The Payback of Online Grammar Teaching on Poor Proficiency English as a Foreign Language Students 'Performance and Attitudes
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Abstract

Telecommunications are not at present resorted to in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms at the ENS (Ecole Normale Supérieure) of Constantine. Accordingly, a networked course was implemented in the teaching of English grammar from home. The purpose of the current inquiry was to determine whether incorporating online instruction in conventional face-to-face grammar instruction enhances EFL first year students' performance. Ensuing online teaching using Nicenet, correlations of the post-test means grades revealed compelling disparities in achievement. The investigation brought about that in learning contexts where technology is inaccessible to EFL learners and teachers, usage of a networked course from home as a complement to in-class methods improves EFL students' motivation and grasp of English grammar.

Keywords: Grammar, second /foreign language learning and teaching, English, online courses, performance, attitude.

تأثير تدريس القواعد على الإنترنت على أداء الطالب بكفاءة ضعيفة.

ملخص

لا يتم حاليا في قاعات التدريس الخاصة بالمدرسة العليا للأساتذة قسنطينة استعمال وسائل الاتصال الحديثة، نتيجة لذلك تم دمج دروس في قواعد اللغة الانجليزية عبر الانترنت، والغرض من ذلك تطوير التعليم وذلك بتحديد الطريقة المثلى في عملية التدريس، إما عبر التعليم المباشر من طرف الأساتذة إلى الطلبة مباشرة (الطريقة التقليدية)، أوعن طريق التعليم عبر الانترنيت (طريقة تجريبية).

الكلمات المفاتيح: قواعد، تعلم وتدريس، اللغة الإنجليزية، دروس على الإنترنت، سلوك، أداء.

L'impact de l'enseignement de la grammaire en ligne sur la performance des étudiants avec une pauvre compétence

Résumé

Actuellement, les salles de classe EFL de l'ENS de Constantine ne recourent pas aux télécommunications. En conséquence, un cours en réseau a été mis en œuvre dans l'enseignement de la grammaire anglaise. Le but de la présente enquête était de déterminer si l'intégration de l'enseignement en ligne dans l'enseignement de la grammaire en face à face améliore la performance des étudiants de première année anglais comme langue étrangère.

Mots-clés: Attitudes, grammaire, apprentissage et enseignement, Anglais, cours en ligne, performance.

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1- Introduction

Telecommunications are not at present resorted to in EFL classrooms at the ENS of Constantine. Accordingly, a networked course was implemented in the teaching of English grammar from home. The purpose of the current inquiry is to determine whether incorporating online instruction in conventional face-to-face grammar instruction considerably enhances EF L first year students' performance. Several teachers throughout the world are increasingly attempting to boost their language instruction with the assistance of activities and practices made convenient via technological tools. A good many have incorporated an array of technologies in the instruction of grammar in foreign and second language learning environment, essentially websites and CD-ROM virtual environments[1] a Cyber Tutor that authorises learners to commentate sentences at the same time supplying immediate feedback and afford facilities[2],the Learning English Electronically (LEE) computer software, which comprises 43 lessons highlighting grammar notions and accurate sentence structure, and enclosing themes such as employment, food, health, school, and transportation[3].

2- Review of Literature

Explicit, implicit, and preliminary grammar teaching approaches that deal with word processing packages, electronic dictionaries and grammars, the World Wide Web, accordances, electronic mail, computer games/simulations, and authoring supports were incorporated to surpass the grammar deficiency noticed in several British undergraduate students learning German[4]. Besides, Corkhill[5] exploited a computer software program which comprises a no-luxury, user-cordial individual tutor with accessible grammar themes for teaching and increasing a comprehensive range of grammar subject matters. Cooperative projects between L1 and L2 learners were too applied as a recent approach to the teaching of grammar. Students in a concentration program in Australia were connected, via the net, with students in Canada and France to carry out a web magazine which consist of articles conceived intermutually in French by the Australian and Canadian students and in English by the French students[6;7]. In Hong Kong, a reciprocatory messaging system was established on the Internet to allow teachers of English to debate language-related topics as constituent of the TeleNex teacher-support network.

(The Teachers of English Education Nexus (TeleNex) is a computer network providing continuous professional support to English language teachers in Hong Kong primary and secondary schools.

TeleNex was first made available to 15 secondary schools as a local area network in 1993 and to 33 secondary schools in 1994. To enable all teachers in Hong Kong to access the network, the Internet version of TeleNex was launched in December 1996. TeleNex consists of a a primary and secondary network.)

Grammatical interpretations based on the examination of corpus data are habitually adopted to meet teachers' scepticism[8].

