



Online Learning of English Language Courses via Blackboard at Saudi Universities During Covid-19: Challenges and Difficulties

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The outbreak of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic resulted in a temporary interruption of learning activities across the world. In Saudi Arabia, there was a sudden and quick shift from face-to-face learning mode to online learning in efforts to save the educational process from non-continuity in many universities. As a result, the use of various e-learning platforms such as Blackboard applications was key to facilitating the learning of different academic courses including the English language. However, the widespread uptake and implementation of Blackboard learning are still in nascent phases in terms of facilitating English language learning. The objective of this study was to investigate the challenges and difficulties encountered in online learning of English language courses via Blackboard at Saudi universities in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Desktop research was used in this study where secondary resources were collected from various academic databases including Google Scholar, Science Direct, EBSCOhost, and Semantic Scholar. Results showed that the use of Blackboard application in online learning of English courses had some potential advantages including improved interactivity, communication, enhanced language proficiency, discussion forums, improved writing quality, learning flexibility, and enhanced grammar and vocabulary acquisition. However, there were potential challenges including students' negative attitude, lack of tutor training, poor technical support, difficulty accessing curriculum content or tests, concerns about safety or privacy, slow internet connection, students' lack of computers, and reliable internet. In conclusion, despite the positive outcomes of using Blackboard in English learning, adequate measures need to be implemented to address identified challenges.

Keywords: English language learning, blackboard, covid-19, English language teaching

Introduction

Background

Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), most learning institutions have been substantially interrupted due to lockdowns to mitigate viral spread and infections (Alkhazim, 2020; Almaiah et al., 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020). To prevent a total shutdown in learning, most universities embraced learning from home via e-learning platforms (Al-Nofaie, 2020). As applies to this study, an e-learning platform is defined as “an integrated set of interactive online services that provide a community of learners and facilitators with educational information, tools, and resources to support the delivery and management of teaching and learning activities” (Al-Samiri, 2021, p. 148). In Saudi Arabia, the Blackboard Learning System is one of the commonly used e-learning platforms by higher learning institutions (Alamer, 2020; Khafaga, 2021).



In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increased uptake and use of e-learning platforms such as the Blackboard Learning System among Saudi universities. Past research shows that during the pandemic, most universities made a quick and sudden shift from face-to-face or blended learning models to online learning modes facilitated by Blackboard applications (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Hakim, 2020; Khafaga, 2021). In the last decade, Saudi students in English language majors including those enrolled in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as second language courses (ESL), have largely benefited from online and distance learning (Ali, 2017; Alkhazim, 2020). However, there is a paucity of insights on the effectiveness of widespread Blackboard learning, especially following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Insights from the extant literature show conflicting results on the effectiveness of e-learning platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic. Al-Mubireek (2019) reported that the use of online learning enhances student interaction and communication with tutors, improves access to materials, and enhances feedback. However, a sudden shift to online learning resulted in negative attitudes among students towards Blackboard learning due to technical challenges like lack of reliable internet connection that demotivated students to learn online via e-learning platforms (Al-Mubireek, 2019). Anas (2020) also reported psychological problems during the Covid-19 pandemic including depression, fear, stress, and insomnia resulting in a lack of concentration and focus in online learning.

Ross (2020) also noted that despite ensuring continuous and less interrupted learning, Saudi students raised concerns that online learning may replace face-to-face interaction. Other students were concerned that sudden and quick shifts from offline to online platforms could negatively hinder communication (Al-Mubireek, 2019; Dhawan, 2020). Additional worries included concerns about fairness during the assessment, unconducive home settings for learning, needed technological skills, and unreliable internet connection (Ali, 2017; Chen et al., 2020). Underwriting these considerations, there is a need to undertake this study and explore the challenges and difficulties that Saudi students experienced when learning English language courses via Blackboard applications.

Problem Statement

The problem statement that informed the need for this study was that the rapid shift from face-to-face learning to online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in uncertainties among students taking English language courses via the Blackboard Learning System. Findings from the surveyed literature indicate that instructors and students were not prepared for such a rapid shift in learning modes (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Ross, 2020). As such, most students developed negative attitudes towards online learning (Ali, 2020), while teachers and technical support expressed inadequate preparation on how to facilitate learning and effectively assess students via the Blackboard e-learning platforms (Almaiah & Al-Khasawneh, 2020). Considering this topic is still in its nascent phases, there is a paucity of studies that have been conducted to assess the challenges and barriers of online learning of English language courses via Blackboard platforms. As such, this study sought to fill this knowledge gap by evaluating ongoing hurdles and difficulties of using online learning across Saudi universities, thereby the motivation to undertake this study.

Research Aims and Questions

This study aimed to investigate challenges and difficulties associated with online learning of English language courses via the Blackboard Learning System in Saudi Arabian Universities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Three research questions were formulated to guide this study.

- RQ 1: What are the key benefits of learning English language courses via the Blackboard Learning System among higher education students in Saudi universities during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

- RQ 2: What are the main hurdles hindering the successful utilization of the Blackboard Learning System among higher education students in Saudi universities during the COVID-19 Pandemic?
- RQ 3: What strategies should be adopted to improve higher education students' experiences when taking English language courses via the Blackboard Learning System in Saudi universities?

