

## USE OF TECHNOLOGY DURING PANDEMIC COVID-19 IN ESL CLASSROOMS: A STUDY AT POSTGRADUATE LEVEL IN BAHAWALPUR

\*Muhammad Ali Javed, \*\*Mouzma Nafees, \*\*\*Muhammad Shahbaz Talib,

\*\*\*\*Prof. Dr. Mamuna Ghani

\*MPhil Scholar, Department of English Linguistics, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur

\*\*MPhil Scholar, Department of English Linguistics, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur

\*\*\*PhD Scholar, Department of English Linguistics, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur

\*\*\*\*Director Executive Training Center, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur

### ABSTRACT

*This study aimed to investigate the impact of technology on ESL learners and teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research focused on the responses of 150 postgraduate ESL learners from the English Literature and English Linguistics departments at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, constituting a mixed-method approach. The researcher employed purposive non-random sampling techniques due to the large student population. The collected data were analyzed using statistical methods and thematic analysis. The findings revealed that the technological shift was initially challenging for the majority of students, emphasizing the necessity of technical literacy for online learning applications. However, the respondents also acknowledged the reliability of the technological shift for learning ESL and its role in motivating students to become more technologically adept. Additionally, the study highlighted the preference for online classrooms over physical ones, with the Zoom application being the most favored for teaching and learning during the pandemic. Moreover, the research identified a lack of technological awareness and affordability among ESL learners, as well as challenges related to the evaluation of students' efficiency and the conduct of online examinations through Learning Management Systems (LMS). The results of this study align with previous research, indicating that the shift to online teaching during the pandemic was not universally beneficial for students and teachers in higher education. While some positive changes were noted, such as increased student motivation and commitment to virtual teaching, concerns about the effectiveness of online learning and its impact on students' attitudes were also evident. In summary, this research provides valuable insights into the experiences of ESL learners and teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic, shedding light on the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of technology in ESL classrooms at the postgraduate level. The findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on the role of technology in education, particularly in the context of the unprecedented challenges posed by the global health crisis.*

**Keywords:** Technology, ESL learners, COVID-19 pandemic, online classrooms, Learning Management Systems (LMS), opportunities and challenges, etc.

## Introduction

COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus, has significantly impacted the world, causing disruptions to various aspects of life, including education. The pandemic began in late 2019, with the first patient discovered in Wuhan, China, and was declared a global health emergency by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020 (Colavizza, 2020). The virus has had far-reaching consequences, causing lockdowns, job losses, and the closure of educational institutions worldwide. In Pakistan, as in other countries, the pandemic led to the shutdown of schools and universities to prevent the spread of the virus (Kamal et al, 2021). This forced educators and students to adapt to online learning, a shift that was necessary but also challenging for many (Bilgin et al, 2020). The transition to online education has been met with both enthusiasm and resistance, with some students and teachers finding the experience beneficial and engaging, while others struggle with technology and internet access. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of technology in education and the need for better digital literacy and resources for students and teachers (Parveen, 2020). It has also exposed the digital divide, with many students lacking access to reliable internet connections and devices, making it difficult for them to participate fully in online learning. The pandemic has also led to a shift in teaching methods, with many educators adopting hybrid models that combine online and in-person instruction (Karakose, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on education, forcing educators and students to embrace technology and online learning (Davis et al, 1989). While the transition has been met with some challenges, it has also presented opportunities for growth and innovation in the educational sector. As the world continues to navigate the pandemic, it is essential for governments and educational institutions to address the digital divide and ensure that all students have access to quality education, regardless of their socioeconomic background (Adnan & Anwar 2020). Several studies have explored the challenges and opportunities of technology-enhanced learning, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there has been a lack of research specifically focused on the use of technology in ESL (English as a Second Language) learning during the pandemic in Bahawalpur (Anderson, 2004). The existing studies have highlighted the challenges faced by ESL learners during the pandemic, such as difficulties with online learning, lack of facilities, internet connectivity, and technology, as well as the deficiency of resource material. Additionally, research has been conducted to investigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the field of EFL (English as a Foreign Language), revealing the viewpoints of secondary school students on pandemic remote education (Aljohani, 2017). Furthermore, studies have explored the experiences, attitudes, and perspectives of ESL teachers regarding the shift to online learning, with a focus on the efficacy and outcomes of digital learning in the ESL classroom. These studies collectively provide valuable insights into the use of technology in ESL and EFL learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, shedding light on the challenges, opportunities, and experiences of learners and educators in this context (Jia, 2010).