Notwithstanding the prestige of using technology, its appliance in language instruction does not entrust learners' progress in skills acquisition nor raise levels of performance than in conventional classroom settings. The impact of adopting technology on L1 and L2 acquisition varies. It counts on the variety of technology exploited, how it is employed, the subject matter and period of teaching. The effects of technology on the improvement of language skills in general and in particular by L1 and L2 college students were the spotlight of various studies. Surveys by Grant[9], Nagata,[10] and Collentine[11] revealed that telecommunications are persuasive devices in teaching and learning grammar. Grant[12] carried a study in 1998 with two groups of 5th grade students The setting is a K-8 private school. Participants in this study were selected from a private school located in the north-eastern suburbs of Massachusetts. One group obtained computer-based instruction in English grammar, and the other followed computer-based instruction in mathematics. The teaching programs included drill and practice. Repercussions of the point of view study disclosed that the computer-based instruction raised

students' enthusiasm towards schooling and education on the whole. Learners revealed an enhancement in learning with instantaneous feedback. In an inquiry with Japanese students, Nagata[13] correlated the efficiency of Nihongo-CALI (Japanese Computer Assisted Language Instruction) with non-CALI workbook apprenticeship. The continuous resourceful computer feedback was considered to be more potent than traditional textbook explanations for promoting learners' grammatical ability to construct Japanese particles and sentences. In a research study, a computer-assisted language learning (CALL) software which consists of user-performance tracking technologies improved the competences of foreign-language learners of Spanish in developing indirect speech[14].

Additionally, Zhou[15] investigated the impact of hypermedia on grammar teaching and learning. She generated a hypermedia computer program by conceiving devices such as Macromedia Authorware and Director. Post-assistance grades proved that contributors' performance considerably expanded, approving the assumptions that the hypermedia teaching is very practical for grammar teaching and study.

Although, the aptitude level and pedagogical sections did not have important consequences on learning time, the achievement of learners with distinctive cognitive traits did not considerably vary hinting that hypermedia-based instruction could fit the requirements and skills of various individuals.

At the stage of high school, Frigaard[16] investigated the achievement of high school students who collaborated in a computer lab on vocabulary, grammar, and listening comprehension in Spanish. Examination of student surveys revealed that the computer lab was a valuable device, arranging certain students more than others. Some of the learners appreciated lab-based activities of the Spanish research of Website and the grammar tutor. Further preferred classroom activities consisted of flashcards and games. Most of the learners admitted that the computer lab enhanced their listening skills and made class more pleasant and they appreciated having usual- scheduled lab sessions.

Nonetheless, they favoured to learn vocabulary and grammar in the classroom and wished to have a teacher present in the computer lab to strengthen their learning potential. Moreover, applying technology in language teaching proved to have diverse repercussionson students' attitudes towards foreign/second language apprenticeship. Chen (2004) investigated the case of 1,026 freshmen beginner students in Taiwan following a college EFL course. The students demonstrated great confident attitudes toward educational technology usage in EFL teaching. Similarly, Felix[17] asserted that generally, students undoubtedly approved working with the web and considered it valuable, with the major part approving to apply the web as a complement to face-to-face teaching. Minor suggestive findings corresponding to strategy strength were attained.

Considerable dissimilarities of age and gender were noticed linked to accuracy of goals, number of work hours, procedure of transfer, feeling of convenience and approbation, of graphics. Moreover, average level college ESL students and teachers denoted very confident attitudes toward utilizing LEE[18].

Teachers recognised the potentiality of the program namely: the supplementary grammar application, the individual -paced and pleasant quality, the incorporation of sound, and the grammar materials include content topics. The students appreciated exploiting the program and reckoned that it boosted their learning moreover, they approved having teacher guidance while manipulating the program independently. Both students and teachers revealed some flaws essentially the delaying reaction time of the computer in performing commands, hindrance using the mouse, opening and shutting the program down, and printing.

Despite of thousands of students and trainers all over the globe are exploiting Online Management Systems such as Blackboard, WebCT, Online Learning, Moodle and Nicenet in instructing the entire types of curricula along with EFL and ESL, the outcome of employing online courses in grammar teaching was not considered by previous studies. Just as in several developing countries, the adoption of online courses in EFL instruction in various higher

education institutions in Algeria is not yet established by reason of deficient internet connectivity in some universities, unavailability of qualified instructors, and deficiency of administrative endorsement. Several educators throughout the world are exploiting OWCP and Moodle to teach writing, grammar, literature, linguistics and other subjects. Nevertheless, the impact of similar procedures on Algerian university students'attainment has not been explored thus far.

