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Developing an E-Content Evaluation Instrument for English Oral Skills Courses in Higher Education Learning Environment

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Abstract

This study aims at developing an instrument to review and develop the quality of online oral skills courses in higher education learning environments. The framework is based on QM for Higher Education, IELO "Indicators of Engaged Learning Online" and active online experiential learning principles. The instrument was developed using the Expert-Oriented Approach. The expert panel consisted of (15) participants from faculties associated with multiple fields and varying teaching expertise levels specialized in Educational Technology, Curriculum & Instruction, Linguists and Measurement & Evaluation. The instrument has been adjusted based on the experts' comments and suggestions. The researchers recommended the effective application of the developed instrument in higher education academic institutions. In addition, it is recommended that this instrument can be adapted and applied into other academic fields.

Key words: online oral skills courses, experiential learning, QM for higher education, IELO standards.

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1. Introduction

Technology is becoming an extremely useful tool in education that educators can no longer ignore. Technology allows teachers to center learning on students and motivates students to provide input and feedback actively on learning (Mucundanyi,G.2021). Creation of high-quality online courses, required to achieve learning outcomes, can be a challenge to non-traditional online course designers, such as university faculty. Increasing interest in online courses urged higher education instructors to design their online courses. A poorly designed online course can cause students to lose interest and become passive learners.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, educators struggle with the limitations of creating comprehensive content in online courses in higher education. Specifically, designing an online content that increases student motivation, student engagement, and student learning (Carmon, Gurevich, Kim & Lanier, 2022). The crucial growth of the field of online learning prior to and during these unprecedented times has resulted in a depth and breadth of research studies and associated information for educators to draw upon (Greenhow et al., 2022).

Online-based learning materials are widely used in higher education today. E-content is considered as one of the valuable tools in today's' technology-based education setting as it serves as a main resource for both learners and educators in the teaching and learning process and has been acknowledged as one of the tools to help overcome some of the short comings in curriculum delivery. Quality e-content is fundamental for quality learning to take place. According to Chalmers (2008), the framework for quality in higher education involves four basic dimensions. These are: a) institutional climate and systems, b) assessment, c) diversity, and d) engagement and learning community. Therefore, the criteria of a good e-content needs to be evaluated and identified based on learners need, content availability, content accessibility, learning resources and activities and content assessment tools and strategies. Besides, different factors should be considered when incorporating course content into an e-learning format, which in turn is mainly controlled by the context of the course and educational platform on which it will be conveyed (Alalwani, 2014).

Online course design evaluation instruments have been created to help instructors design and assess quality (Baldwin & Ching 2019). These tools can be used to encourage improvement in online courses through course design consistency and foster a dialogue about quality in online courses (Legon 2015). As a result, instructors are required to employ different online tools and web- based materials in their classes. However, the insufficiency of a systematic approach that governs the design and the delivery of the content has resulted in the misapplication to

fully exploit the potential that technology brings to learning (Boukhechba & Draia, 2019). Besides, few comprehensive instruments have been developed to assess online learning environments for higher education (Chang & Fisher, 2003). Therefore, the current research attempts to develop an instrument to review and develop the quality of online oral skills courses in higher education learning environments which are specified in teaching English language to ensure an effective e-learning content that leads to better learner performance. An expertise-oriented evaluation approach is considered as a possible tool for applying needed adaptations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 E-Content Evaluation Standards

In their study, Santos, Putra& Hendra, (2021), provided an alternative interaction design for e-Learning modules by developing content based on user needs using the User-Centered Design methodology. Due to a lack of e-Learning content for visual and global preferences in the Felder Silverman learning styles, User-Centered Design is chosen as the basis to design the e-Learning module. The research results revealed an alternative design and a proposed interface design. The alternative design describes learning objects and navigation of the e-Learning module. The proposed interface design is a prototype of an interactive e-Learning module. After being evaluated, the prototype satisfied the user's expectations in terms of content translation, content navigation, and interactivity throughout the module.