## Literature Review

Several studies have highlighted the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the learning process of ESL (English as a Second Language) learners worldwide. The role of

technology during this period has been crucial in minimizing academic disruptions and enabling continuous learning. Some researchers argue that the use of technology during emergency situations is inevitable. Here are summaries of some relevant studies:

Ahmad et al. (2020) conducted a study to explore the relationship between English and online learning during COVID-19. The research revealed an increase in internet usage during the pandemic. However, both students and instructors were unprepared for the sudden shift to online learning, facing challenges such as speed, connectivity, and computer availability, especially for individuals with low incomes. The findings emphasized the need for new strategies to address these challenges and highlighted the importance of understanding necessary software and apps for teaching and learning English online Jia, Q. (2010). T. Asgher (2021) investigated the impact of online teaching methods on higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results indicated that online learning did not prove beneficial for Pakistani learners and teachers of higher education, as they encountered various physical, social, economic, and psychological problems. Amjad et al. (2021) conducted a study on learners' perceptions of online English language learning during the pandemic. The research, which involved 100 respondents, revealed that Pakistani ESL learners agreed that online English language teaching during the pandemic yielded positive results to a great extent, particularly in terms of lectures' time duration, teachers' feedback, and online examinations. Shahzad et al. (2020) investigated the impact of virtual teaching on the attitudes of ESL learners at the postgraduate level in Pakistan. The study, which involved 100 students, found that virtual teaching caused a favorable improvement in students' perspectives, with many students expressing enthusiasm about learning through online teaching. These studies collectively underscore the challenges and benefits of online learning for ESL learners during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the need for effective strategies and resources to support continued education in emergency situations.

### **Research Objectives**

The research intends:

1. To explore the responses of ESL learners regarding the use of technology during the pandemic Covid-19.
2. To determine the extent to which the technology helped the teachers and students in ESL classrooms during pandemic Covid-19.

### **Research Questions**

This research answers the Following questions:

1. What has been the response of ESL learners with regard to the use of technology during the pandemic Covid-19?
2. Did technology help the teachers and students in ESL classrooms during pandemic Covid-19?

### **Significance of the study**

The importance of this study is extensive, as it may provide insights to educational policymakers regarding the impact of the coronavirus on the use of technology, particularly prevalent online teaching-learning applications, at the postgraduate level in Bahawalpur. The results of this study

may be instrumental in evaluating the need to incorporate technology into the national curriculum for postgraduate disciplines that are primarily theoretical and have been distant from the use of technology. Additionally, the study aims to assess learners' perceptions of the technological shift from physical classes to online classrooms, identify any initial difficulties faced by learners, and propose awareness programs to address these challenges. Furthermore, the research may elucidate the experiences of teachers and students with online teaching-learning applications, examining their effectiveness and potential limitations. Notably, the study may also evaluate the reliability of online evaluation systems and their impact on ESL learners' learning and understanding during the pandemic.

### **Research Methodology**

The researcher used a quantitative research design since the research is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The study aimed to investigate the ESL learners' perceptions regarding the use of technology during the COVID-19 pandemic in ESL classrooms and to determine whether technology was supportive during COVID-19 or not. To conduct the research, a questionnaire was circulated among the ESL learners, and interviews of selected ESL teachers were conducted. The study is significant as it was decipher whether the ESL learners learned more than they learn in physical classes because mostly teachers do not use audio-visual aids during their lectures in physical classrooms, but in online classes, while using online teaching-learning applications, teachers automatically use audio-visual aids while sharing the screen to the participants of the meeting, and this use of audio-visual aids increases the interest of the learners, and they learn more in an effective manner.