3- Methodology

The researcher has been adopting networked courses as a complement to in-class training (blended learning) since the year 2000. In the current research, first year EFL students exploited an online course with Nicenet from home as a subsidiary to face-to-face in-class grammar tutelage. (Nicenet is a non-profit organization of Internet professionals who give their time to provide services to the education community. Nicenet's Internet Classroom Assistant (ICA) allows virtually any classroom, even those with modest resources, access to powerful tools. Everything in Nicenet is offered free for public use, and Nicenet makes no profits from your participation).

It aspired to probe the efficiency of blending online in-class instruction on students' performance in grammar.

4- Research Questions

Moreover, it attempted to answer the consecutive questions:
(a) Is there an indicative dissimilarity in the achievement level as measured by the post-test between 1st year EFL students enrolled in the wired grammar course being an enhancement to face-to-face teaching and those using conventional face-to-face in-class instruction?
(b) Does the frequency of implementing the online course affect the students 'performance, i.e. are students who participated in the online program better achievers in grammar?
(c) Do online and face-to-face teaching (blended learning) have any positive impact on students' attitudes?

To answer the above questionings, two groups of EFL students cooperated in the survey:
One group was taught grammar via traditional face-to-face in-class training relying upon exclusively the teacher and the textbook. The other class was lectured adopting blended learning involving vis -a-vis in-class tutoring and an online course with Nicenet. The effect of online and face-to-face in-class instruction on first year EFL students' grammar attainment was established on quantitative analyses of the pre- and post-tests. However, the effect on their attitudes was built on qualitative analyses of their responses to a post-treatment questionnaire.

5- Subjects

The study participants were 293 females and males first year English students at the Teachers' Training School of Constantine.

The subjects were all native speakers of Arabic. Their average age was 18 years, and the range was 17-19.

Seventy-four students (25.25%) were enrolled in the online course; 164 students (55.97%) were not. Signing up in the online course was facultative as several students had no access to the Internet.Enrolled students composed the experimental group, and those who did not constituted the control group. Both groups received the same in-class grammar lessons. In addition to face-to-face in-class tutelage, the experimental group was exposed to networked instruction (blended learning). Students in the experimental group had no previous involvement with online instruction.

Returns of the T-test displayed in Table 1 denoted important divergences between the experimental and control groups in their grasp of English grammar (T = 2.8; df = 236; P<.008). The experimental group surpassed the control group (median = 26% & 23% correspondingly, with more considerable alterations prevailing among students in the experimental group than the control groups as enunciated by the standard deviation values displayed in Table 2.

Table 1: Independent Samples Test (comparison of pre-test and post-test mean scores)

	t-test	df	Sig. level	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Pretest	2.686	236	008	2.7521	1.0247

Table 2: Distribution of Pre-test Scores of Experimental and Control Groups in Percentages

	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Error Range	Experimental group
Experimental group	74	25.63%	26%	16.12	1.90	11-67%
Control group	164	22.88%	23%	13.78	1.08	03-61%

6- In-class Teaching

The experimental and control groups obtained an identical common in-class instruction. The contents presented in class consisted of: parts of speech, prepositions, prepositional phrases, transitive and intransitive verbs, linking verbs, regular and irregular verbs, adverbs, tag, negative and yes-no questions, negatives, regular and irregular plurals, use of definite and indefinite articles, pronouns, subject-verb concord, tenses, modals, pronunciation of –ed, -s and -es at the end of verbs and nouns, spelling of –ing, -ed, -es.(Reima Sado el Jaraf 2005) The students used an identical grammar book Understanding and Using English Grammar by Betty Azar (4th Edition) (personal choice) and effectuated the same exercises and grammatical topics . The grammar curriculum was started in Autumn 2016 and lasted for 25 weeks.

Learners in both groups carried out the entire grammar exercises in class. At the time of carrying out the exercises, the researcher inspected students' performance and brought individual assistance. Exclusively errors associated to rules under study were emphasised. Feedback was supplied on theexistence of errors however no accurate forms were afforded. The participants ought to check out the rules and illustrations in the book on their own. Supplementary scores were granted to students who could answer all the parts in the exercise accurately and within the assigned time.

Concerning assessment, students in both groups were given two in-term tests. Tests were marked, returned to the students with appropriate feedback.

Students were encouraged even for the slightest enhancement. Answers of the exercises were debated in class.

7- Treatment (Online Instruction)

Together with the traditional in-class instruction, the experimental group exploited an online course with Nicenet, as using the Nicenet course site did not request any exclusive license or enrolment payment, and it was not difficult to handle.

The experimental group employed their own Personal computers and the Internet from home. We provided the participants the class key and they signed up. The researcher was required to deliver the online instruction herself.

