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Exploring the Relation between English and Online Mode of Learning during Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

This investigation was focused on exploring the relationship between learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19 which were propitious for students and teachers. Judgmental sampling of twenty-five textual units from online news blogs was drawn. Axial coding was applied to analyze thematic patterns in data. Findings flaunted that Internet use was surging during Covid-19. Teachers and students were engaged in digital interaction to overcome the academic loss, and they were not ready for the online shift. Internet speed, connectivity, and availability of laptops to low-income parents were grim realities questioning universities' capacity to go for online mode of learning and teaching English, which entailed to be devised afresh. Students were experiencing a high level of digital divide and decreasing equity during Covid-19. The study resulted that universities were preparing to cope with learning and teaching English during Covid-19 by shifting online mode even in the dearth of resources, both teachers and students needed to learn necessary software and applications for teaching and learning English through online mode. The usefulness of the study was marked by way of planning the future scheme strategically for learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19.

Keywords: Online news blogs, thematic patterns, digital interaction, relational properties, CEFR-Quali Matrix

Introduction

The condition of learning and teaching English through online mode has been analyzed globally during Covid-19. Through UN News (2020), it transpires that one point five billion students are internationally bereaved face-to-face instruction. This situation has been recorded in one hundred and ninety-one countries. Sixty-three million teachers of primary and secondary institutions have influenced during global lockdown. Ozer (2020), an educator of Turkey, contends that during Covid-19, learning and teaching English is being facilitated by designing online portals in

universities. It is being set with distance mode by producing urgent language content for students and new helplines for students' psychosocial support in learning and teaching English are also being devised. He further asserts that free internet access to students and live courses is a beneficial way to develop learning and teach English to students during Covid-19. Global Times (2020) has accentuated that parents in China have started off enrolling their children in virtual learning and teaching English classes during Covid-19, and with this expanding demand, English language teachers from the Philippines have upreared their market value because of low fee, and they share same time zone. Teenagers joining English classes with Filipino teachers have taken up \$57 million in the first quarter of 2020, eighty-two percent of the total revenue being earned. ICEF (2020) Monitor has reported that for learning and teaching English, people are pursuing relief funds from the Canadian Government to assist the educational sector during Covid-19. USA Executive Director Cheryl Delk-Le Good has filed an urgent case for financial assistance to facilitate country's English language teaching sector coming out with strategic support for English centers during Covid-19.

Whenchu Yu is the founder of VIPKID and CEO of Cindy Mi (see, e.g., Asia Society, 2020), vocalizes that Juliet (an educator) from Pennsylvania shared her observations of students developing anxiety due to the reason of spending more time in their homes. To normalize the condition, she went for an online mode to practice English vocabulary with anxious students during Covid-19. Bicker (see, e.g., BBC News, Seoul, 2020) has reportedly claimed that an English (from Hankuk Academy of Foreign Studies) admitted to being scared before the class because of not using technology, but it is not unhandy. It has proved to be an excellent option during Covid-19, and after her English language class, she has become more enlightened, and reported that technology is another addition to worry about in devising English lesson plans during Covid-19.

Ahmad, Khan, Faisal, and Khan (2017) have unanimously propounded that some educators conceived the brilliant idea of massive open online courses (MOOCs) to entrust meaningful learning experience free of cost around the globe, and distance English learning is not new in Pakistan. According to them, Allama Iqbal Open University has been the first in Asia to go about distance education in 1974, which currently has three million enrolled students (see, e.g., AIOU, 2016). They avowed that Pakistan has excellent MOOCs potential as a developing country where most of its students are unable to afford at world's premier institutions, and EdX, a mutual effort of Harvard and MIT have got nearly ninety thousand students from Pakistan and EdX has also set a regional office in Lahore. They (2017) declared that the British Council had initiated its free course through Future Learn for understanding IELTS and techniques for English Language Tests (see, e.g., Coughlan, 2015). Moocs began in Pakistan by domestic teachers are more beneficial for Pakistani students, as international teachers do not understand the country's social, religious, and cultural dimensions noted by Ahmad, Khan, Faisal, and Khan (2017).

Asia and Pacific (2020) reports that feeling the onset of the pandemic in Pakistan, Higher Education Commission (HEC) has directed all universities and accredited institutions to actuate online mode of learning for minimizing academic loss to the students staying at home during Covid-19, and this direction left an ultimatum impacting digital structure of all universities to teach

English through online mode in Pakistan. Therefore, an in-depth understanding of the relationship between learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19 seems to be the future of Pakistani teachers and students. Thus, the study has been built on the relation between learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19.