### **Research Population**

Population refers to a distinct group of people who share a common characteristic or trait, whether it be a country or a collection of individuals. It can also refer to the whole of people involved in research. In this study, the population consisted of postgraduate ESL learners from the Department of English Linguistics and the Department of English Literature at The Islamia University of Bahawalpur.

### **Sampling and Sampling Technique**

According to Etikan et al. (2016), sampling is a method for selecting individuals from a given population. In this study, the researcher focused on postgraduate ESL learners from the Departments of English Literature and English Linguistics at The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB). The sample consisted of 150 ESL learners from these departments, as it was challenging to involve the entire population due to the large number of students studying in these departments. The researcher employed a purposive sampling technique, which is a non-random and judgmental method, to select participants based on the researcher's assessment of their potential usefulness for the study's goals.

### **Research Tools**

In order to achieve the study's objectives and obtain reliable and valid results from the collected data, the researcher utilized a questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire consisted of 30

statements, divided into two portions. The first portion was used to understand the perceptions of ESL teachers and learners regarding the use of technology during the COVID-19 pandemic in ESL classrooms, while the second portion focused on the effectiveness of the usage of technology. The questionnaire employed a Likert scale, which comprises declarative statements and a number of classes, allowing respondents to score their approval or dissent. The interviews consisted of five structured questions administered to instructors teaching at the Department of English Linguistics.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

Bryman (2016) describes the concept of unwavering quality as a "consistency of a proportion of an idea." Researchers who support the use of quantitative research have engaged in substantial discourse around the issues of validity and reliability. The researcher conducted a pilot study as a means of testing the dependability and validity of the research (In, 2017). A sample of twenty students was selected, and a questionnaire was filled out and time was noted during the examination. Keeping the results in mind and with the suggestion of the supervisor, some changes were made in the instrument. The interview questions were checked by the supervisor and senior research fellow. Validity and reliability are crucial concepts in research, ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the findings. Validity refers to the extent to which a research study measures what it claims to measure without being affected by extraneous factors or bias, while reliability refers to the consistency and reproducibility of the research results over time and across different samples, methods, and evaluators. Qualitative research does not always conform to the same criteria of validity and rigor as quantitative research. Validity and reliability are still important for qualitative research, as they help ensure the quality and credibility of the findings. Within the framework of the research process, qualitative researchers need to use verification practices that are both integrated and self-correcting to reclaim responsibility for the reliability and validity of their findings (Heale & Twycross, 2015).

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher designed a questionnaire with 30 statements, utilizing a Likert scale to allow students to express their opinions on the use of technology during the pandemic (COVID-19) in ESL classrooms. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions, and students were able to respond accurately after understanding the instructions. All students completed the questionnaire without difficulty. To gather interviews, the researcher selected ten instructors from the Department of English Linguistics and conducted interviews with their consent. The interviews were recorded and stored for analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The statistical package for social sciences was used to analyze the questionnaire data, and the results were presented in tables and graphs. The data collected from the interviews was thematically analyzed. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the data collected from the respondents, which is a crucial factor in determining the response to the research inquiry or query. The use of statistics in collecting information, analyzing it, and drawing conclusions from the data is essential for achieving rigor in qualitative research. This type of

research focuses on the qualities of users—the actions behind the numbers. It is an observational research method that goes on for a few years and sometimes can go on for even longer. This data collection method aims to find correlations through an empirical study of subjects with case studies. The versatility of this method is demonstrated in how this method can be used to analyze both simple and complex subjects. The strength of this method is how judiciously it uses a combination of one or more qualitative research methods.