Preceding online tutelage, the students' computer proficiency skills were evaluated by a questionnaire. Later a tutorial (some guidelines) was administered to them for reference. The online course fundamentals were elucidated and the procedure of how to employ specific course components was as well posted in the "Conferencing" sphere. Online instruction was launched by posting a welcome annotation, by establishing a discussion subject and by transmitting a group e-card. The researcher never ceased to do so over the whole the semester.

Each week, grammar websites (hyperlinks) associated to the grammar theme presented in class were annexed in "Link Sharing". The links enclosed explanations, examples, exercises and quizzes and regular grammar lessons. Questions that necessitated the employment of a specific tense or grammatical structure were posted in the "Conferencing" space. Further, the students could post brief paragraphs on any subject of their preference.

The students looked over the particular grammar links posted under "Link Sharing", answered the quizzes and were instigated to look over the day – to-day grammar lesson.

All over the semester, the researcher played the role of a facilitator. She supplied technical assistance on handling the diverse constituents of the online course, and replied to individual students' requirements, observations and requirements for specific sites. Moreover, the researcher transmitted in common and private messages to incite the students to collaborate and get across. The investigator was compelled to seek for suitable websites and post them in the "Link Sharing" sphere. She was required to post questions and topics and write exemplary responses each week. The reporter did not remedy spelling and grammatical mistakes. She would identify the type of errors committed notably in the grammar threads and request the students to check their posts. Exploiting the linked course was facultative as 55.97% of the learners had no connection and were not able to cooperate. Students were awarded additional credit for using the online course.

Prior to the instruction, the experimental and control groups were pre-evaluated. They followed the same grammar pre-test that included questions involving the grammatical themes to be studied. At the end of the semester, both groups obtained a similar post-test that included all of the grammatical topics studied during the whole semester: These comprise the following:

(1) Inserting an article in the text where necessary;

(2) Indicating whether nouns are Count or Non-count as it is used in the text. They were supposed to write C or NC;

(3) Specifying the part of speech of each word used in the text. They were supposed to use abbreviations;

(4) Supplying the plural form of the nouns where necessary;

(5) Providing the singular form of the nouns where necessary;

(6) Using the appropriatetense form of the verbs between parentheses or adding a modal where necessary;

(7) Saying how are -ed or –es pronounced in the designated words;

(8) Writing the past participle of each verb in the text;

(9) Inserting pronouns in the blanks;

(10) Completing sentences;

(11) Transformingnouns and pronouns to the plural form;

(12) Filling in the blanks with expressions of quantity or

indefinite pronouns. Most of the questions involved production.

The pre- and post-tests of both groups were evaluated by the investigator.

The students inscribed their ID numbers instead of their names. Keys answers were provided. Questions were scored. However, marks were withdrawn whenever they were spelling mistakes.

At the end of the course, all of the students replied to an open-ended questionnaire, which included 10 questions:

8- Test Validity and Reliability

The post-tests are considered to have content validity in that they attempted at evaluating the students' performance in grammar. The assignments relied on in the post-test were equivalent to those enclosed in the book and carried out in class. Besides, the test recommendations were formulated precisely and the testee's duty was specified.

Concurrent validity of the post-test was concluded by creating the link between the students' marks on the post-test and their course scores. The validity coefficient was .78. Concurrent validity was also accomplished by forming the relation between the students' scores on the post-test and their scores on the secondin-term test. The validity coefficient was 72 for the grammar test.

Considering that the researcher was the teacher of the experimental and control groups and the marker of the pre-test and post-test essays, acknowledging inter-rater reliability was

indispensable. A 30% random pattern of the pre- and post-test papers was extracted and double-marked. A competent (reliable) colleague was requested to score the pre- and post-test samples. The scoring processes were clarified to her, and she carried out the same scoring procedures and employed the same answer key that the investigator applied. The scores awarded by the evaluator were correlated with the researcher 's. Inter-rater correlation was .99 forthe post-test.

Moreover, examinee reliability was measured applying the Kuder-Richardson formula 21'.

(The scores for KR-20 range from 0 to 1, where 0 is no reliability and 1 is perfect reliability. The closer the score is to 1, the more reliable the test. Just what constitutes an "acceptable" KR-20 score depends on the type of test. In general, a score of above .5 is usually considered reasonable.

Apply the following formula *once for each item*:

*KR-20 is [n/n-1] * [1-(p*q)/Var]*

where:

- n = sample size for the test,
- Var = variance for the test,
- p = proportion of people passing the item,
- q = proportion of people failing the item.
- = sum up (add up). In other words, multiple Each question's p by q, and then add them all up.If you have 10 items, you'll multiply p*q ten times, then you'll add those ten items up to get a total.