On this account, students' learning and teaching English through online mode as new digital criterion is being diffused during Covid-19 by universities in Pakistan. Consequently, it is not fully implemented in Pakistan, and many rural & urban students do not have ingress to online mode impeding their productivity. Accordingly, the study investigates several options to make learning and teaching English through online mode more convivial for students, and it is an all-inclusive qualitative probe into the relationship between learning and teaching English online during Covid-19 in Pakistan. The study addresses the following questions:

Research Questions

- What are the relational properties of learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19?
- How is the implication of learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19?

Significance of Study

The end-users of this study are students, teachers, and policymakers engaged in learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19 in Pakistan, and they all are to know the different relational properties of it. So, they are also to make sense of the relationship between learning and teaching English through online mode. This study is intended to be pivotal, decisive, and valuable for students and teachers by having a hand in the frontier of knowledge concerning learning and teaching English through online mode.

Methodology

Qualitative paradigm is set in motion, wherein; the researcher himself is the instrument of data collection, and the key informant happened to be twenty-five textual units from online news blogs sampled based on the researcher's judgment. The inductive process has been employed without initial hunches, and context differed in meanings. The key signifiers have been decoded with axial coding for meaning, reality, events, and activities in data analysis. Categories, occurring repeatedly are interconnected, and research findings have been linked to research questions. Key signifiers are selected for thematic patterns in data. Questions are addressed in analyzing data such as what is the unit of text in data? Who is centrally involved? What are the major activities and events in data? Where are linkages in data? In data interpretation, meanings are found to answer questions in findings, and linkages are seen in data pieces. Four questions are addressed in data interpretation, like what is vital in data? Why is it important? What is to be learned from it? So, what? Results and findings have been narrated, and finally, discussion and conclusion are deduced. (Gay, 1996)

We have explicated the data to establish the link between signifier and signified by forming repeatedly occurring categories and thematic patterns. The selected texts from online news blogs have shaped meanings and events, helping us devise evidence-driven advice about the relationship between learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19.

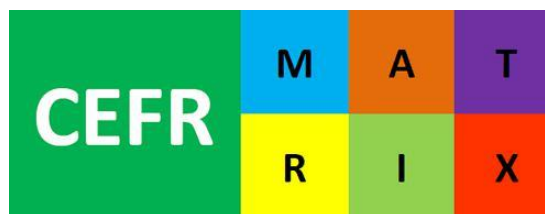
Data Analysis

[1] Language learning applications... seeing an Internet surge in Covid-19 (Forbes, 2020)



The signifier “internet surge” in a text unit means an increase in internet utilization by teachers and students who are centrally engaged in learning and teaching English online. It is the main activity carried out by them. It has been found in text that Internet use has increased, which is connected with research questions. Internet surge is equally significant for learning and teaching English online because of connectivity. Provisions for the availability of the internet entail to be made by the educational sector, and the internet surge has many implications for Pakistani students as a policy matter.

[2] ...foster effective language learning...supported by CEFR- QualiMatrix (COE, 2020)



In this text, the signifier is “CEFR-QualiMatrix”, a new resource website for language professionals in challenging times of Covid-19. For learning and teaching English through online mode, both students and teachers are centrally entangled in it. It is found that “CEFR-QualiMatrix” is implicitly connected with research problems and questions and is a healthy activity for students to learn and teach English through online mode. As a policy matter, universities need to carry out provisions to access this website by ensuring its availability to students and teachers.

[3] Krashen’s seven tips for teaching language in Covid-19 (Language magazine, 2020)



In this data set, the signifiers are seven tips and language teaching. The former means a pack of useful ideas beneficial for learning and teaching English online during Covid-19, and the later means implicit ways to maximize learning and teaching English to students only. Universities, teachers, and students are mainly engaged in this activity. The primary reality in signifiers is the university's preparedness plans, and it refers to remote learning. Finding in this unit is preparedness on the part of teachers, students, and universities affecting learning and teaching English to students on a grander scale and answering research questions and problems. The issue of preparedness has been influential in learning and teaching English through online mode in Pakistan. Provisions need to be made by universities because preparedness has profound implications in Pakistan as policy advice.

[4] ...Covid-19 generation...use language differently...being out of schoolchange children's relationship with formal expression. (The Atlantic, 2020)



In this text, the signifier is "language use," which means dropping quality in learning and teaching English. Universities, teachers, and pupils are centrally engaged in it. The principal activity in signifier is capacity building through online mode of learning and teaching English. Finding is the capacity building for quality progression in English use, connected with the research question and problem. The capacity building is significant in Pakistan concerning learning and teaching English to students through online mode and universities; it has deep-rooted implications, and the same as policy advice is to be executed.