In her article, Lewis, E (2021), indicated that Some of the challenges that she faced while leading the instructional, design, development, delivery, and maintenance of all online courses were associated with not providing: (a) a course overview; (b) clearly stated, appropriate, and measurable outcomes; (c) culturally inclusive materials, images, and other resources designed to support the learning needs of diverse learners; (d) accessible online courses; (e) multiple ways to engage learners; (f) inclusive instructions; (g) assessments and rubrics that clearly aligned with learning outcomes; and (h) consistency in the user interface experience from one course to the next.

In his research, Al-alwani (2014), proposed a framework in the form of an instrument survey to evaluate the quality of digital content and its performance in an e-learning platform. Evaluation was made under seven primary criteria with multiple item questions to assess the performance of subject e-content in an e-learning environment. The evaluation framework was developed using an expert-oriented approach using reviews from a panel of 42 experts in the higher education field. This instrument survey presented a basic structure for evaluating and assessing potential of an e-learning digital course. As stated by the researcher, this structure was intended facilitate standardization and classification of e-content.

In their research, Almohamadi, Bazara'& Baryan (2021), aimed at identifying the most important international standards of designing electronic courses, figuring out the stages of designing e-courses in accordance with international standards, and preparing a suggested proposal for designing e-learning courses in light of international standards. The researchers used the descriptive-analytical method of research for tackling many findings of research and studies related to the design and standards of e-courses. Based on the foregoing, a suggested proposal has been developed for designing e-learning courses in higher education institutions in light of international accreditation standards.

In their paper, Chua & Dyson (2004) proposed the ISO 9126 Quality Model as a useful tool for evaluating such systems, particularly for teachers and educational administrators. The authors demonstrated the validity of the model in a case study in which they applied it to a commonly available e learning system and indicated how it can be used to detect design flaws. It is suggested that the metric would be applicable to other e-learning systems.

In their study, Tarasoeal, Khalili &Auer (2015), have developed the CrowdLearn concept to exploit the wisdom, creativity, and productivity of the crowd for the creation of rich, deep-semantically structured e-learning content. The CrowdLearn concept combines the wiki style for collaborative content authoring with SCORM requirements for reusability. Therefore, it enables splitting the learning material into Learning Objects (LOs) with an adjustable level of granularity. To realize the CrowdLearn concept, a novel data model called WikiApp is devised. The WikiApp data model is a refinement of the traditional entity relationship data model with further emphasis on collaborative social activities and structured content authoring. The researchers implemented and evaluated the CrowdLearn approach with SlideWiki – an educational platform dealing with presentations and assessment tests.

In their research, Chang & Fisher (2003) designed a new web-based learning environment instrument (WEBLEI) which contained four main scales; Access, Interaction, and Response & Results. It focused on information structure and the design of online material. Statistical analyses, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient, factor analysis, and

discriminant validity, indicated that the WEBLEI is a reliable and valid instrument. The findings involved the perceptions of undergraduate and graduate students utilising their instrument.

2.2 IELO Standards

According to Edel-Malizia & Brautigan, (2014), Indicators of Engaged Learning Online (IELO) illustrates thirty indicators of engaged learning online, which are distributed into three major areas: Instructional Approach, Teaching, and Learning. The IELO framework is a research-based tool that incorporates both instructor roles and design features of an online course that indicate the extent to which a course is engaging to online students.

Bigatel & Edel-Malizia (2017) studied the use of the Indicators of Engaged Learning Online (IELO) framework as a guide to evaluate the quality of online courses. Six online courses were evaluated for quality in terms of engaged learning based on thirty indicators contained within the framework. The purpose of the pilot study was to explore how the Indicators of Engaged Learning Online (IELO) framework could be used as a tool for evaluating the quality of online courses by instructional designers (IDs) and instructors. Insights into the practical use of the (IELO) framework and the need for improved guidelines for IDs and instructors as they assess the amount of student engagement designed in a course are provided. Recommendations for practice have implications for both aspects of engagement: how a course is designed and how it is delivered.