As this can quickly get tedious for tests with a large amount of items, it's usually calculated with some type of software like Excel.

KR-21

The KR-21 is similar, except it's used for a test where the items are all about the same difficulty. The formula is [n/(n-1) * [1-(M*(n-M)/(n*Var))] where:

- n= sample size,
- Var= variance for the test,
- **M = mean score for the test.**
-

The examinee reliability coefficient for the post test was .85.

9- Data Analysis

The pre- and post-test unprocessed scores were converted into percentages. The mean median, standard deviation, standard error and range were calculated for the pre- and post-test scores of both the experimental and control groups. To determine whether there was a substantial divergence in competence between the experimental and control groups preceding training, an independent sample T-test was run employing the pre-test scores.

In consideration of the fact that experimental and control groups are disparate in size, denoting dissimilarities that existed between them in their pre-test means scores at the beginning of the semester, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was administered employing the post-test scores as the response variable and the pre-test scores as the covariate to mend for random disparities that occurred when the subjects were selected for the treatment groups. This amendment issued in the adjustment of group means for pre-existing differences engendered by sampling error and contraction of the extent of the errorvariance of the analysis.

To determine whether each group had made any improvement as a consequence of training, a within group paired T-test was calculated for each groups adopting the pre- and post-test mean scores of each group.

To check whether there is a correlation between the students' post-test scores and frequency of handling the online course, the student' post-test scores were equated with the number of feedback they posted in the "Conferencing" space through the Pearson correlation formula. (using the excel). Post-test scores could not be correlated with the frequency of exploiting the hyperlinks posted in the Link Sharing, as such statistics are not implemented by the Nicenet system.

10- Results

10-1- Impact of Online and Face-to-face Instruction on Performance (Research question b)

Table 3 reveals that the common EFL first year student in the experimental group achieved scores more elevated than the typical student in the control group on the post-test (medians = 62% and 55% correspondingly) with identical variations among students in the experimental and controls (SD = 17.98 and 18 correspondingly).

Table 3: Distribution of Post-test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups in Percentages

	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Error Range	Experimental group
Experimental group	74	61.80%	62%	17.98	2.12	30-100%
Control group	164	55.76%	55%	18.00	1.24	14-94%

Table 4: Comparison of the Pre- and Post-test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

		df	t	Sig level	Mean	Mean Difference	SD	SE of Mean
Ex group	Pretest	73	27.09	.000	25.6%	25.6	8.08	.95
	Posttest	73	32.33	.000	61.8%	30.9	8.17	.96
Control group	Pretest	163	42.46	.000	22.9%	22.9	6.90	.54
	Posttest	163	44.66	.000	55.8%	8.00	8.00	.62

Conclusions of the paired T-test in Table 4 report an important divergence between the pre- and post-test mean marks of the experimental group at the .01 level, indicating that student achievement in the experimental group considerably enhanced by virtue of exploiting a blend of online and conventional face-to-face in-class grammar guidance (T = 7.5; df = 73). Correspondingly, a discernible distinction between the pre- and post-test mean scores of the control group was perceived at the .01 level, proposing that achievement in the control group greatly progressed by reason of in-class grammar instruction which relied upon only the textbook (T = 10.29; df = 163). Considering that the two groups are disparate in size, and essential diversities occurred between the experimental and control groups in their pre-test scores, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) on adjusted post-test means announced powerful differences between the experimental and control groups (F = 117.23; df = 236; P<.0001). The experimental group made greater improvements in grammar achievement than the control group due to handling a combinationof online and face-to-face in-class instruction. The effect size was .49.

10-2- Correlation between Post-test Scores and Frequency Method

Table 5 displays the overall number of conversation messages delivered along with the median and the maximum number of messages posted. The investigation presumed a convincing definite correspondence between the post-test grades of the experimental group and the frequency of practising the online course. The correlation coefficient was .40 and it was compelling at the .01 level. This implies that a student's attainment in the grammar course may correspond to the number of contributions he/she made to the debate topics and questions posted in the networked course. This signifies that high and low practice frequencies of the online course were concluded to equate with high and low performance levels as estimated by the post-test. It can be deduced that handling the online course may contribute in boosting the students' general achievement level.

Table 5 Distribution of Discussion Messages Posted by Experimental Groups

	Total # of Group Messages	Median	Maximum # of Individual Messages
Grammar	364	6	50

10-3- Outcome of Online and Face-to-face Instruction on Attitudes

Inquiry of student remarks, opinions and responses to the post-treatment two questionnaires disclosed positive reactions towards online learning and the grammar course under investigation.