[5] In Digital English Language Learning Market 2020, size & demand are rising...in COVID-19 (Cole Market Research, 2020)



In this textual unit, the signifier is "Digital Language Learning", which means learning and teaching English online compared to face-to-face instruction in traditional classrooms. Universities, teachers, and pupils are mainly engaged in it. The primary reality in signifiers is the resources and necessary tools for the online shift to cure the theory of digital divide in Pakistan. Finding in this data set includes assessing trends, needs, effects, size, and type of learners for whom learning and teaching English through online mode is to be planned and executed by instructors, and it is connected with problems and questions of the study. Necessary provisions entail to be made for developing missing elements to boost up learning and teaching English online in universities, and the same denotes practical implications in Pakistan for making an online English learning advice to students.

Results and Findings

We have identified many data analysis issues and built the relationship between learning and teaching English through online mode for students and teachers. We have detected that during Covid-19, the use of internet has surged in universities, and both teachers and students are utilizing the internet on a large scale in Pakistan. They are engaged in learning and teaching English through online mode and universities to cure connectivity issues by making necessary provisions regarding tools and applications likely to be used in learning and teaching English through online mode. “CEFR-Quali Matrix” has been identified as a new resource website for learning and teaching English online during Covid-19, and it is a healthy activity to play and progress with digital resources. The endpoint is provisioned to be made by universities for students as well as teachers. Krashen’s (2020) seven ways of learning and teaching English are found as a pack of skills useful for students’ online interaction during Covid-19 and refers to preparedness plans impacting learning and teaching English online on a large scale. We have traced out that stopping language use during Covid-19 decreases the quality of learning and teaching English online. It is the capacity building by way of the digital shift in learning and teaching English, which is equally essential for implication and policy matters. We also have noticed that learning and teaching English through online mode is a new criterion in challenging times of Covid-19. The central reality is resources, applications, and tools to be made available for students to minimize the conceptions of the digital divide in Pakistan, and teachers need to assess trends, size, and learners' type before learning and teaching English through online mode. We have perceived that universities are also to develop infrastructure, internet speed, and connectivity. For students’ learning and teaching English through online mode, the provisions and acquisition of electronic tools must be tendered and procured in adequate quantity by universities in Pakistan.

Discussion and Conclusion

We have discovered learning issues and taught English online and perceived ways to maximize teaching and learn through online mode with limitations. Universities are required to develop preparedness plans in a shortage of resources. Different students' problems are also needed to be resolved in online modes, such as lack of connectivity, electronic gadgets, low internet speed, and unpreparedness. Proper capacity building of teachers and students wanted to be executed. Internet surge is to be monitored and appropriately administered amid global lockdown. The capacity of the university to shift online mode is another grim reality to be considered. We have observed that universities are not possessed with infrastructure and electronic tools to carry out learning and teaching English through online mode. Universities, students, and teachers have been engaged in online communicative acts to compensate for academic loss caused by Covid-19 and have not been ready for this online shift in emergencies. We have also noticed that the whole digital learning mechanism for students entails being prepared afresh as a future line of actions in Pakistan and students belonging to low-income families need free tablets and laptops because they are unable to afford internet prices and purchase of computers, which has resulted in a deprivation of online interaction. Islam (2020) has propounded that Pakistani students learn and teach English to engage

many complex nature features like geo-political conditions and socio-economic factors, giving shape to learners' motives in English language acquisition. Similarly, Rafi (2020) sets forth that in Pakistan's 212 million population, thirty-six percent enjoy Internet Link during Covid-19. As soon as universities in Pakistan opted to go online to learn and teach English during Covid-19, numerous students have expressed their concerns on social media by verbalizing displeasure to internet facilities in remote areas. Bari (2020) opined that some English teaching areas entail laboratory works that do not necessitate drills to be exclusively online. For those students, the right to enter laboratories becomes very important.

The findings of this study suggest that students' learning and teaching English through online mode has been a dilemma during Covid-19, and the academic achievement of students is mostly disturbed on a larger scale. Students in Pakistan are experiencing a high level of digital divide and decreasing equity. The suitable approach to cover the limitations of online teaching is to overcome perceived obstacles in executing learning and teaching English through online mode, and to develop preparedness plans. Teachers need to acknowledge the significance of the issue of students' learning and teaching English online. Universities, teachers, and students are needed to practice software and applications to learn and teach English online. Students are also required to communicate their concerns with teachers online, and universities are to set e-portals sharply to facilitate their students by tendering and procuring electronic gadgets with the assurance that no student is left behind in online mode, and digital inequality prevailing during Covid-19 in learning and teaching English through online mode is required to be somewhat reduced. The study implicates a dire need to introduce capacity building of teachers and students to use electronic tools confidently in learning and teaching English through online mode during Covid-19.

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