Importance of the Study

Undertaking this study was important in assessing the potential benefits of using Blackboard platforms in English learning in Saudi universities and assess how to optimize these advantages (Ali, 2020). Further, the extant literature shows a lack of consensus on the effectiveness of online platforms over blended or face-to-face learning of English courses (Viner et al., 2020). Insights from this study will contribute to this debate by examining potential challenges to Blackboard use, and provide recommendations on addressing the identified barriers. Results from this study will also inform implications for educational practice in terms of relevant strategies that need to be embraced by Saudi universities to optimize uptake and use of the Blackboard platform in facilitating the teaching of English language courses.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) was used in this study to understand potential challenges when using the Blackboard platform in English language learning. Venkatesh et al. (2003) proposed the UTAUT framework and it has been widely used in assessing behavior intention and attitudes to using technologies such as online learning and teaching (Chao, 2019). The UTAUT theory postulates that technology use among individuals is informed by various issues such as performance expectancy (its usefulness), effort expectancy (ease of use), and social influence (probability of other people using the same technology) (Ali et al., 2018). Additional factors influencing technology use include risk perception (such as concerns about privacy and data confidentiality), trust factor (availability and reliability of the technology, and its accessibility in daily life (Chao, 2019). These factors may help determine potential challenges and difficulties teachers, information technology (IT) technicians, students, and learning institutions in Saudi Arabia encountered with the use of Blackboard platforms in English learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key Themes from Literature on Blackboard Learning

A search of the past studies on English language learning via the Blackboard Learning System was conducted on Google Scholar, Scopus, and Semantic Scholar. Specific focus was limited to Blackboard use in Saudi universities as a dominant E-learning platform for teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). The Boolean search criteria were used to extract relevant studies using a combination of keywords and phrases. The keywords used included “Blackboard e-learning” AND “TESOL and Blackboard in Saudi universities” AND “Blackboard use in Saudi universities during COVID-19” AND “English language students in Blackboard e-learning” AND “teacher support for TESOL students in KSA” AND “Saudi university e-learning preparedness in TESOL courses during coronavirus pandemic”. A total of 15 studies were identified from the three academic databases. Subsequent sections discuss key themes identified from the identified past studies on e-learning via the Blackboard Learning System.

Inadequate adoption of e-learning via blackboard by universities

Studies conducted in Saudi Arabia on the use of e-learning systems such as Blackboard show that during the pandemic, there was the inadequate implementation of online learning. For example, a qualitative study by Alfallaj (2021) explored challenges posed by e-learning systems like Blackboard at Qassim University, Saudi Arabia. A total of 30 English as a foreign language (EFL) students and 31 teachers participated in the study. The researchers used semistructured interviews to collect data from the interviewees (Alfallaj, 2021). A major theme that emerged from the study was that e-learning via Blackboard was poorly used during the pandemic. A major challenge was that most students preferred brick-and-mortar settings to Blackboard settings. Also, students in rural settings were less likely to access Blackboard due to unreliable internet connection, further hindering adequate adoption of e-learning by TESOL students via Blackboard Learning Systems (Alfallaj, 2021).

Like Alfallaj (2021), Alamer (2020) investigated the impact of using blackboards on vocabulary acquisition among students at King Khalid University (KKU). The researchers used quantitative research where 14 TESOL students from KKU participated in online surveys. Results showed that during the pandemic, the TESOL students at KKU faced various challenges when learning key among them poor adoption of Blackboard Learning Systems. As a result, English language students developed a negative attitude towards e-learning (Alamer, 2020). Similar challenges related to the poor adoption of Blackboard systems in Saudi universities during the pandemic have also been reported in studies by Alhadreti (2020) and Alkhazim (2020). For example, a qualitative study by Alhadreti (2020) showed that poor communication and delayed or lack of tutor response during the pandemic made e-learning via Blackboard less effective.

Underwriting the above considerations, it may be noted that a growing body of knowledge shows that universities in Saudi Arabia faced potential challenges in flexibility, accessibility, readiness, and quality management in Blackboard adoption. A qualitative study by Yen (2020) among students from Sichuan University reported poor adoption of e-learning among EFL learners during the pandemic. Key among the potential challenge was lack of timely support from teachers and difficulties accessing relevant English learning materials in e-learning platforms (Yen, 2020). Qualitative studies also show that the rapid shift to e-learning during the pandemic resulted in poor adoption of learning due to a lack of relevant curriculum and pedagogy since most learning content was designed for traditional classroom settings (Moawad, 2020; Saïdy & Sura, 2020). Mhlanga and Moloi (2020) reported that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the success of online learning depends on continuous development and quality management.

Lack of instructor self-efficacy and competency

Another theme that emerged from the literature regarding e-learning during the pandemic was that most teachers were either not prepared or were inadequately trained to deliver English instructions online. The success of English learning via Blackboard depends on the level of preparation of stakeholders such as teachers, tutors, and the IT support team (Yen, 2020). A qualitative study by Martin (2020) attempted to identify how to optimize e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interview with 11 English language teachers discovered that although teachers are competent and express high self-efficacy in delivering instruction in brick-and-mortar settings, they were incompetent in the use of e-learning platforms. As such, teachers were unable to effectively meet students' learning needs during the pandemic.

Liguori and Winkler (2020) also examined teacher preparedness during the pandemic. Key among the challenges expressed by 13 English language teachers was a lack of training in using online learning platforms like Blackboard. In some cases, teachers lacked applicable software (learning content and curriculum) or compatible hardware (smartphones, laptops, or personal computers), further hindering any efforts to deliver English curriculum via e-learning platforms. Findings by Martin (2020), Liguori and Winkler (2020), and Yen (2020) show potential challenges related to inadequate teacher preparedness in the use of e-learning platforms for English language instruction delivery, both before and during the

pandemic. As such, there is a need by universities to promote teacher training through workshops, seminars, and conferences to enhance their competency in Blackboard use (Moawad, 2020).

Poor quality e-learning platforms

According to Dhawan (2020), the successful usage of online learning platforms depends on the usability of the system by the target audience. In their systematic review of past studies on e-learning adoption during the pandemic, Dhawan (2020) assessed issues related to online learning utilization in TESOL courses. The researchers conducted a review of literature on the topic and extracted 31 studies. Key findings showed that most universities lacked quality e-learning platforms, unreliable connections, incompatible platforms, and poor user interfaces (Dhawan, 2020). Such challenges demotivated both teachers and students from embracing e-learning during the pandemic, especially among second language students who experienced challenges navigating complex online learning platforms.