All the students considered the online -grammar course beneficial and enjoyable, and judged it a modern method of leaning English grammar and completing homework. It enhanced their motivation and boosted their confidence. It established a cordial-atmosphere between the students and teacher and among the students themselves. They judged the exercises posted in "Link Sharing" valuable, as they proffered more contributions and gave immediate feedback. The exercises served to simplify troublesome issues and assisted the students revise for the in-terms.

They could exploit the online course any moment and as many times as they required.

Some of the disadvantageous features of online teaching in the current research are that some students did not post any answers if not initiated by the teacher. If the instructor did not post recent subjects and post a model response, some of them initiated a new string related to a similar theme rather than posted a reply under that topic.

Some type wrote "Thank you" notes and compliments rather than authentic responses. Others browsed and checked out only rather than posting messages.

Deficient participation in the online course was caused by scarcity of computers and Internet connectivity at school and at home. A few students did not take online instruction vigorously as it was not exploited by other teachers and students at school. The researcher could not make the online course obligatory and could not assign a percentageof the course score to it. Employing the Internet as a learning device was not component of some students' culture. Some were so accustomed to classical instruction that relied upon the book. They revealed that they were not internet browsers and favoured reading books and references. They were also convinced that online courses should be used for entertainment not for credit and hard working studying. If wired learning is not an element of tests and marks, they will not engage in. The investigator did not have ample time in the classroom to brainstorm subject matters before and after posting and could not scrutinize the material in the hyperlinks in class. Other flaws are owing to the Nicenet online course pattern. The investigator could not conceive her own quizzes and exercises and could not upload graphics and PowerPoint presentations.

11- Discussion and Conclusions

Indicative discrepancies were found between the experimental and control groups in grammar attainment as estimated by the post-test, propounding that in the experimental group enhanced thanks to blending online and in-class teaching.

This denotes that employing online instruction as a complement to in-class teaching is an influential tool for enhancing students' achievement in grammar. Findings of the current investigation furthermore demonstrated that active participants made immense improvements than passive participants who consecutively made bigger gains than unenrolled students (control group).

This finding is compatible with results of previous researches exploiting alternative modes of technology in grammar tuteling such as the Nagata[19], Collentine[20] and Zhuo[21] studies. Nagata discovered the continuous intelligent computer feedback to be more efficient than plain workbook answer sheets for promoting learners' grammatical competence in conceiving Japanese particles and sentences. Collentine anounced that user-behaviour tracking

technologies boosted the skills of foreign-language learners of Spanish in forming indirect speech. Zhuo ascertained that hypermedia-based instruction was very impressive in grammar teaching and learning. Nutta[22]analysed post-secondary English as a Second Language (ESL) students 'acquirement of chosen English grammatical structures depending on the technique of computer-based instruction versus teacher-directed one.She estimated that for all levels of English proficiency, the computer-based students obtained considerably higher scores on open-ended tests including the grammatical structures in question than their teacher-directed counterparts.No denoting differences were concluded between the computer-based and teacher-directed students'marks on multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank tests. She proclaimed that computer-based instruction can be an adequate method of teaching foreign language grammar.

Contrary to Frigaard's research[23] in which the students favoured to learn vocabulary and grammar in the classroom in place of the computer lab, students in the current inquiry exhibited enthusiasm in learning grammar online. Furthermore, the present survey exposed positive outcomes of blended learning (online and face-to-face instruction) on students' attitudes as regards the grammar course. This finding is likewise corresponding with results of further studies. Comparatively, Lin[24] identified that international students' perspectives towards ESL were positively fit to their attitudes about computers. Their position towards ESL was conjointly positively tied up to their perceived computer proficiency progress and their involvement in ESL was positively affected by their perceived computer aptitude development. In Chen's survey[25], freshmen and sophomores students in Taiwan proclaimed extremely positive attitudes regarding educational technology appliance in EFL teaching. Likewise, Felix[26] revealed that all in all, students were undoubtedly eager to working with the web and considered it utile, with the best part favouring to employ the web as a complement to face-to-face teaching.

Yet, intermediate level academic community ESL students and teachers displayed very confident attitudes as to using LEE[27]. Correspondingly, in Schnackenberg's computer software LEE, online grammar teaching in the current study supplied supplementary grammar practice, a self-paced and non-menacing learning environment. The students appreciated handling the online course and perceived it helpful for learning.

Conclusively, the present investigation prescribes that application of blended learning (use of online instruction as a supplement to face-to-face instruction) be increased to further language course and other university levels. To incite the students to cooperate, the teacher has to impel and motivate them. Guidelines for using the online course should be made conspicuous. A slight number of postings may be indicated. Administrative support is as well needed so that the students would regard the online course in all seriousness. Extra Management Systems like WebCT, Moodle or Blackboard may be adopted alternately of Nicenet to allow the students to refine, upload pictures and PowerPoint presentations, and employ online chat and to permit to the lecturer to conceive her individual quizzes and exercises. The impact of teaching grammar completely online adopting materials and exercises devised by the instructor is as yet open for additional research.