2.3 QM Standards

Elaasri & Bouziane (2019) examined in their study the extent to which the online courses on ENT (digital working space) comply with the Quality Matters (QM) rubrics. They used the QM standards, an internationally recognized, research based, and peer-review process designed to certify the quality of online and hybrid courses. The results indicated that none of the seven ENT platform online courses passed the Quality Matters review. However, four courses scored fairly good overall in terms of total points. The study findings suggest that while the quality of the course-based standards was fairly high, the course design quality was low.

2.4 Expert Oriented Approach

The expertise-oriented strategy to evaluation, widely used by accrediting agencies, depends primarily upon professional expertise to judge an educational program (Usun, 2016). Expertise-oriented Evaluation Strategy is the oldest and most widely used evaluation approach to judge a program, activity, or institution. Evaluators utilizing this strategy draw on a panel of experts to judge a program and make recommendations based on their perceptions. (Usun, 2016)

Rovai (2003) used this approach in a study aimed to evaluate distance education. Evaluators should assess student performance, determine program and cost effectiveness, monitor quality to include technology and support services, evaluate course design and instruction, and ascertain teacher and student satisfaction. An inventory of potential evaluation questions for input, process, output, and impact evaluations that respond to the potential needs of internal and external stakeholders are listed along with quantitative and qualitative data requirements that can be helpful in responding to these questions.

2.5 Experiential Learning Process

In his study, Baasanjav(2013) analyzed the relationship between e-learning, a combination of experiential and e-learning, and technological integration in online higher education classes. By incorporating the experiential learning theory proposed by Kolb (1984), which elaborates upon John Dewey's notion of continuity of experience and interaction, the author contributes to the understanding of the roles of direct media experiences in online learning environments and proposes a useful model for teachers designing online technology courses. According to the researcher, the e-learning theory helps to address the wide variation of technological skills among students that instructor of online classes encounters.

3. Problem of the study

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically changed the way we teach, particularly regarding listening and speaking skills. Online teaching has presented various challenges in teaching these skills that were not present in the traditional classroom setting (Jones, M. 2021). One of the main difficulties in teaching listening online is the

use of streaming media playback resulting in effects that can hinder listening comprehension; learner use of subtitles and potential overdependence as well as negative effects upon phonological acquisition; and assessment of listening when learners are capable of cheating.

4. Importance of the study

The current research intends to present an instrument that may assist the instructor to guide course developers through the development, evaluation, and improvement of their online and blended listening and speaking courses. Instructors can use the instrument presented to aid in the creation of courses designed to meet Standards from the outset. Besides, this tool can help instructors to design online activities that still expose students to much input through listening and provide opportunities for them to practice speaking. The instrument is also used to assess the level to which a course meets Standards and highlight areas for improvement.

5. Research Methodology

When evaluating various e-learning based content courses, one of the major challenges faced is covering multiple variables which affect the quality and effectiveness of the course in an e-learning environment (Alalwani, 2014). Current evaluation practice is mostly focused on evaluating three basic factors; course content, course assessment and measurement and course online experiential learning activities and learners' interaction. To develop the framework used in reviewing the quality of oral online courses, several brainstorm sessions have been arranged by the researchers. The e-content framework was based on active online experiential learning principles, QM for Higher Education, and IELO standards.

The instrument was developed using the Expert-Oriented Approach. An online e- content evaluation instrument validation form was sent for 30 experts and professors. Out of which 25 professors participated in validating the evaluation tool. The online e-content evaluation instrument form was formulated as a means of collecting data from respondents who have considerably different academic backgrounds across the country. The expert panel members were from faculties associated with multiple fields and varying teaching expertise levels specialized in Educational Technology, Curriculum & Instruction, Linguists and Measurement & Evaluation. The experts were requested to respond to questions with comments according to two standards: clarity of the item and relevance of the item to the sub-category. Focus group interviews were conducted by the researchers with the members of the expert panel. A semi-structured interview was employed with the members of the expert panel to get feedback on the framework, allowing the analyses of primary issues and providing thorough data. The researchers developed an interview form, including a general opening and a set of inquiry questions to make the interview flexible and to leave space for the interviewee to give open and detailed responses related to the instrument sections in words of appropriateness and clarity of the items and subitems. Experts' comments and suggestions were taken into consideration. The instrument items were readjusted and elaborated based on the experts' comments and suggested changes. The research resulted in an instrument for reviewing and developing English online oral skills courses in higher education learning environment. The instrument composed of three main domains followed by (12) sub domains distributed into (66) respective criterions. The three main domains are course content, course assessment and measurement and course online experiential learning activities and learners' interaction. A detailed review of our proposed evaluation instrument is presented in the next section.