Khafaga (2021) conducted multiple case studies on the use of Blackboard among Saudi TESOL students during the pandemic. Mixed method research involving surveys with students and interviews with 29 teachers from five Saudi universities was conducted. Survey results and interview findings showed that TESOL students and teachers experienced hurdles navigating the Blackboard platform. Inadequate tailored English resources failed to meet individual student needs (Khafaga, 2021). These findings echo observations by Dhawan (2020) regarding poor e-learning platforms and their negative impact on teacher and student experience in EFL classrooms. Abduh (2021) also explored issues related to full-time online assessment during COVID -19 lockdown.

A qualitative study of 14 EFL teachers was conducted to assess their perceptions about e-learning programs in TESOL programs. Thematic analysis of the interview responses showed the e-learning platforms were effective in meeting the immediate needs of students during the pandemic, such as accelerating graduation, course completion, sustainable learning. However, teachers experienced challenges accessing compatible resources, relevant curriculum, and reliable assessment tools (Abduh, 2021). These findings further show potential shortcomings of the e-learning platforms during the pandemic, further necessitating the need for this study.

In the context of e-learning in Saudi universities during the Covid-19 pandemic, the level of platform quality may be considered as one of the main aspects for the success of electronic learning systems (Liguori & Winkler, 2020). Studies focused on e-learning show that usage of this platform is determined by perceived compatibility, trialability, observability, and perceived enjoyment (Basilaia et al., 2020). Additional factors for the positive experience of online learning include the possibility to achieve knowledge sharing, trust, content quality, and ease in accessing relevant information (Jena, 2020). Despite the various studies on e-learning adoption, the current study sought to add new contributions to the extant literature on the main challenges and factors experienced in online learning of English language courses via Blackboard at Saudi Universities.

Growing Importance of Blackboard Use in Saudi Universities

Despite the potential challenges of e-learning platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic, available literature shows that Blackboard use increased across Saudi universities. The increase was particularly evident in TESOL courses. Various studies on TESOL programs were public during the pandemic both in the *Asian EFL Journal* and the *TESOL International Journal* focusing on blackboard use among Saudi universities (Abduh et al., 2021; Aji et al., 2021; Alfallaj et al., 2020; Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020; Erarslan, 2021). The published studies used different e-learning management systems such as SAKAI, LAMs, Moodle, WebCT, and Blackboard Learning System.

In Saudi Arabia, most universities offering TESOL courses used the Blackboard Learning System (Alamer et al., 2020; Alhadreti, 2020; AIKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Almekhlafy, 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020; Chen et al., 2020; Khafaga, 2021). Through Blackboard, English language students and teachers were

able to shift from face-to-face learning into e-learning thereby overcoming public health guidelines such as prolonged school closures and social distancing (Huang et al., 2020). Specifically, Blackboard adoption provided an increased collaborative learning environment that is tailored to meet the needs of individual students (Huang et al., 2020). Liguori and Winkler (2020) reported that the use of Blackboard in TESOL by most Saudi universities during Covid-19 was informed by its accessibility, easiness, and ubiquity compared to text-book-based learning and traditional instruction. However, researchers expressed that despite their increased uptake, some students and teachers did not fully experience the benefits of Blackboard platforms during the pandemic (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Almekhlafy, 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020).

Dhawan (2020) reported that the difficulty of access in rural areas in Saudi Arabia, lack of teacher support, limited guidance by information technology experts, and a complex user interface hindered effective integration of e-learning in TESOL classrooms. Such challenges further informed the need for this study to assess challenges students encountered while pursuing their TESOL programs in Saudi universities, via the Blackboard Learning System. Undertaking this study would help understand the hurdles of using Blackboard learning and its effectiveness in meeting learning goals and set academic outcomes. Therefore, this study set to investigate how teachers and students in Saudi universities perceived Blackboard used in TESOL during the Covid-19 pandemic. In so doing, this study examined potential difficulties that might emerge among students enrolled in TESOL courses when using Blackboard Learning System.

Change in Blackboard Features

Proponents of the Blackboard platform cite important features that make it useful and suitable for online learning. Hoq (2020) observed that Blackboard learning has features and functions to enhance user experience and perceptions such as discussion forums, virtual classrooms, course content, test and assignment, and course portfolio. Favale et al. (2020) also noted that the Blackboard platform has grade center and email options that increase the potentiality of teaching and learning processes. Course portfolio places welcome messages to learners and inform them about the course schedule, syllabus breakdown, and expected learning goals (Martin, 2020; Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020). Access to background knowledge about the course increases individual interest and focus on objectives, goals, activities, strategies, and outcomes at the end of the course (Martin, 2020; Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020).

Blackboard course content also contains all relevant and supplementary resources in different formats, audio, image, animation, videos, and text (Dhawan, 2020). Files with different formats ensure that students have varied learning options, further enhancing student interest and concentration on learning materials. Most features such as quizzes, tests, and assignments are designed similarly to traditional learning settings that have guidelines, deadlines, and instant feedbacks (Dhawan, 2020). Grade center features serve to record all student assessments, examinations, and record test scores with the user-friendly organization to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to be improved by individual students.

Virtual classrooms through web-conferencing, presentations, lectures, question and answer chats, and whiteboards further enhance the learning experience of students. Importantly, most of the sessions may be recorded and scheduled, with announcement features designed to update students about all actions and tasks to be executed on Blackboard platforms. Additional features including discussion forums, boards, and emails are used to share questions, discuss threads, and other teacher-student communication and interaction sessions. Past studies show the use of various features of Blackboard in online learning has diverse effects on students (Abduh et al., 2021; Aji et al., 2021; Alfallaj et al., 2020; Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020; Erarslan, 2021). While researchers (Al-Samiri, 2021; Cabangcala et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2020; Khafaga, 2021) show increasing success when Blackboard features are used effectively, critics argue that some students failed to experience positive academic expectations such as attaining set learning outcomes (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Hakim, 2020). As such, there is a need to examine the use of

Blackboard usage in online learning to determine its usefulness and potentiality especially among Saudi students enrolled in English language courses.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges and difficulties associated with online learning of English language courses via Blackboard at Saudi Arabian Universities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The focus of this part is to detail the search strategies and methods used to collect relevant data to answer formulated research questions. Subsequent sections present and detail research strategies used, data sources, search criteria, inclusion and exclusion criteria, search results, and data analysis.