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Appendices
Appendix 1
(1) Why did you conscribe and utilise the online course?

(2) How often did you use the online course?

(3) What did you enjoy about it? What did you dislike?

(4) Did your English enhance as a consequence of using the online course? And if so in what ways?

(5) Did the English course make any change in learning English grammar?

(6) Did you post any response for paragraphs in the online course? If no, why?

(7) What troubles or hardships did you encounter in using the online course? How did you solve them?

(8) How much time did you allocate to using and browsing the online course?

(9) Which link/s did you estimate most beneficial?

(10) Would you register one more time in an alike course ensuingly. Why?

Appendix 2

Sample Grammar Links

Daily Grammar Lesson

http://www.thebeehive.org/external_link.asp?r=/school/middle/subjects.asp?subject=12&e=http://www.dailygrammar.com/archive.shtml

Parts of speech

http://www.jiskha.com/english/grammar/parts_of_speech.html

Parts of Speech (Definitions)

http://www.cftech.com/BrainBank/OTHERREFERENCE/GRAMMARANDPUNCTUATION/PartsSpeech.html

Parts of Speech (Lessons & Quizzes)

http://www.eslus.com/LESSONS/GRAMMAR/POS/pos.htm

http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/partsp.html

http://www.cityu.edu.hk/elc/quiz/partspee.htm

http://www.cityu.edu.hk/elc/quiz/partspee.htm

Prepositions: Quiz

http://a4esl.org/q/j/ck/mc-prepositions.html

English Zone: Questions

http://english-zone.com/index.php?ID=30

Singular and Plural

http://www.better-english.com/grammar/sinplu.htm

http://www.better-english.com/grammar/sinplu.htm

http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/plural6.htm

Irregular Verbs

http://www.englishpage.com/irregularverbs/irregularverbs.htm

Tenses

http://www.englischhilfen.de/en/grammar_list/zeitformen.htm

VerbTenseChart

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/esltensverb.html

Verbs

http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar_list/verbs.htm

 http://www.ucl.ac.uk/internet-grammar/exlist/exlist.htm

Quiz Center

http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/quiz/

Appendix 3

An Unedited Sample Online Grammar Discussion Thread with Students'

Responses and Comments

From teacher

Subject: Practicing the Simple Present

Please write few sentences in which you tell us about what you and your family members do every Ramadan day or night. Make sure you use the Present Simple Tense.

Use punctuation marks like periods and commas. Use a capital "I" for the pronoun "I".

Thanks you in advance.

From student 1

Subject: Hello every one

I and my family sleep early. that because we wake up to eat a meal before AL_FADJER prayer .Then,everyone from us goes to his¥her work or universty.

Replies (1):

From student 2

In ramadan especially, every one of my family tries to do something different.

Ramadan is a nice month. we usually visit our relatives. My little brother likes to eat somuch cookies in ramadan, so he usually gets fat eveyramadan. it was just few 'separate'sentences.

From student 3
Subject: Practicing the Simple Present
I love Ramadan because it's a great month to be more closer to Allah. I and my family everyday get's together and eat the first meal after al-athan in the sunset . Ramadan is aspecial month to me and to all the muslem's in all over the world.

From student 4
I usually help my mom in the kitchen, after breakfast we watch T.V. I like staying at myroom most of the time and draw, but in Ramadan staying with my family is more funthen being alone.

From student 5
Subject: My Habits in Ramadan.
Daily habits:
1- I pray fadjr.
2- I sleep after fadjr.
3- I get up little bit later.
4- I wash my face.
5- I sit to surf the net and study my lessons.
6- I work on translation tasks.
7- I attend the online courses.
8- I work on my assignments.
9- I check my mail.
10- I pray dohr.
11- I talk to relatives by phone.
12- I prepare something to iftar.
13- we take our eftar.
14- we pray Maghreb.
15- we pray Isha and traweh.
16- we sit to talk.
17- I read Quran.
18- I sleep to get up early.
Weekly Habits:
1- I clean our house.
2- I visit rahem.
Monthly Habits: (after Ramadan)
1- I pay telephone bills.
2- I renew internet subscription.
3- I buy our house necessities.
Teacher, if we use present simple, should we imagine that the speaker want to tell us atthe end of his speech that what he said is his (daily habit or weekly habit or monthly habit or annual habit or hourly habit without writing this depending on the presence ofthis tense present simple in the sentence and not any other tense)and if the subject issolid can we imagine that there are words that are omitted like (everyday, every week,every month, every year, every hour)

Replies (1)
From teacher
Habits can be daily, weekly, monthly, annual and even things we do every 5 or 10 years,or things that happen every 100 years. For example, I can say:
I travel every summer.
I change my furniture once every 5 years.