6. Results and Findings

The research resulted in an instrument for reviewing and developing English online oral skills courses in higher education learning environment. The developed instrument consisted of (3) three domains, (12) sub domains and (66) respective criterions. The three main domains are course content, course assessment and measurement and course online experiential learning activities and learners' interaction.

A. Course Content

Items included are related to (5) sub domains with (23) respective criteria. The four sub domains include: Course introduction, course instructional material, course accessibility and course resources. The four domains and their sub domains are shown in table (1)

Table (1): Course Content

	Domain	Sub-Domain
1.	Course Introduction (overview)	1.1 Minimal technical skills expected of the learner are stated clearly. 1.2 The requirements for learner interaction are stated clearly. 1.3 Information on hardware and software requirements is clearly stated. 1.4 Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class. 1.5 The self- introduction by the instructor is available online.
2.	Course outcomes	1.1 Course learning outcomes are measurable. 1.2 Course learning outcomes are stated clearly, and written from the learner's perspective. 1.3 Course learning outcomes are suited to the level of the course
3.	Course Instructional material	2.1 The course material is based on the course objectives. 2.2 The course material is current and varied. 2.3 The course material is adapted to the online learning. 2.4 The listening and speaking texts are selected and sequenced according to students' levels and needs. 2.5 The course material delivery is engaging, motivational, contextual, experiential, learner-centered, and authentic. 2.6 Direct instruction is delivered primarily through short videos.
4.	Course Accessibility	3.1 The course provides alternative means of access to course materials that meet the needs of diverse learners. 3.2 The course accessibility is flexible in terms of time and location. 3.3 The course content is available freely for the learners. 3.4 The course content is approachable for the learners in their own pace.
5.	Course Resources	4.1 All the learning resources used in the course are appropriately cited. 4.2 Needed links are provided constantly and can be accessed easily by the learners. 4.3 Chat tools for asynchronous communication are activated to enable learners to engage with one another, easily share ideas and collaborate. 4.4 Email for asynchronous communication is activated for announcements, schedule changes, issue solving, and other interactions that can and should be documented. 4.5 A variety of technology is used in the course resources.

1. Course Introduction

A great deal of research has been conducted on both theoretical and pragmatic approaches that emphasize the criticality of interaction in language learning environments. Interaction is considered an essential component of blended and online learning (Ge, 2012) , without which, as noted by Moore (1989), effective online learning cannot take place. Moore (1989) proposed three types of interaction (learner-content, learner instructor, and learner-learner), which is a widely accepted definition and focus for research. Using these three types of interaction as a foundation, instructors can direct their teaching approaches and create learning activities aimed at incorporating one, two, or all three types, depending on the complexity and scope of an assignment. Several studies support the idea that interactivity increases collaboration and cooperation within the learning environment, and that the quality of interaction determines the success of online learning and teaching (Jung, Choi, Lim & Leem, 2002; Chang, 2009; Nandi, Hamilton & Harland, 2012). Online learners need to have clear course instructions, sufficient technical skills, and well stated goals and to manipulate strategies to reach those goals, either individually or collectively in group environments. Course instructors can employ various strategies and techniques to supervise and direct their learners' actions, facilitate interactions, and provide a reflection to learners on their performance.

2. Course Outcomes

According to Lumpkin(2021), faculty needed guidance in designing effective online courses beginning with the establishment of learning outcomes with aligned assessments. Besides, faculty needed to add details and clarity to syllabi and organize disciplinary content into sequential learning modules, each filled with internet resources including videos, discussion groups, and a variety of learning activities and assessments.