Research Strategies

A secondary research method or desktop research was used to identify relevant sources to answer the research aim and questions. There were no human participants in the study. Viner et al. (2020) noted that secondary research entails using already existing data to examine a topic under study. Further as secondary research, the desktop study uses already existing reports, documents, and archive data from textbooks, encyclopedia, peer-reviewed articles, news articles, and meta-analyses (Ghauri et al., 2020). Secondary information from these sources may also be supplemented using additional records including published academic papers, government documents, academic databases, statistical databases, and historical records (Hofferth, 2018).

In this study, the use of desktop research was preferred because of time and cost-effectiveness compared to undertaking primary research through interviews and surveys (Spurlock, 2020). According to Spurlock (2020), secondary research is cost-effective in accessing and retrieving suitable data to examine the phenomenon under study. The use of existing data makes it easier to collect a substantial amount of information from various sources facilitating information triangulation (Spurlock, 2020). However, a major limitation of secondary research relates to accessing information that may not directly answer formulated research questions (Ghauri et al., 2020). In most situations, secondary data entails information that was collected to answer a different study problem, thereby limiting generalization when used in another setting (Ghauri et al., 2020).

Data Sources

Academic databases and institutional websites were used as the source of secondary data in this study. The academic databases used included Google Scholar, Science Direct, EBSCOhost, Springer, and Semantic Scholar. Additional academic databases included CiteSeerX, Emerald, and Wiley Online. Additional information was extracted from government and institutional websites from different universities across Saudi Arabia regarding the use of Blackboard during the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the Saudi universities included Qassim University, University of Najran, Taif University, King Abdulaziz University, Bisha University, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Shaqra University, and King Faisal University.

Search Criteria

To identify suitable resources for the study, keywords, search terms, and phrases related to online learning of English and Blackboard applications were used. A comprehensive search of the literature was conducted on different academic databases, the Saudi education ministry, and websites of various Saudi universities. Table 1 shows different keywords that were used during the search process. Some of the keywords that were used included: “perception of Blackboard learning”, “online English learning”,

“Covid-19 and Blackboard learning”, “Blackboard usage in online learning”, and “Saudi Arabia e-learning”. Additional phrases used in the search process included “Blackboard learning in Saudi Universities”, “language e-learning during Covid-19”, “perceptions about virtual English learning”, and “Saudi university students’ English virtual learning”. The search terms were categorized into three groups: online learning, English language courses, and Saudi Universities.

TABLE 1

Keywords, Phrases, and Search Terms Used to Research Relevant Secondary Resources in this Study

Categories	Search Terms			
	Google Scholar	Semantic Scholar	EBSCOhost	Science Direct
Online learning	Virtual learning during Covid-19; distance learning at Saudi universities	E-learning programs; virtual learning opportunities; online learning courses	Synchronous and asynchronous learning in Saudi universities; virtual courses for English	E-book modules, mobile learning, bring your device during covid-19; e-courses
English language courses	English learning courses; EFL courses; ESL learning online	Second language programs during Covid-19; EFL courses; ESL learning online	Language programs in Saudi universities; EFL courses; ESL learning online	English learning courses; EFL courses; ESL learning online
Saudi universities	Online courses at Qassim University; virtual learning courses at the University of Najran	Virtual learning at Taif University; courses at King Abdulaziz University; online programs at Bisha University,	e-learning programs at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University; virtual classes at Shaqra University	Online courses at King Faisal University; virtual classes at Shaqra University; e-learning in Saudi universities

An additional assessment was conducted to ensure the collected studies aligned with the study aim and research questions by ensuring keywords were similar in the titles and abstracts of the collected resources. Articles with similar keywords in their titles and abstracts were further assessed to confirm their research objective and results were closely related to online learning of English language courses via Blackboard in Saudi universities. However, some potential variation in phrases, keywords, search terms, and obtained results was evident due to different search engine optimizations and because of variation in subject headings. As a result, different combinations of search terms and keywords were used in each academic database to ensure comprehensive research in finding enough resources for the study.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to select relevant studies. Years of research focus were limited to studies published between April 2020 and April 2021. The period was selected because it covers the height of the Covid-19 pandemic when most learning institutions were largely disrupted and closed because of lockdown to mitigate coronavirus transmission (Khaled & Ahmed 2020; Viner et al., 2020). Data from the past year, therefore, would ensure the collection of the most recent and updated trends about online learning of the English language via Blackboard across Saudi universities.

Only studies focusing on Saudi Arabian universities were included in the study, with a specific focus on English language courses. Secondary resources that these inclusion criteria were further reviewed for their quality and relevance using the 9 questions from the Joanna Briggs Institute Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument (JBI-QARI) critical appraisal checklist. Table 2 presents the JBI-QARI checklist used to examine the quality of the obtained secondary resources.

TABLE 2
Quality Evaluation Questions Used to Assess the Extracted Studies

No.	Questions
1.	Are the research aims specified?
2.	Was the study designed to achieve these aims?
3.	Are the variables considered by the study specified?
4.	Is the study context aligned to study objectives?
5.	Are the data collection methods adequately detailed?
6.	Does the study explain the reliability/validity of the measures?
7.	Are the techniques used to analyze the data adequately described?
8.	Do the results add to the literature?
9.	Does the study add to your knowledge or understanding?