From student 3
Subject: Question
If I am not persistent in doing the action I did I mean I did it but not everydayeverydaymay be I stop doing it then I redo it again then something else takes me but I return todo it again Can I use here present simple? can we call this habit? and if not what can wecall it? and which tense all thes meaning without writing them explicitly?

Replies (5)
Fromteacher
(1) Could you please add punctuation marks to your sentences.

(2) You need to use a mixture of tenses here. In real life communication situations, we use a mixture of tenses and we move back and forth among the tenses. However, when
you teach beginners, you have to teach the tenses one at a time and have the students
practice them one at a time. Once they master each tense, then we can proceed to practicing two tenses, then more. At the early stages, students should practice the tenses at the sentence level, and at a later stage they can practice them at the discourse level. But if a teacher requires that her students use all the tenses at the same time, they will not master any. My students are in their first semester of university. This is their first grammar course; they will be taking two more: one in semester two and one in semester three. In semester two, they will be practicing the tenses at the paragraph level.
I hope this explains it.

From student4

Correction

If I am not persistent in doing the action I did, I mean I did it, but not everyday
everyday may be I (will) stop doing it. then I (will) redo it again. Then something else takes me (away). But I return to do it again. Can I use present simple (here)? Can we call (these) habits? and if not, what can we call them? Which tense applies to all these meanings without writing them explicitly?
Yes, Doctor. But I remember in narrating something, they always told us to stick to one tense, whether present or past, it was really strange because sometimes there are things should be in other tenses, for that I have this idea that we can not change tenses throughout the text but it is really a big misery.

From teacher

It depends on what you are writing about. No hard and fast rules.

From teacher

Thanks for the exclusive list, I am sure your friends will like them and willmake a long list like it.

From student 3

Thanks Dr. for correction.I try to encircle all what is called a habit in my life to know what "habit", that we say all the time, mean? I hope I successed.

From student 5

Everything changes in Ramadan, The food, T.V, people, conversations and even the way you feel changes.
My Grandfather insists that we have breakfast at his house everyday, which is really nice, it gives us the chance of knowing him (and each other) better.
The food in Ramadan is another story, my mom makes the best pastries in the world,Not to mention her Gatayef (an Arabic dessert).
Just talking about it makes me droll !
Anyway, I think this year my basic Ramadan day will start by going to the university,watching Ramadan`s series`, having breakfast with my family, praying at the mosque
(which I really want to make a daliyhabbit), watching more T.V, studing (cause I have midterms in Ramadan) then sleeping.
So far, I think it`s going to be a great Ramadan.
Wishing u all a Great Ramadan Too:)

From teacher

This is an interesting paragraph. I like the informaiton and I like your writing style too.
Looking forward to hearing more about Ramadan from you and from your classmates.

From student 6

In Ramadan I read the Holy Quran and pray after 8:00 p.m .Ieat dats and water withsome of food.

From: student 7

My daily list in Ramadan is change From year to another, but I want to tell you what I do in Ramadan in this year. When I wake up at 9:00 (this is when our holiday started)
I clean my house with my sisters untill 9:30 or 10:00. Then I read Qura'an some hours unto my mother call me to help her in cooking. When the time come 4:00 I watch T.V,because thereis anice program in this program his arranger is Mohammad Al-Aode. After it is finish I see another program about profet Mohammad. Then I go back to the kichin to my mother till to Magreb foretoken and all my family eat Fatoor. At 7:00 Istudy my Grammer Book each day Ireview 2 pages to 3 pages also my Vocabulary Book. When I finish those books I readmy favourite story which is (Jane Eyre) becuse I want to improve my Einglish languge and I hope read many stories in Ramadan befor the holiday finish. You know doctor.

now we rae in holiday so my small brothers want to shopping, travel, park or any place from 11:00 to 2:45. Then I eat Sahoor and go to Sleep.

From teacher

Dear student,

I like your writing style. There is something special about it. I can see a great writer.

Keep on writing and let us enjoy more of your thoughts and reflections.

From Teacher

Subject: Your paragraphs

Dear Students,

I enjoyed reading your paragraphs and learning about your Ramadan daily activities.

However, I suggest that you type your paragraph using Microsoft WORD before you post it. MS WORD will underline spelling mistakes in red. It will also give you the options for correcting your mistakes. This way your English will improve. Try it and let me know what you think.