3. Course Instructional Material

The main quality issues that concern material and content are selection and sequencing of material, and the quality of the material used and produced on a course (Conley, Lutz & Padgitt, 2017). According to Moreno, (2010), keeping learners engaged and interested in the course material in an online class, is one of the most difficult challenges instructors face. In online settings, research underscores the need to provide learners with interactive learning experiences that keep them engaged with one another and with course content that can replicate the interaction that is inherent in traditional course environments. Research has shown that when there is a demonstrated applicability of the material to their daily activities, learners are more responsive to course content and exhibit greater motivation to participate (Wilkins, 2021).

In their study, Lupinski & kaufam (2023) indicated that their was a clear evidence of greater student engagement rates in courses with instructor-made videos (IMVs) for online courses through higher course grades and discussion participation. Besides, positive outcomes were reported from the course evaluation and student survey, which indicated an increased perception and student satisfaction in courses with IMVs. These outcomes contribute to the field of online education by providing support for the belief that adding IMVs into online classrooms to increase instructor presence can contribute to student satisfaction. According to Gozali, Istiqomah & Widiati (2022), The results of their study showed that the application of technology should be combined with clear instruction and task requirements. They added also that Cognitive Presence needs to be fostered through activities that promote problem solving and critical thinking, such as online discussions, problem- or project-based learning, and self-reflection. Lastly, teachers need to make use of technologies to convey genuine concern for students and create a warm and friendly online environment as part of teaching activities that build Social Presence.

4. Course Accessibility

Literature has shown that accessible online courses enable learning, engagement and promote equity whereas inaccessible content is a barrier to student success and an impediment to student retention. Despite legal obligations for accessible course content, creators of course materials are often unaware of the benefits of improved accessibility and their personal liability (Jason et al, 2021). According to Schmidt & Stowell (2019), the creation of online courses that (1) offer effective student engagement and (2) follow “universal design of instruction” (UDI) in order to maximize accessibility and usability for all learners is one of the challenges that the instructors face . By revealing the availability of online content structuring access to capital-enhancing uses of the Internet, studies of online content can help explain sociodemographic differences in Internet accessibility and usage, and can delineate digital divides along lines of inequality, when content is available to some people but not others, as well as inequity, when content is available but not useful in people’s contexts of use (Grace, Stratton, Fanseca, 2019).

5. Course Resources

Open Educational Resources (OER) integrated online courses provide a rich and a flexible learning environment to acquire knowledge and skills among undergraduates. A significant issue with OER-integrated online courses is the poorly addressed instructional design features. Instructionally rich online courses will have a greater impact on both teaching and learning (Thanuja, Shironica, & Ajith, 2021.) Adam (2021) suggests that, depending on the overall instructional context in which text-based chat is integrated, this medium, which is generally assumed to be social and informal, may actually be flexible enough to also support the development of academic discourse. Furthermore, the detailed description of language use and development across online and off-line environments invites consideration of the relationship between chatting and speaking.

B. Course assessment

Items included are related to (2) sub domains with (14) respective criteria. The two sub domains include: Course assessment tools and strategies and course assessment tools’ validity. The domains and their sub domains are shown in table (2).

Table (2): Course Assessment and Measurement

5.	Course Assessment Tools and Strategies	5.1. The course assessment tools measure the stated learning outcomes. 5.2. The assessment strategies include informal assessment tools; observation, projects, presentations…etc 5.3. The course includes formative assessment; Quizzes, draw a mind map, exit tickets, tests, questions. etc. 5.4. The course includes summative assessment, mid-term exam, Final exam, research paper etc. 5.5. The course includes peer to peer online assessment tools, breakout rooms. 5.6. The assessment tools selected are sequenced and suited to the learner's work being assessed. 5.7. Assessment methods are dynamic including simulations, virtual seminars, and asynchronous group work. 5.8. The assessment methods stimulate creativity, critical thinking and in-depth knowledge of the listening and speaking texts.
6.	Course Assessment Tools' Validity	6.1. The course grading policy is stated clearly. 6.2. clear descriptive criteria are provided for the assessment of learners' listening and speaking skills. 6.3. Assessment tools are legally secure and accessible. 6.4. The legal security for students' assessment relies on a valid and reliable technical infrastructure. 6.5. Identification problems in synchronous settings are testified by using web cameras, computer ID. 6.6. plagiarism problem is overcome by using some applications such as" Turnitin "

