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TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF LMS SCHOOLGY IN FACE-TO-FACE AND ONLINE TEACHING MODES: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Abstract. For decades, scholars have debated which model of education is superior. Some argue that online is beneficial and others argue that online is less effective than traditional face-to-face. The study presents a lived experience of teachers' perception of face-to-face and online teaching applying Learning Management System (LMS) Schoology. Presented paper deals with possible positive and negative experiences of English language teachers using Schoology during online and traditional face-to-face teaching. The study takes place in one of the universities in southern Kazakhstan. "Schoology" was chosen as a platform to ease and support the teaching process. The aim of the study is to identify teachers' perceptions of the Schoology in online and traditional teaching styles. Participants were asked to answer a questionnaire about their perception of the Schoology and informal observations took place. The advantages and disadvantages of online education were additionally revealed in this study. The study is qualitative research with two teachers that uses open-ended questions and analyzed employing acceptance theory.

Keywords: online and traditional education, face-to-face, LMS, Schoology, teachers' perception, lived experience, acceptance theory.

Аннотация. В течение многих десятилетий ученые спорили какая модель образования лучше. Некоторые утверждают, что онлайн модель выгоднее, а другие утверждают, что онлайн модель менее эффективна, чем традиционное обучение. В данном исследовании показан наглядный опыт восприятия учителями очного и онлайн обучения с использованием Schoology системы управления обучения. Данная статья рассматривает возможные положительный и отрицательный опыт преподавателей английского языка использующих Schoology во время обучения онлайн и традиционного лицом к лицу. Исследование происходит в одном из университетов на Юге Казахстана. Schoology была выбрана в качестве платформы для облегчения и поддержания учебного процесса. Целью исследования является выявление представлений преподавателей о Schoology в онлайн и традиционных стилях обучения. Участникам было предложено ответить на вопросник об их восприятии Schoology, и неформальные наблюдения также были включены. Преимущества и недостатки онлайн образования также были дополнительно выявлены.

Данная статья это качественное исследование с участием двух преподавателей, которое использует открытые вопросы, для анализа была использована теория принятия.

Ключевые слова: онлайн обучение, традиционное обучение, лицом к лицу, теория принятия, система организации обучения, наглядный опыт, восприятие преподавателей, Schoology.

Андатпа. Онжылдықтар бойы ғалымдар білім берудің қандай моделі жақсы екендігі туралы таласты. Кейбіреулер онлайн-бұл тиімді, ал басқалары дәстүрлі күндізгі ставкаларға қарағанда онлайн аз тиімді деп санайды. Зерттеуде оқытушылардың Оқытуды басқару жүйесін (LMS) Schoology арқылы күндізгі және онлайн-оқытуды қабылдау тәжірибесі ұсынылған. Ұсынылған мақалада онлайн-және дәстүрлі күндізгі оқыту кезінде Schoology қолданатын ағылшын тілі оқытушыларының ықтимал он және теріс тәжірибесі қарастырылады. Оқу Оңтүстік Қазақстандағы ЖОО-ның бірінде өтуде. «Schoology» оқу процесін жеңілдету және қолдау үшін платформа ретінде таңдалды. Зерттеу мақсаты - мұғалімдердің онлайн және дәстүрлі оқыту стиліндегі мектеп бағдарламасы туралы түсініктерін анықтау. Қатысушыларға мектеп бағдарламасын қабылдау туралы сұрақтарға жауап беру, сонымен қатар бейресми бақылау жүргізу ұсынылды. Бұл зерттеуде қосымша онлайн-білімнің артықшылықтары мен кемшіліктері анықталды. Зерттеу ашық сұрақтар бар сауалнаманы қолданатын және қабылдау теориясын пайдалана отырып талданатын екі оқытушы бар сапалы зерттеу.

Түйін сөздер: онлайн-және дәстүрлі білім беру, күндізгі оқу нысаны, мектеп бағдарламалары, мұғалімдердің қабылдауы, өмірлік тәжірибе, қабылдау теориясы.

The study presents teachers' perception of traditional and online teaching applying Schoology. The process of transition from traditional training to online learning has been developing for two decades. Since the advent of the huge archives presented on computer-readable media, more and more often the idea arose to use this material for educational purposes. In global terms, this became possible with the development of the Internet, which made it possible to send the necessary amount of data from one end of the world to the other, communicate freely with other network users online and post information on Internet sites, making them accessible to everyone (Saturina, 2006). In order to make instruction more convenient, LMS is widely used in both traditional and online instruction. However, in the technology age, many teachers resist new means of education, especially novice teachers with less experience.