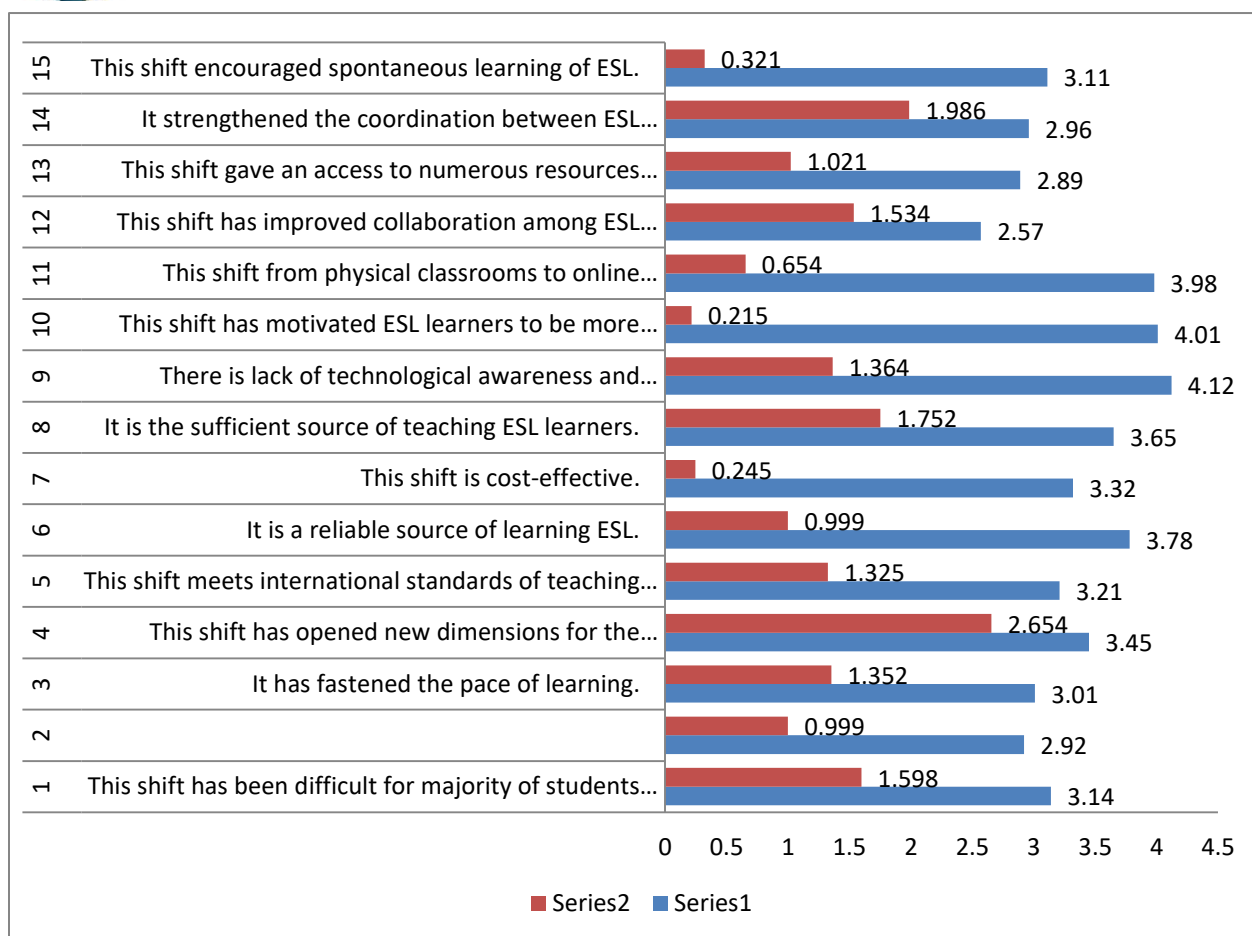
### **Analysis of Questionnaire**

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the education sector, leading to an increased reliance on technology for teaching and learning. This shift has presented numerous challenges and opportunities for educators, policymakers, and researchers to analyze and understand the effectiveness of online learning environments. By examining the data collected from questionnaires and surveys, this study aims to provide insights into the perceptions and experiences of respondents regarding the use of technology in education during the pandemic. The analysis focused on the benefits and drawbacks of online teaching and learning systems, as well as the strategies employed by instructors to ensure active participation by ESL learners in online classes.