5. Course Assessment tools and strategies

Transitioning to online assessment can be a potential opportunity if the basic tenets of programmatic assessment, choice of online assessment tools, strategies, good practices of online assessments and challenges are understood and explored explicitly for designing and implementing online assessments (Mahajan Et al, 2021). According to Gordan & Cambell (2013), Online assessment can be liberally used for the assessment of knowledge through online multiple-choice questions, assessment of skills by using online objective-structured clinical examination or virtual patients, assessment of competency and performance by using e-logbooks and e-portfolios, and assessment of affective domain through contributions and discussion in online team project works.

The emphasis within online assessment should be placed on the employment of multimodal tools for formative and summative assessments. These tools must focus upon mastering clinical reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making skills (Fuller et al ,2020).

6. Course Assessment Tools' Validity

According to Singh (2012), the reliability of an assessment refers to the dependability of results. It can be seen in terms of marker consistency, temporal stability, and context specificity. Given the importance assigned to students' assessment, it is critical to examine the fundamental concerns of assessment within the blended context, i.e., validity, reliability, acceptability, feasibility, and educational impact, to control the associated risks and realize its desirable outcomes (Mahajan et al, 2021). Though content and construct validity are important, face validity needs to be accorded equal weight age, particularly when introducing online assessment for the first time to students who may be unfamiliar with its processes and may require reassurance (Dennick, Wikinson & Purcell , 2009). The content validity of online assessment can be enhanced by introducing additional features: like animations, videos, and sound added to online questions and "Hotspot" questions.

The creation of authentic assessment concept is credited to Wiggins (1993), which he defines as any assessment task that uses multiple assessment systems to measure students' behavior and memoir in meaningful tasks related to extracurricular life (Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner 2004). Formal assessment is a systematic way of determining a student's proficiency, such as with a midterm or final exam. Another example of a formal assessment is an assignment that requires subjective analysis in the form of a reflection paper or an essay. Although this type of assignment takes time to grade, it can give the instructor insight about how the student thinks and applies concepts (Haugen & Kimberly, 2019). One challenge of online formative and summative assessments is their validity, which requires authenticity of assessment activities, effective formative feedback, multidimensional perspectives, learner support and aspects that are challenging, coherent, engaging, and respectful (Haugen & Kimberly, 2019).

C. Course online experiential learning activities and learners' interaction.

Items included are related to (5) sub domains with (28) respective criterions. The five sub domains include: Encourage active engagement, Monitor understanding, Strengthen understanding, Asynchronous communication tools, Synchronous communication tools. The domains and their sub domains are shown in table (3).

Table (3): Course Online Experiential Learning Activities and Learners' Interaction.