A total of 18 secondary resources were identified from the different academic websites that met most of the JBI-QARI assessment criteria. According to Ghauri et al. (2020), the JBI-QARI quality assessment is used in ranking each resource based on a three-point scale: “Yes” = 1 point; “No” = 0 points; and “Partially” = 0.5 points. In line with this scoring criteria, each secondary resource was assigned a score of 0 and 9. The higher the total score of every resource, the higher the degree to which the identified study is considered relevant to answering the research questions. Table 3 presents results for the quality assessment process based on the JBI-QARI checklist.

TABLE 3
Quality Assessment Results

No.	Studies	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Total
S1	Alamer, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S2	Ali & Algane, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S3	Almekhlafy, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S4	Gulnaz et al., 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S5	Hakim, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S6	Ja'ashan, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S7	Khafaga, 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S8	Khaled & Ahmed, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S9	Mahyoob, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
S10	Alhadreti, 2020	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S11	AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S12	Al-Nofaie, 2020	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S13	Aziz et al., 2021	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S14	Almaghaslah & Alsayari, 2020	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S15	El-Sayed, 2020	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S16	Almaiah et al., 2020	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S17	Dahmash, 2020	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
S18	Hoq, 2020	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	8.5

As shown in Table 3, studies 10 through 18 scored 8.5 points out of 9 because they did not focus on online learning of English language courses. Some of the alternative online courses that were examined in these studies included accounting, business management, finance, human resource, psychology, and education. A high JBI-QARI score of 8.5, however, indicates the studies are relevant to this research in understanding potential challenges and difficulties of online learning via Blackboard. As such, studies 10-18 were included to supplement information collected from studies 1-9.

Search Outcomes

The initial search identified 127 studies from academic databases including peer-reviewed journals, government reports, and ministry of education documents. Examination of these resources using their titles, abstracts, and executive summaries resulted in the exclusion of 37 studies since they did not meet the inclusion criteria; resulting in 90 studies. Moreover, 31 out of the 90 remaining resources were

excluded where 13 were published outside Saudi Arabia, 9 studies did not focus on online learning, 6 studies focused on English learning in traditional settings, and 2 studies were published before April 2020.

A total of the remaining 59 studies were also examined and a further 19 studies were removed since they did not have full pdf texts, 8 studies were opinion articles, and 7 studies were newspaper articles. Further 4 studies were removed as they were letters to the editor, and 3 studies were published in Arabic. Following these eliminations, only 18 studies met the inclusion criteria where 11 were quantitative studies and 7 were qualitative studies. The characteristics of the 18 studies used in this study, in line with the three formulated research questions are as follows:

- a) 10 studies identified potential positive impacts of online learning of the English language via Blackboard. The studies also elaborated on potential shortcomings of learning the English language via Blackboard in Saudi universities (Ahmed 2020; Aziz et al., 2020; Dahmash, 2020; Gulnaz et al., 2020; Hakim, 2020; Hoq, 2020; Ja'ashan, 2020; Khafaga, 2021; Khaled & Al-Nofaie, 2020; Mahyoob, 2020),
- b) 7 studies identified potential challenges and difficulties of online learning using Blackboard in Saudi universities (Alamer, 2020; Ali & Algane, 2020; Almekhlafy, 2020; El-Sayed, 2020; Ja'ashan, 2020; Khaled & Ahmed, 2020; Mahyoob, 2020),
- c) 8 studies shared potential recommendations that may be implemented across Saudi universities to address challenges and difficulties encountered while using online Blackboard to learn the English language (Alhadreti, 2020; Almaiah et al., 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020; Dahmash, 2020; Gulnaz et al., 2020; Hakim, 2020; Hoq, 2020; Khafaga, 2021).

Data Coding and Document Analysis

To identify relevant themes for the study, document analysis was conducted on the 18 studies. Document analysis entails qualitative interpretation of collected studies to give voice and meaning around the topic under study (Brynard et al., 2019). The process of analyzing documents entails coding information into similar themes and patterns to draw relevant conclusions in line with the research aims and questions (Brynard et al., 2019). A six-step thematic analysis process by Braun and Clarke (2019) was used in coding and thematic analysis of the collected studies. Step 1 focused on familiarizing with the objectives and findings of each study via reading and re-reading and noting down keywords related to challenges and difficulties of online learning via Blackboard.

Step 2 focused on generating initial codes using phrases and sentences with similar meanings. Step 3 entailed searching for the themes from the created codes through the collation of multiple codes identified in Step 2. Step 4 was intended to review created themes and aligning them with the entire dataset. In Step 5 the themes were further refined and defined to create clear names for each theme in line with the research questions. Finally, Step 6 focused on producing the report to answer the formulated research and research questions.

Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges and difficulties associated with online learning of English language courses via Blackboard at Saudi Arabian Universities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The current part presents key findings obtained from 18 secondary resources published on the topic. The results are presented chronologically in line with the formulated research questions detailing the benefits of learning English via Blackboard, challenges of using Blackboard learning, and recommendations to address identified challenges.

Using Blackboard has Benefits and Potential Drawbacks

Table 4 shows obtained results on potential benefits and drawbacks of learning the English language via Blackboard in Saudi Universities among students enrolled in TESOL programs. Nine studies were identified from the various academic databases concerning benefits and drawbacks related to Blackboard usage in English language learning (Alamer, 2020; Ali & Algane, 2020; Almekhlafy, 2020; Gulnaz et al., 2020; Hakim, 2020; Ja'ashan, 2020; Khafaga, 2021; Khaled & Ahmed, 2020; Mahyoob, 2020).