**Table1. The responses of ESL learners regarding the use of technology during the pandemic Covid-19.**

Sr. No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	This shift has been difficult for majority of students to be adopted initially.	3.14	1.598
2	This shift requires technical literacy regarding the use of online teaching-learning applications.	2.92	0.999
3	It has fastened the pace of learning.	3.01	1.352
4	This shift has opened new dimensions for the learning of ESL.	3.45	2.654
5	This shift meets international standards of teaching ESL.	3.21	1.325
6	It is a reliable source of learning ESL.	3.78	0.999
7	This shift is cost-effective.	3.32	0.245
8	It is the sufficient source of teaching ESL learners.	3.65	1.752
9	There is lack of technological awareness and affordability among ESL learners.	4.12	1.364
10	This shift has motivated ESL learners to be more technological.	4.01	0.215
11	This shift from physical classrooms to online classrooms created a more engaged environment for learning of ESL.	3.98	0.654
12	This shift has improved collaboration among ESL learners.	2.57	1.534
13	This shift gave an access to numerous resources instantly for learning ESL.	2.89	1.021
14	It strengthened the coordination between ESL learners and teachers.	2.96	1.986
15	This shift encouraged spontaneous learning of ESL.	3.11	0.321
<b>Average</b>		<b>3.32</b>	<b>1.210</b>



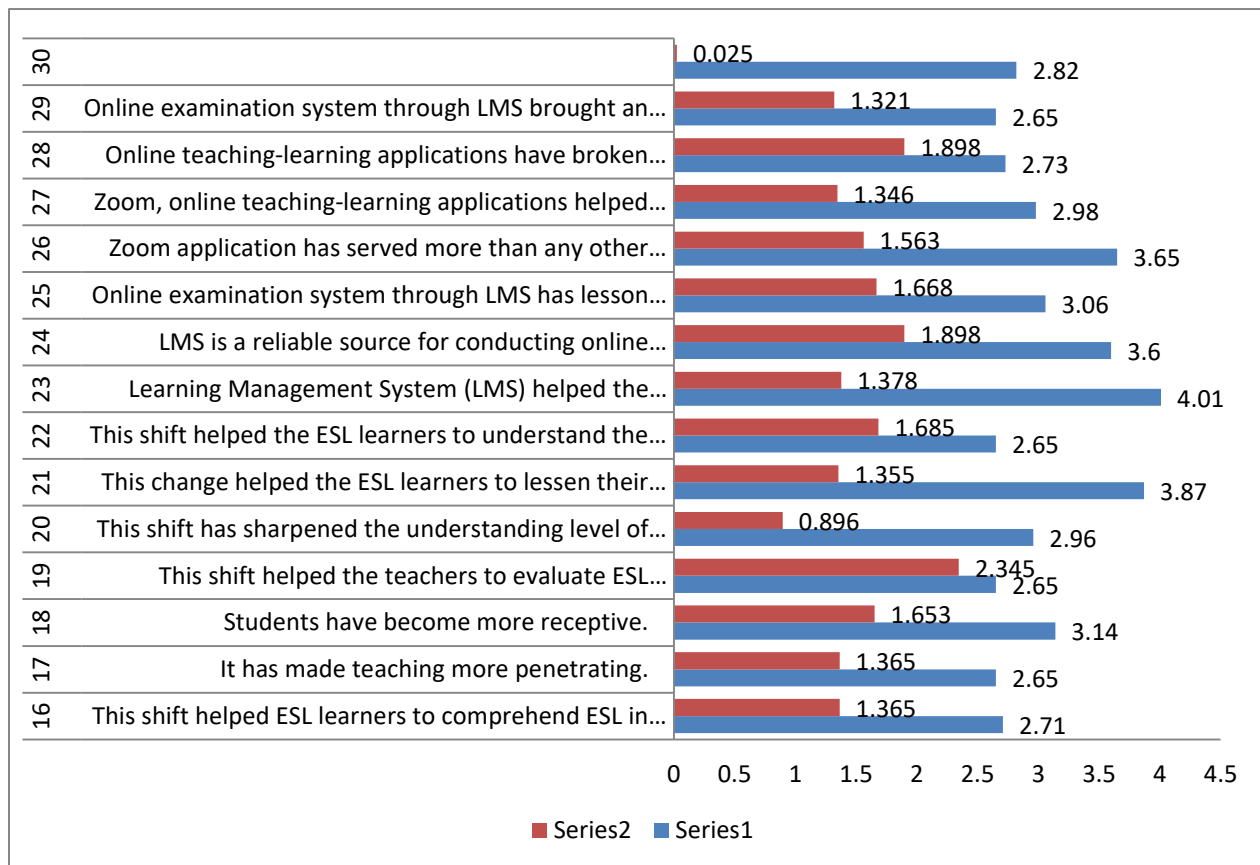
In Students' opinions about the responses of ESL learners regarding the use of technology during the pandemic Covid-19, the respondents responded that there is lack of technological awareness and affordability among ESL learners, this shift has motivated ESL learners to be more technological, and it is a reliable source of learning ESL, It is the sufficient source of teaching ESL learners remained with high mean values 4.12, 4.02, 3.98, and 3.78 respectively.