7.	Encourage Active Engagement	7.1. The instructor asks the learners to introduce themselves to the class at the beginning of the course (recorded audios, talks, recorded videos…) 7.2. The instructor motivates the learners to exchange ideas freely through open discussions, debates, role-plays and one-to-one arguments. 7.3. The instructor follows a definite strategy for communication, cooperation, and interactivity according to pedagogical needs, available technology and human resources. 7.4. The instructor uses breakout meeting rooms in online video conferencing platforms to simulate small group discussions. 7.5. The instructor gives group assignments and workshop formats for small teams to hold online brainstorm meetings. 7.6. The instructor uses the chat feature by asking a question and let the students reply with a brief response and read them loud to the whole class. 7.7. The instructor uses the polling feature in Zoom or another online poll to ask questions and show responses in real-time. 7.8. The instructor creates a set of class notes with blanks for important information and share on the LMS. 7.9. The instructor breaks up the synchronous presentation by stopping for a quick activity, such as responding to a question in chat, arguing about one idea. 7.10. The instructor uses shared spaces for small groups to record ideas using collaborative tools such as Google docs/slides/draw, and then views those with the whole class. Some tools could be Google, etc 7.11. The instructor poses an equivalent question to the asynchronous students, either in video or text, and asks the students to respond in a small group discussion forum. 7.12. The instructor shares the group talks with the larger class discussion forum by some applications such as Padlet. 7.13. The instructor asks students to use digital pin boards to share content and have discussions. 7.14. The instructor Assigns partners and pose a question, asking them to share their ideas, in a Moodle discussion forum for the pair, email, or other tools like Flipgrid or Marco polo. 7.15. The instructor asks the students to record their responses with role

		play/presenting a solution and others can respond in a discussion forum.
8.	Monitor Understanding	8.1. The instructor asks for some students to share orally a selection of responses or a summary of their responses with the whole class. 8.2. The instructor encourages the students to identify any unclear points. Unclear points can be added in the chat or on a shared screen.
9.	Strengthen Understanding	9.1. The instructor creates a pro/con list using a collaborative Google document in real-time or on a shared screen 9.2. The instructor uses concept maps: Use an online tool (such as Mind meister) to have students work collaboratively in real-time to elaborate their ideas. 9.3. The instructor offers Visual prompt and asks students to respond. This can be done using tools like Voicethread and Annotate 9.4. The instructor uses Entry/Exit Tickets: At the beginning or end of a class/ module, ask students to respond to a question in the chat or discussion forum or use a polling program to ask questions. 9.5. The instructor has the students share drafts prior to class and then break into groups for discussion/feedback.(think, pair & share strategy)
10.	Asynchronous Communication Tools	10.1. The instructor activates email in Asynchronous Communication for announcements, schedule changes, issue solving, and other interactions that can and should be documented. 10.2. The instructor activates Chat tools for asynchronous communication to enable learners to engage with one another, easily share ideas and collaborate on speaking projects. 10.3. The instructor activates Video Chat Tools for Asynchronous Communication for more effective debates, discussions and speeches conducted by the students. 10.4. The instructor activates discussion Boards for Asynchronous Communication to pose insightful questions, provoke interesting discussion, promote new ideas, and identify potential problems.
11.	Synchronous Communication Tools	11.1. The instructor activates Synchronous communication tools such as – Video conference – Chat/Instant messaging – IP telephone – Whiteboard – Audio chat 11.2. The instructor activates Discussions which occur in a real-time and face-to-face setting

7. Encourage active engagement

According to Wilkins (2021), Engaging Learners Through Interaction When conceiving and developing activities designed to engage language learners in blended or online settings, it is important to consider not just how to capture their interest, but also how to capitalize on it.

In the CLT methodology, task-based approaches are common practices that most effectively take advantage of the diverse, authentic resources available online. Brandl (2008) delineated TBI into two categories of tasks: real-world and pedagogical. Real-world tasks underscore an authentic aspect of language or culture necessary to interact with in a real-world environment. Pedagogical tasks, on the other hand, connect the classroom and the real world, incorporating a teacher's pedagogical goal and the social contexts of the learning environment.

The integration of internet-based resources such as Google docs, slides, Zoom etc allows for nearly unlimited access to authentic source materials. In addition, this principle emphasizes the need for the instructor to incorporate maximum use of the target language in both classroom and virtual activities.

8. Monitor understanding

In a study conducted by Aderibigb, Dias & Abraham, (2021), students were reasonably committed to online discussion forums in this study. This could be because they have technological skills, found the platform beneficial,

and were less distracted when engaging online. That said, our findings reveal that students' commitment to online discussions can be fostered with prompt faculty support, exciting topics, and time to adjust to the new learning platform.