Online Education

Online education has equal and important opportunities for educational institutions and for different people's skills. In recent years, the online education system is developing rapidly and increasing the possibility for people to get education easier ways. Thus, the development of the demand for distance education causes the replacement of people by robot technique. Consequently, there is a demand for having a variety of professionals in different spheres, so that people are trying to get different qualifications at the same time. Whereas, online education is the best tool to get more information and knowledge in short terms. People have to develop permanently (Brian, 2012).

As for now, online education is a new, progressive type of learning which has occurred in the third decade of the XX century due to new technological inventions and opportunities. Many countries have established the development of online education as a prior trend lately and provide a meaningful part of the budget. "According to the statistics, more than 300 universities offer online education in the USA. Based on the study of Valentine (2010), 57% of American instructors regard online education as inferior to traditional lessons" (Valentine, 2010, p.101).

Distance learning has a number of additional features. The educational process during distance learning was based on the focused and controlled intensive independent work of the student, who could study in a convenient place for himself, according to an individual schedule, having with him a set of special teaching aids and an agreed opportunity of contact with the teacher in the learning process. The outlooks of online education are explained by different advantages factors in front of other types of education. The most salutary factors are flexibility and accessibility (Ostankowicz-Bazan, 2016).

James (2015) emphasized the advantages of online education:

1. *Attractive price.* A lower price for many students is a key factor. Especially when a person does not yet know how much he needs the topic being studied. If after several online seminars the topic is attractive, then a more in-depth study can be continued in the classic offline mode.
2. *Comfortable Learning Environment.* Students decide themselves about the place where to study. Many people feel more comfortable sitting at home and learning new things.
3. *Flexibility.* No schedule pressure on students. Nothing forces students to follow schedules. There is a choice in online learning on what time is suitable to study for them. Online education substantially reduces financial factors and on the other hand, keeps time for both teachers and students.
4. *Avoiding community.* There are many people who do not like big communities and are introverts, for them working themselves the best way.

5. *Developing technology skills.* Online education becomes one of the reasons to learn how to work with a particular platform and device.

On the other hand, several other researchers presented disadvantages of online education:

1. *Lack of professionalism.* Online learning activities are currently not licensed or certified. Anyone with the desire and opportunity can become the speaker of the online training program.
2. *Weak training material.* When preparing an online program, many teachers and speakers consider the group's most difficult setup and focus on advertising and promotion. At the same time, neither the time nor energy is enough for the quality preparation of the educational material itself.
3. *Little or no face-to-face interaction.* While this may seem obvious, students have a tendency to underestimate the impact of never meeting the instructor and other students in the class. Edmundson (2012), an English professor at the University of Virginia, argued in a Time opinion piece that online education creates a “monologue and not a real dialogue” in the learning environment. Building relationships with your instructor and classmates will require more effort in an online environment.
4. *More work.* Online courses typically require a greater amount of reading and assignments than traditional classes. Teachers also have a lot of work to do. Preparing online-interactive assignments presents huge work rather than in traditional teaching.
5. *An intense requirement for self-discipline.* Online courses usually have deadlines for assignments, tests, commenting on lectures, and others. The problem is the time management and organization skills necessary to stay on top of your work, allot an appropriate amount of time to complete each task, and balance your coursework against other priorities in your life. If you tend toward procrastination, then you might need to strengthen your skillset before choosing an online course or program (Tom, 2017).

Online teaching and learning system has grown in recent years and has experienced mainstream acceptance. Students get into self-control in their learning environment, which ultimately helps develop a deeper understanding of degree courses. New models of learning are always springing up in the market, providing students with varied opportunities to fashion their education into something that fits them, not the other way round. It also provides individuals with an opportunity to finish a degree they might have started and been unable to continue with for one reason or another. The future of online degree education looks promising and opens up education to a larger section of the population than ever before.

For teachers, this form of training primarily means the emergence of an additional opportunity to present material to students, i.e. in fact, it becomes

possible to train a larger number of students at the same load. In addition to solving its primary task - distance learning through the Internet, online is also an excellent complement to full-time education and can be a good help to improve the quality and effectiveness of traditional education (Satunina, 2006).