TABLE 4

Benefits and Potential Drawbacks of Blackboard Usage in English Learning

Reference	Focus	Benefits	Drawbacks
1. Alamer, 2020	Impact of using Blackboard on vocabulary acquisition among students at King Khalid University	-Students expressed positive views towards most useful features such as easy navigation, information quality, learnability, and support	-Students show a negative attitude towards English vocabulary -Little influence on the performance of students in vocabulary learning. -Limits the use of Blended Learning.
2. Ali & Algane, 2020	Impact of using online technology to teach English Literacy to students at Qassim University.	-Improved teaching English literacy -Effective positive impact of Blackboard learning applications. -Access to suitable assessment tools in English literacy.	-Lack of training among instructors, - Lack of specialists in e-learning, -Poor technical support, - Lack of incentive and experience in using it -Students' lack of response to e-learning, -Difficult accessing content and tests,
3. Almekhlafy, 2020	Online learning of English language courses via Blackboard at the University of Najran	-Positive perceptions about Blackboard learning -Important features in English learning include a user-friendly interface, interactivity, and the ability to highlight important parts	-Some students noted difficulties copying parts of the book and paste them to other apps. Some students reported an inability to save books in pdf format.
4. Gulnaz et al., 2020.	Experiences and perceptions of EFL teachers and students about the effectiveness of Blackboard learning at Taif University.	-Enhanced language proficiency -More satisfaction with target language due to vivid audios, videos, images, chatting, reading texts, and discussion forums	-Students were concerned about their safety, privacy, and data confidentiality
5. Hakim, 2020	Challenges faced by EFL teachers and students in technology integrated online courses at King Abdulaziz University	-Positive attitude about e-learning in collaborating writing -Improved writing quality. -Improved communication with teachers.	- Concerns about not developing suitable handwriting if e-learning was used often - Slow internet connection --Students' lack of computers and the Internet,
6. Ja'ashan, 2020.	Prospects and challenges of E-learning use among EFL students in Bisha University	Enhanced grammar and vocabulary - Improved communication and social engagement.	-Slow access since some students lacked modern computers with fast computing power/ memory -Poor qualification among IT technicians, -Interrupted and weak internet connection

7.	Khawaja, 2021	Perception of Blackboard collaborate-based instruction among EFL teachers and students in five Saudi Universities; (i) Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, (ii) Shaqra University, (iii) King Faisal University, (iv) Qassim University, and (v) King Khalid University	-Learners expressed positive views using the Blackboard since it promoted interaction, -An enhanced collaboration between teachers and students, a -Improved communication with tutors. -Increased flexibility in learning time, location, and assignment completion.	-Slow internet connectivity that affected the quality of learning and access to web-based applications. -Students have different devices in a bring your device (BYOD) setting with different functionalities making it difficult to achieve uniform instruction and learning. -Increased cases of cheating through online exams
8.	Khaled & Ahmed, 2020	A review of literature on the EFL/ESL student perceptions of e-learning in Saudi Universities	- Positive views of Blackboard learning as it promoted more interaction, collaboration -Enhanced communication with the teacher.	-Slow Internet Connectivity -Concerns about online privacy when using e-learning -Potential examination cheating and teachers unable to determine honesty
9.	Mahyoob, 2020	Challenges of e-Learning among EFL Learners in Science and Arts College, Alula, Taibah University	-Learners noted mobile devices are easy to understand and use	-Main drawbacks include technical, academic, and communication challenges. -Most EFL learners were not satisfied with online learning as they failed to fulfill expected progress in English learning performance

Students in TESOL Courses Experience Various Challenges when Using the Blackboard Learning System

Reviewed studies indicated some potential challenges and difficulties that affected the successful usage of the Blackboard learning for TESOL courses in Saudi universities during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Table 2 summarizes the results obtained from 9 studies (Alhadreti, 2020; AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Almaghaslah & Alsayari, 2020; Almaiah et al., 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020; Aziz et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020). Some of the identified difficulties included: privacy and security concerns (Alhadreti, 2020; AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Hoq, 2020), technological access (Alhadreti, 2020; El-Sayed, 2020), limited skills among IT personnel and staff (Almaghaslah & Alsayari, 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020), lack of technical support (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; El-Sayed, 2020), and lack of awareness about online learning (Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020). Lack of readiness among students to embrace online learning (Dahmash, 2020), low commitment among faculty towards online teaching and learning (Alhadreti, 2020; Dahmash, 2020), and limited relevant curriculum content (Aziz et al., 2021; El-Sayed, 2020) further hindered optimal use of Blackboard platform in most Saudi universities.

TABLE 5

Challenges and Difficulties that Affected the Successful Usage of Blackboard Learning Platform by Saudi Students

Challenges and Difficulties	Description of difficulties	References
Privacy and security concerns	-Open nature of online learning systems raise potential issues related to personal safety and security of information among staff/students/faculty	Alhadreti, 2020; AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Hoq, 2020
Technological difficulties	-Students faced technological challenges in accessing and using Blackboard	Alhadreti, 2020; El-Sayed, 2020
IT skills among support staff	-Poor skills and inadequate knowledge among IT support staff and faculty members	Almaghaslah & Alsayari, 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020;
Lack of technical support	Technical IT staff unavailable and limited support of critical facilities to execute different activities such as network administration, operation, installation, and maintenance. -Slow internet speeds and high internet traffic during online learning.	AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; El-Sayed, 2020
Lack of awareness	-Lack of awareness among students of relevant internet skills -Student's failure to take responsibility for personal online learning	Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020
Student readiness	-Learners showing inconsistent preparedness levels in utilizing online learning platforms	Dahmash, 2020
Faculty member effort	-Low individual effort and support being shown among faculty members in using and implementing online learning	Alhadreti, 2020; Dahmash, 2020.
Quality of course content	-Offered courses had limited content due to interactivity affecting the quality of content	Almaiah et al., 2020
Localization of content	-Limited lack of adaptability and customization, of course, content to meet tailored needs of individual learners.	Almaghaslah & Alsayari, 2020
Limited course content	-Lack of relevance, the accuracy of course content, and misalignment, of course, content with learners' need	Aziz et al., 2021; El-Sayed, 2020
Faculty staff acceptance of technology	-Teachers show negative perceptions and low acceptance towards technology change from the traditional classroom or face-to-face teaching	AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Aziz et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020
Low Level of knowledge of faculty members	-Course instructors lack proficiency and grip of online curriculum content and lack skills on how to effectively deliver e-learning sessions	Alhadreti, 2020; Almaiah et al., 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020; Hoq, 2020
Obsolete technological infrastructure	Lack of updated and poorly maintained computer network, software, and hardware capabilities in most universities	Almaiah et al., 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020; Aziz et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2020

Various Strategies Should be Used to Overcome Difficulties of Using Blackboard in TESOL Courses

Another theme that emerged from the extracted studies related to the need to put in place strategies to improve the online learning experience via Blackboard and reduce low uptake and negative attitudes associated with its use among faculty, instructors, and students. Table 6 summarizes various strategies that may be used to ensure increased uptake and utilization of online learning via TESOL, especially via the Blackboard Learning platforms.