Many online lecture courses use muddy points as an instructional assessment technique that allows the instructor to gather information about the topics that are not clear to the students at the end of each class. Using this information, the amount of lecture time allocated to a specific topic can be increased or decreased to match students' feedback and emphasize the areas where the students need more support (Ramos, 2015).

9. Strengthen understanding

With the invention of new technologies such as Google Docs**,** Google Drive, and Prezi Meeting students and teachers are able to use these new techniques to improve student skills in communication, critical thinking, and collaboration (Clapp & Swenson, 2013).

Concept mapping is an effective knowledge construction strategy to help students. Concept mapping not only improves learning outcomes, but also increases student engagement in all types of tested engagements, namely behavioral, emotional, and cognitive (Farawi et al, 2020).

Utilities that can be useful for language learning activities include calculate Me, Calendar Fly, Doodle, Cluster Maps, Currency, Converter, Moviemaker, Google, Mindmeister, Mindomo, Remember, Survey Monkey (Farawi, et al .2020).

Joinera & Patterson (2019) suggest that Voice Thread is a viable tool for engaging students in online classes, helping students bridge communication gaps, having an active voice, and building ICT competency. Besides, VT also helps faculty get to know their students and to strengthen their online presence in courses.

The data from the Faculty Journal and the End of Experience Surveys support that exit tickets gather purposeful information in order to target student learning, provide immediate feedback to the instructor of the course, and offer university students an opportunity to reflect on their learning (Danley, McCoy &Weed, 2016).

10. Asynchronous communication tools

Various strategies, tools, and types of activities are applicable when devising and designing instructional approaches to create interaction. One approach is integrating an online component, such as asynchronous online discussion (AOD), into an FTF setting, which provides a learning opportunity situated completely external of the classroom (Wilkins, 2021). While the flexibility of asynchronous communications is a given component of online courses, that capability assumes a greater significance when transferred to an FTF setting. Given that capturing and maintaining interest is a key element of learner engagement, integrating an online component into an FTF education program fulfils the critical requirement for interaction among learners and is directly applicable to develop specific skills (Wilkins, 2021).

An asynchronous online learning platform allows for more opportunities for immediate feedback, individual practice, and guidance (Sewell, Frith & Colvin, 2010). The asynchronous feature of the online pedagogy where students engage at their pace makes them feel that they have control of their education, unlike the traditional teacher-led methodology Thus, creating an online student community is vital because it enables students to establish professional and supportive communication channels that transcend time and geography (Rolls, Hansen, Jackson & Elliott, 2016).

11. Synchronous communication tools

Blended synchronous learning (BSL), where some students are present in a physical classroom while others participate online in real time, has been gaining momentum and shows great potential for teaching less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) (Grions & Swinehart, 2019). Synchronous and asynchronous classes were implemented by universities around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic. A study conducted by Dahmash (2021), revealed that students engage in practices including using the split view on iPads, opening additional windows to search for information, searching using Smartphone apps, and writing notes and highlighting key concepts when attending English writing classes regardless of learning mode. It also revealed that synchronous classes offered students real-time communication and provided immediate feedback, while asynchronous classes allowed students to navigate the challenges of distance learning, complementing the synchronous English writing classes and providing students with a sense of security.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The current research resulted in developing an evaluation instrument to assess the online listening and

speaking courses relying on the expertise-oriented evaluation approach which aims at providing comprehensive analysis and mining for experts from distributed educational backgrounds. Besides, this evaluation tool raises the instructors' awareness regarding the quality of their listening and speaking e-content courses which will reflect the learners' linguistic performance.

In general, today's learners are digital oriented, and to successfully engage them, educational processes must meet their real needs and learning environments. This concept has important implications for administrators and educators, in that it directly impacts educational policies, teaching methods, development and application of instructional technology, and development of curricula. It should be noted here that while the generalized approach of this research is directed towards teaching English language as a foreign language, the concepts and evaluation tool are equally applicable for other academic fields.

The effective application of the e-content evaluation instrument in higher education academic institutions is recommended. In addition, it is recommended that this instrument can be adapted and employed into other academic fields in higher education.

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