obliged by administrations to use a single platform that does not seem interesting to them in terms of interface, features, and interactivity.

The Moodle platform is technically complicated. Consequently, it is not surprising that it does not present the perfect model for online learning. Despite this fact, teachers are not against the platform itself but require more knowledge and time to adapt and feel the system needs to be more structured.

Whatever the attitudes are, the majority of participants did not reflect on the value of synchronous teaching and learning. That is, if teachers are not meeting their students live either in audio or video calls, how can we consider this kind of learning as 'online'? It may be only a form of asynchronous classes where students can check for lectures whenever they want. At this point, what makes it different from emailing those documents to students? LMSs are based on mutual and connective interaction that appear or coexist at the same time.

### **3.4 Recommendations**

Based on the results of this study, the researcher suggests the following relevant pedagogical recommendations that may help both teachers and learners improve the quality online teaching and learning in Algerian universities. First some recommendations are provided to policymakers, namely the ministry of higher education and scientific research.

- To Allow teachers and pedagogies to use their own e-teaching, e-assessment strategies, as well as their preferred tools and materials for the subject matters, they teach. Imposing one platform on all universities would not be opening doors to creativity.
- The investment in Moodle digital platform in university remains fragile in terms of implementation and use for both teachers and student, due to the speed of its use in the sensitive circumstance, and the lack of training in how to exploit it .Thus, The ministry of education should launch a set of training and workshops to equip the Algerian universities

with the use of online platforms like Moodle and Google classroom that lead teaching and learning to be successful.

- To achieve the desired effect of these digital educational platforms, the managers must begin to think of an urgent organizational strategy to ensure that all imbalances are addressed and corrected
- The Moodle platform is very useful, when appropriately used, but it cannot be relied on as the only tool and the use of other alternatives is a must to fulfill the different students' needs and suits their different levels.

Moreover, according to the teachers' experiences and the result of the Interview in this study, there are some recommendations for teachers'

- The absence of teacher training in educational technologies is another difficulty that teachers may face in conveying lesson online, so it is recommended for EFL teachers to properly train themselves with ICTs delivery and methodologies.
- The e- learning platform was still new for the students. Therefore, it is vital to explain the function of this platform for students at the beginning
- Teachers also recommended to actively access the platform to monitor their students' interaction and progress and to keep their online classes crisp and interactive to help student stay focused on the lesson and prevent them from distraction.
- Providing students with effective digital educational programs and content that are truly relevant to their needs will make them more engaged and more motivated to use the tools of the digital learning platforms.

Furthermore, based on the result of the implementation in this study, there are some recommendations for the student that related to the use of e –learning platform

- - First, to assess the online learning platforms such as Google classroom and Moodle students' should be taught the necessary skill that allows them to use Google Classroom

effectively (computing skills, online education training and so on) this will lead them to use platform successfully and benefits from online learning.

- These platforms were designed to develop student independence and autonomy in learning. Hence, learners should be well organized, self-motivated and possess a high degree of time management skills in order to keep up with the pace of the course
- All students must have access to the learning material produced by the educators. It is also recommended that teachers should have access to unlimited conditions of tools like Zoom, Meet, and others.
- Making digital curricula capable of improving and enriching the educational level of students, developing their intercultural capabilities, and training them in research skills and access to information is a major challenge.

To conclude, based on the findings in this research. There are some suggestions for further research studies are recommended. Related to the topic of this research, although this research is far from perfect it can be the source for the next researcher. This research focused only on two online LMSs platforms (Moodle and Google classroom) used mainly by teachers at Mostaganem university. Other researchers can conduct diversity of online educational platforms for teaching and learning.

### **3.5 Limitations of the Study**

The study has some limitations that reflect on certain obstacles in the course of investigation, data collection and some contradictory claims by the informants. The first limitation that hindered the research was the selection of participants. Some students did not answer all the questions, and this could affect the result.

Furthermore, because of the questionnaire that was conducted online, it was restricted to learners with the access to the internet. Another challenge was time which may be a problem for the researcher to finish this research.

One of the contradictions found is the claim of not being able to access a given platform then the claim of positive or negative evaluation remarks on it. For instance, a participant may

confirm having no account on Moodle; however, they complain about the services of sharing announcements, downloading documents, or following teachers accounts. In addition, the data collected from teachers may serve the study well; for that, a qualitative method could not be a suitable instrument to obtain insights on online teaching challenges.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Through this topic, we have attempted to answer our research questions through the discussion of the findings. It has been noticed that the obtained results from both questionnaire and interview revealed that there are many challenges facing both EFL teachers and learners when they use online platforms. One of them is technical issues. Moreover, we have discovered that Google Classroom has outperformed Moodle in terms of effectiveness, accessibility and interactivity. Finally, we have provided some recommendations that may be useful for teachers and learners.