Certainly, a teacher using e-learning technologies can educate a larger number of students who are geographically separated, but will this bring the desired educational and economic effect? In the traditional face-to-face learning process, the teacher has the feedback necessary for learning immediately, reacts to it, “along the way” restructuring the teaching material, has the opportunity to make this material more accessible in front of students. Undoubtedly, for the preparation of electronic courses, the experience of expert teachers and experts in their field should be used, but such a teacher does not always have the necessary time for this, the ability to work with a computer.

Schoology Learning Management System (LMS)

The study applies a platform that helps teachers in transferring grades, quizzes, discussions, and collaborations online among students during online and face-to-face teaching and learning processes. The platform was chosen based on the workshop about “Designing Teacher Education & Professional Development for the 21st Century” was conducted on how the Schoology, chosen platform, works by Denneille K. Luke in 2017 in Almaty city¹⁷. The presented platform counts as the most suitable in use for students and teachers, taking into account their interests, preferences, and skills. The presented platform gives an opportunity not only to transfer grades but also to conduct quizzes, final examinations, writings, and discussions. There is a function to see each student’s mistake, give feedback, and leave comments in writing or discussion parts. The platform provides a convenient grading system, which minimizes teachers’ work time and counts grades itself based on the initial setups that the teacher introduced. Originally designed for sharing notes, Schoology was released commercially in August 2009 (Conte, 2011).

The Schoology platform was designed by Jeremy Friedman, Ryan Hwang, and Tim Trinidad while still undergraduates at Washington University in St. Louis, MO. Originally designed for sharing notes, Schoology was released commercially in August 2009 (Conte, 2011).

Likewise, Schoology as a learning management tool open for providing teaching resources and materials, also to organize, evaluate, and assess the learning process. In accordance with creators of the Schoology, they emphasize one of the most significant advantages, the platform provides an opportunity of knowing the individual needs of the students, in such a way that the teaching-learning process is more fitting to the student’s needs (Rahman, et.al., 2011).

As for interface design, it is considered as completely attractive and simple in use. It was closely designed as a social networking platform in terms of discussion forums, participation, and feedback. Those advantages positively influence students’ attitudes, motivation, and interest in learning subjects. The

Schoology also has provided users with the opportunity of controlling the time of the taken quiz and assignment, also it has the possibility to control activities with the help of statistics section through that teachers are able to check the last connection, attempt, the duration of the time they spend on completing the activity.

Conceptual Framework

Perception of teachers using LMS in online and face-to-face instructions

In implementing any time of new methodology or technology, teachers are the main stakeholders whose opinion is sometimes neglected. According to Wade and Fish (2009), there are different factors whether teachers can have positive or negative experiences teaching online such as a desire to use LMSs, prior experience or training, and faculty support. In their study, they examine both qualitatively and quantitatively the answers of 87 faculty members from a public university in a southwestern state. Data show that there is a big divide between faculty members who had experience and who had not. Those who did not have any experience show a high level of resistance.

Without any doubt, most researchers and practitioners agree on technologically enriched teaching styles including learning management systems (LMS). For instance, 90% of all responding universities in the USA (Hawkins & Rudy, 2007), 95% of the responding universities (Browne et al., 2006) have adopted LMS. Although the wide use of LMSs around the world, there are some barriers to successfully implementing them. ElTartoussi (2009) emphasizes that that successful education does not solely depend on “technology, but rather careful planning and adoption strategies must be closely investigated and that the adoption among users such as teachers and students is a vital concern” (in Al-Busaidi & Al-Shihi, 2010, p. 2). According to Al-Busaidi and Al-Shihi’s (2012) large scale study of 82 instructors from Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) in Oman identified satisfaction effects of LMS. The first instructor’s technology anxiety negatively impacts the satisfaction of LMS. Second, the impact of the instructor's experience with the technology did not have a significant effect on their satisfaction with LMS. The teacher's personal innovativeness positively impacted their satisfaction with LMS. Fourth, system quality, information quality, management support, incentives policy, and training significantly impacted instructor satisfaction of LMS (p.33). Moreover, LMS’s teachers’ satisfaction in blended-learning is 58,4% and 12,6% in purely online learning.

Acceptance theory as a methodology

Acceptance theory is a multidimensional attitude that has technical, social, and personal factors. Technological factor triggers when teachers feel intimidated because of the lack of competency or computer proficiency. Those barriers include age, degree, or technical expertise.

Pedagogical factors are connected to teaching styles, teaching philosophy, and teaching content.