TABLE 6

Potential Approaches to Address Identified Challenges and Difficulties in the Usage of Blackboard Applications in Saudi Universities

Identified Difficulties	Potential Solutions	References
Privacy and security concerns	-Use strong encryption, two-factor login authentication, coded persona information such as synonyms of enrolled students	Alhadreti, 2020; AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Hoq, 2020
Technological difficulties	-Improve access to online learning especially among students in remote regions with a poor internet connection using offline access to Blackboards	Alhadreti, 2020; El-Sayed, 2020
IT skills among support staff	-Offer training workshops to enhance the skills and knowledge of IT professionals and faculty members	Al-Nofaie, 2020;
Lack of technical support	-Create a 24/7 online student support system to respond to urgent queries	AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; El-Sayed, 2020
Lack of awareness	-Create awareness about online learning and train student son how to use Blackboard to better achieve their learning goals	Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020
Faculty member effort	-Encourage faculty to show more commitment towards online learning implementation	Dahmash, 2020
Quality of course content	-Offered courses had limited content due to interactivity affecting the quality of content	Almaiah et al., 2020
Localization of content	-Customize course content to meet specific individual student needs	Almaghaslah & Alsayari, 2020
Limited course content	-Create relevant, accurate course content and alignment of course material with students' learning outcomes	Aziz et al., 2021; El-Sayed, 2020
Faculty staff acceptance of technology	-Motivate teachers and encourage them through training and awareness creation of Blackboard implementation to supplement blended learning	AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021;
Low Level of knowledge of faculty members	-Course instructors lack proficiency and grip of online curriculum content and lack skills on how to effectively deliver e-learning sessions	Al-Nofaie, 2020; Hoq, 2020; Hoq, 2020
Obsolete technological infrastructure	-Invest and allocate needed financial resources in software, hardware, and network capabilities within universities	Aziz et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2020

Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges and difficulties associated with online learning of English language courses via Blackboard at Saudi Arabian Universities during the Covid-19 pandemic. In this discussion part, a critical analysis of the key findings is presented and discussed considering the formulated research questions and objectives. The discussions are also conducted in contrast to past study findings on the topic and the UTAUT frameworks of technological acceptance.

Challenges and Difficulties of Online Learning of English Courses via Blackboard Platform

Research Question 1 was formulated to answer the following: *What are the key benefits of learning English language courses via the Blackboard Learning System among higher education students in Saudi universities during the COVID-19 Pandemic?* Insights from obtained secondary resources identified different benefits of using online learning platforms. For example, findings from King Khalid University, Qassim University, and the University of Najran showed that students in TESOL classes who used e-learning reported it to be enjoyable due to the ease of navigation, information quality, flexibility, and improved teaching and learning (Alamer, 2020; Ali & Algane, 2020). The observed positive perceptions

about Blackboard learning might be explained by the UTAUT framework where perceived ease of use and accessibility to new technology positively influences users to embrace e-learning adoption through Blackboard learning (Chao, 2019; Venkatesh et al., 2003).

Additional findings from universities such as Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Shaqra University, Qassim University, and King Khalid University found that online learning was positively perceived because of enhanced language proficiency, satisfaction with target language due to vivid audios, videos, images, chatting, reading texts, and discussion forums (Hakim, 2020; Ja'ashan, 2020). Also, using e-learning was believed to improve writing, promote collaboration, and enhance student communication with teachers (Gulnaz et al., 2020; Hakim, 2020; Ja'ashan, 2020). These insights may be attributed to the UTAUT framework where uptake of technology is often informed by performance expectancy and perceived usefulness. That is, when students believe using online learning will improve their language proficiency, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar improvement, they are more likely to show positive attitudes to its adoption (Khaled & Ahmed, 2020; Mahyoob, 2020).

However, irrespective of the perceived advantages of e-learning via Blackboard among Saudi students in TESOL courses, researchers also reported potential negative outcomes. Some TESOL students from Qassim University and King Khalid University shared negative perceptions because it did not improve their English vocabulary, while others noted a lack of any positive outcome in vocabulary learning (Gulnaz et al., 2020; Hakim, 2020). Students noted problems in accessing Blackboard in remote areas with limited power connections or with unreliable internet connections (Hakim, 2020). Moreover, teachers from Shaqra University noted that online learning hinders blended learning with a potential negative impact on personal privacy and slow connection.

These drawbacks were further exacerbated by inadequate teacher preparedness, limited resources for e-learning, and issues with curriculum content. Such challenges hinder optimal use of Blackboard among TESOL students in Saudi universities (Gulnaz et al., 2020). The observed challenges may be explained by the UTAUT framework formulated by Venkatesh et al. (2003). Specifically, students' risk perception (i.e., concerns about privacy and data confidentiality) and trust factor might result in laxity among teachers and students (Chao, 2019) to use Blended learning in English language courses. Therefore, these findings show that despite the positive impacts of online learning of the English language, there are potential drawbacks that may hinder the full implementation.

Research Question 2 was created to identify the following: *What are the main hurdles hindering successful utilization of the Blackboard Learning System among higher education students in Saudi universities during the COVID-19 Pandemic?* The key challenges and difficulties identified included growing concerns by students and teachers about personal privacy and information confidentiality in online platforms (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Hoq, 2020). Technological difficulties such as accessibility to online sites in remote areas or regions with poor internet further discouraged usage of Blackboard in English language learning (Alhadreti, 2020; El-Sayed, 2020). As such, despite the effectiveness of e-learning via the Blackboard Learning System, potential system failures and inadequate support from teachers or technicians became a key hindrance among some TESOL students to fully utilize online learning during the pandemic.