## **General Conclusion**

This study, the researcher attempted to compare and contrast the use of Moodle platform and Google Classroom by EFL students and teachers at Mostaganem University. Based on the opinions of participants, it aimed at showing the level of effectiveness of both platforms. Another core purpose was to investigate the challenges that Algerian teachers and students faced regarding online teaching and learning.

Mostaganem EFL students prefer Google classroom over Moodle in terms of accessibility and effectiveness. The main findings confirmed the first hypothesis. Additionally, EFL teachers tended to alternate Moodle with Google Classroom by virtue of its interactivity and usefulness. Thus, the second hypothesis was also approved. The mere fact of choosing other platforms by teachers implied that the imposition of Moodle platform at Mostaganem university was not well appreciated.

This research work comprises three chapters. The first chapter covered the theoretical part of the research topic. The first part highlighted the term Learning Management systems (LMSs), its definitions and the situation of online platforms in Algeria. Along with that, the second part was devoted mainly on Google classroom and Moodle platforms. Then, it discussed their use, features as well as advantages and limitations. The last part was concerned with the similarities and differences between them.

The methodology followed in undertaking this research study was described in the second chapter. It was important to take a multidisciplinary approach to undertake this research. A mixed methods approaches was chosen to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Thereafter, the type of research and methodology were considerably described along with the binary data collection instruments, namely students' questionnaire and teachers' interview. In the aftermath, the data collected were thoroughly analyzed and presented in graphs and charts.

The last chapter was devoted to the discussion of results and recommendations. First, we discussed the obtained data from students' questionnaire. Then, teachers' interview was discussed. In addition, a general discussion of all the results was provided briefly. The chapter discussed the limitations that impeded the process of gathering data, namely limited access to

respondents, insufficient sample size and time constraints. Moreover, the chapter expounded recommendations for EFL teachers and learners

LMS platforms are highly recommended for teachers and learners to achieve a higher level. Yet, there are other LMSs that teachers in Algeria or worldwide have used. It is recommended for further research to study the teachers' choices of platforms and the reasons for their preferences. It is also recommended for Algerian researchers to question the purpose of imposing certain LMSs by the ministry of Higher Education. A potential problematic is the support by the ministry to provide institutional companies and training that provide universities with full access to applications and e-libraries as well as conferencing tools (like Teams and Meet).

This research should take into consideration the previously proposed recommendations to have more successful results. Therefore, hopefully this piece of research will pave the way for future investigations.

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# Appendices

# Appendix A

## Students' Questionnaire

Dear participant,

You are kindly requested to contribute to the fulfillment of a research work by answering this questionnaire. It attempts to compare and contrast both online learning systems: Google Classroom and Moodle. Your insights and opinions will be of important support. Your answers will be treated anonymously.

**Guidelines: For each item, please tick the right box or fill in the space provided with the required information**

### A.1 Learner's profile:

1. Gender:

Male  Female

2. What device do you own to access the internet?

Smartphone  Laptop  Desktop

### A.2 Student's interests:

1. Which learning mode would you prefer?

Online  Face to face

2. Which online learning platform do you prefer to use?

Moodle  Google classroom  Other .....

3. Which of these two platforms was uncomplicated to reach?

Moodle  Google classroom  Why? Explain .....

### A.3 Challenges that students face in online learning platforms

1. What are the challenges you encounter when using the online learning platform: Google classroom and Moodle?

You may check more than one box

- Technical issues (internet cutouts, electricity blackouts . . . etc.)
- Computer literacy (you do not know how to use a computer)
- Lack of training (you haven't been trained to use an online learning platform)
- Lack of motivation (you are not motivated by distance learning; you prefer face to face)
- Boredom (you are easily bored from sitting in front of a screen for a long time)
- Other .....

2. How has the COVID affected your learning behavior?

- Demotivated you to study
- Pushed you to do better

3. How has COVID affected your learning time management?

- Made you more organized and allocate more time to studying
- Disrupted your study time

4. Do you think that learning process can rely on online learning platforms In Algeria?

- Yes
- No
- Justify .....

*Thank you for your cooperation.*

# Appendix B

## Teachers' Interview

This interview investigates the challenges of using of online platforms namely, Moodle and Google Classroom in Algeria. We would be very grateful if you could sincerely answer the following questions. Your honest answer will be of great use for this research.

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. In your point of view, do you think online learning is as strong as formal, traditional learning in a classroom? Yes, no explain
3. have you received any training to use course management software Justify?
4. Since Moodle was the official university platform during the pandemic. How do you see it in terms of accessibility and usefulness? Justify
5. Which course Management Software have you used for teaching?
6. Were they more useful than Moodle platform?
7. Are you satisfied with teaching through course management software? Please justify
8. What obstacles have you encountered while teaching through course management software?
9. Based on what criteria do you consider Google classroom / Moodle as the most effective teaching platform?

*Thank you for your collaboration.*