Personal factors are a teacher's conclusion after a positive or negative experience.

In this study, it is used as a conceptual framework. Different frameworks have been used to investigate individuals' acceptance such as Davis's (1989) perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, Ball and Levy's (2008) model of acceptance of emerging technologies, and Sumner and Hostetler's (1999) importance of instructors characteristics. Sumner and Hostetler (1999) identify various characteristics including user type, the current level of computer skills, the extent of computer skills in teaching and training needs; also some organizational factors are crucial such as organization support, technology alignment, and technical support.

The research question is "What is the role of Schoology in online and face-to-face teaching styles?"

Study procedure

The study investigates the lived experience of two English language instructors in one of the Kazakhstani universities one teaching online and another teaching face-to-face. Lived experience, according to Creswell (1998), puts an emphasis on the "meaning" of individuals' everyday lives and experiences. In one of the Kazakhstani universities one teaching online and another teaching face-to-face. Lived experience, according to Creswell (1998), puts an emphasis on the "meaning" of individuals' everyday lives and experiences. The main aim of the notion of lived experience is to understand teachers' concerns and resistance of new. Thus, the sample size is limited to two - the focus is on depth and locality rather than on generalizability and external validity. The main aim of the notion of lived experience is to understand teachers' concerns and resistance of new. Thus, the sample size is limited to two - the focus is on depth and locality rather than on generalizability and external validity. Content analysis is employed to find themes and categories of open-ended questions and informal observations. Data analysis shows four main topics concerning usage of LMS Schoology.

The study focused on the implementation of Schoology into online and traditional education. Both online and traditional education's advantages and disadvantages sides were taken into account. The study uses acceptance theory in accordance with teachers' skills and perception. To analyze teachers' perceptions, a questionnaire was conducted with two teachers who have equal experience in teaching using Schoology.

Study results

After analyzing the data, three factors emerged: instructors' perception, assessment, organization factors. Answers of the teacher with an online instruction marked as O and answers of the teacher with face-to-face instruction marked as F.

1. *Instructors' perception factor*

Both teachers gave satisfactory answers. The answers show that both teachers have experience in using Schoology during online and traditional teaching. Schoology appears as a friendly and useful platform to work with for online instruction, but quite unsatisfactory for face-to-face instruction. According to Al-Busaidi and Al-Shihi's (2011), system quality and information quality has a great impact on the satisfaction of teachers:

F: "...especially design it is not comfortable,

"Schoology is effective during face to face for teachers. It increases teacher's productivity, because the app does everything by itself, which really helps in teachers' management."

O: "Also, it helps to check and create assignments, home tasks; sometimes I send to my students' different materials and share photos."

2. *Assessment factor*

None of the teachers like the grading system in Schoology. According to their answers, they find Schoology as a difficult platform to work with the grading scale, design becomes one of the factors which influence on the difficulty of using. Also, the lack of control from teachers would lead to cheating of students.

F: "Grade system no, there are a lot of big deal going with the grading system and checking assignments, but I like only conduct the exam"

"I dislike grading system, home tasks, and especially design it is not comfortable"

O: "No exact answer, I don't use the score-and rating system in Schoology. I prefer to calculate by myself."

Still both of the teachers like the function of the time limit there and the function of sharing the materials which help to ease the teaching process.

F: "I like only to take tests. And download teacher's issues for teachers"

O: "First of all, I use this source to conduct online tests."

O: "I like the fact that I can use "time limit" for all tasks and assignments. It really helps me when I give an "essay writing" task."

3. *Organizational factor*

In accordance with teachers' answers, online and traditional become easier using Schoology. It minimizes time spending on checking the answers of the test, gives an opportunity to control students using a "time-limit" function:

F: Again it's useful for teachers only in managing the time, and not checking a great number of quizzes and home tasks. In others, no it is not useful

O: It's great that teachers do not need to spend a lot of time checking them.

Conclusion

It is beneficial for teachers to use learning management systems nowadays due to time-efficiency, which minimizes work both online and traditional face-to-face instruction. Learning management systems become an integral part of teaching students. Schoology has established itself as a convenient and easy in use platform. Teachers with experience of working with Schoology according to the theory of acceptance which shows that not all teachers are able to use learning management systems in suitable ways, there appears a lack of competency or computer proficiency. There are different factors to consider in implementing LMS such as teachers' preconceptions, types of both tasks and assessment, management of instruction, and classroom.

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