In some Saudi universities, faculty members and instructors highlighted concerns about inadequate skills and knowledge on IT use to deliver curriculum content via Blackboard platforms due to the rapid shift from traditional classrooms in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic (Al-Nofaie, 2020; Alsayari, 2020; Dahmash, 2020). In line with the UTAUT framework, when the user experience due to poor performance expectancy, high-risk perception, and lack of trust is associated with new technology, the target audience is more likely to shun utilizing it in learning (Chao, 2019). As such, the identified difficulties may help explain laxity among students, teachers, and faculty members in Saudi universities from using the Blackboard platform in the learning of English language courses.

Research Question 3 was created to examine the following: *What strategies should be adopted to improve higher education students' experiences when taking English language courses via the Blackboard Learning System in Saudi universities?* Results from extracted studies identified potential

measures that may be used to address diverse challenges affecting students, teachers, IT technicians, and university institutions in using Blackboard platforms to facilitate the learning of English language courses. Security concerns might be addressed through reliable verification of personal information such as strong passwords, authentication, and coding usernames of students, teachers, and IT technicians (Alhadreti, 2020; Hoq, 2020). Technical access might be addressed through offline options where learners from remote areas can access Blackboard course content where there is a poor internet connection (Alhadreti, 2020; El-Sayed, 2020). Inadequate IT skills may be addressed through the training of instructors and faculty (Al-Nofaie, 2020), with increased awareness creation on the importance of online learning (Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020).

Regular technical support and assistance need to be provided to help students access quick assistance when they experience problems (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; El-Sayed, 2020). Challenges resulting from low interest among faculty members towards online learning usage may be addressed through motivation and awareness creation for instructors on supplementary roles played by Blackboard resources in ensuring learning continuity during the Covid-19 pandemic (Ali, 2020). Course content must also be diversified in a manner that meets the unique and varied needs of students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, thereby increasing the receptivity of online learning in English courses (Almaiah et al., 2020). Obsolete technology and computer networks should be upgraded through the additional allocation of financial resources, training of IT experts, acquisition of new software and hardware components in the entire IT infrastructure of various Saudi universities (Aziz et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2020).

Limitations

There are potential limitations of this study. All data were extracted from secondary sources and may fail to align with specific research questions of the study due to the varied research aim and objectives of the extracted studies (Ghauri et al., 2020). The sources of information were largely limited to Saudi studies limiting the application of findings to higher education facilities within the country (Viner et al., 2020). A sample size of 18 papers was used in this study with research on English language learning via the Blackboard platform still an evolving topic. The few available resources and the present findings are likely to change with the evolving and ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, thereby implying that the identified nature of online learning challenges may change in the future.

Implications for Practice

Findings from this study have important implications for practice as applicable to students, instructors, IT support staff, and university administrators. As related to students, there is a need to create awareness and motivation to encourage learners to embrace online learning. Providing relevant motivation would help change negative perceptions towards Blackboard learning thereby ensuring more students change individuals' perceptions about online learning platforms (Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020). The key focus among teachers while motivating students should be on convincing learners on the importance of e-learning via Blackboard. Viner et al. (2020) noted that students have the traditional mindset of face-to-face learning due to physical interaction, feedback, engagement, and classroom discussions. By contrast, students tend to think that e-learning lacks these characteristics. As such, teachers should ensure instruction delivery via the Blackboard motivates proactive learning through real-time feedbacks, student discussions, engagements, close support, and detailed discussion of course materials. Such an approach would motivate learners in TESOL courses to embrace Blackboard learning like traditional classroom settings (Aziz et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2020).

Faculty members also need to be provided with regular workshops and training on the use of Blackboard platforms. Specific workshops should focus on on-the-job training in TESOL curriculum formulation and effective instruction delivery methods through virtual or online learning settings. Additional professional training should be availed to ensure English language teachers have relevant

skills and competency in the use of Blackboard technology in facilitating target language learning. Availing professional development, skills acquisition, and learning of relevant knowledge would ensure instructors are well equipped on how to deliver relevant course content via online platforms (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021; Aziz et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2020; Hoq, 2020; Xiao & Hurd 2007, 2010; Ying, 2006). Faculty workshops and training should also allocate resources on the acquisition of applicable software and hardware such as smart devices for use in Blackboard platforms.

IT support staff and technicians need relevant training on support services, answering queries, and troubleshooting potential problems students encounter when accessing learning materials via online platforms (Almaghaslah & Alsayari, 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020). University administrators should also advocate for policy guidelines, resource allocation, and financial support to implement and upgrade existing obsolete IT infrastructure in Saudi universities to ensure it meets the modern technology changes and diverse needs of multiple users.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendations for future research are informed by the identified study limitations. In elaboration, future researchers need to conduct primary research and collect survey and interview data from Saudi universities to capture first-hand views and experiences among students and teachers about the challenges of online language learning using Blackboard platforms. Also, future research should consider using a large sample size to ensure the generalizability of the study findings to other educational settings (Ghauri et al., 2020). Using large data would ensure internal validity due to the triangulation of different data sources such as focus group discussions, field observations, archival data, survey questionnaires, and semi-structured interview sessions (Ghauri et al., 2020; Viner et al., 2020). Most of the studies used in this study were published between July and December the year 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic influenced school closures and lockdown measures. With the emergency of the vaccines against Covid-19 and easing lockdown restrictions, most universities might revert to traditional learning modes further reducing online learning of English learning. As a result, the nature of the identified challenges might change in the future. As such, such potential changes might necessitate the need for future research to examine how the identified challenges and difficulties are likely to evolve or be perceived by students and instructors.

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