The responses to the statements that his shift has opened new dimensions for the learning of ESL This shift is cost-effective; This shift meets international standards of teaching ESL remained with high mean values 4.01, 3.98 and 3.78 respectively. The responses to the statements that it strengthened the coordination between ESL learners and teachers, this shift gave an access to numerous resources instantly for learning ESL, and this shift has improved collaboration among ESL learners, remained with low mean values 2.96, 2.89 and 2.57respectiely.



**Table 2. The extent to which the technology helped the teachers and students in ESL classrooms during pandemic Covid-19**

Sr. No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
16	This shift helped ESL learners to comprehend ESL in a more efficient way due to the addition of audio-visual aids.	2.71	1.365
17	It has made teaching more penetrating.	2.65	1.365
18	Students have become more receptive.	2.68	1.653
19	This shift helped the teachers to evaluate ESL learners' efficiency in an effective manner.	2.65	2.345
20	This shift has sharpened the understanding level of ESL learners.	2.96	0.896
21	This change helped the ESL learners to lessen their routine burden.	3.87	1.355
22	This shift helped the ESL learners to understand the behavior of each other.	2.65	1.685
23	Learning Management System (LMS) helped the teachers to properly evaluate their learners' efficiency during Covid-19.	4.01	1.378
24	LMS is a reliable source for conducting online examinations during pandemic Covid-19	3.60	1.898
25	Online examination system through LMS has lessened the focus of ESL learners	3.06	1.668
26	Zoom application has served more than any other teaching-learning application during Covid-19.	3.65	1.563
27	Zoom, online teaching-learning applications helped the teachers to conduct classes smoothly.	2.98	1.346
28	Online teaching-learning applications have broken the rigidity in learning ESL.	2.73	1.898
29	Online examination system through LMS brought an element of anxiety among ESL learners.	2.65	1.321
30	This online teaching-learning system gave ESL learners any easy access to their teachers and vice versa.	2.82	0.025
<b>Average</b>		<b>3.07</b>	<b>1.450</b>



In Students' opinions about the extent to which the technology helped the teachers and students in ESL classrooms during pandemic Covid-19, the respondents responded that learning Management System (LMS) helped the teachers to properly evaluate their learners' efficiency during Covid-19, This change helped the ESL learners to lessen their routine burden, Online teaching-learning applications have broken the rigidity in learning ESL remained with high mean values 4.01, 3.87 and 3.65 respectively.

The responses to the statements that online examination system through LMS has lessened the focus of ESL learners, Zoom, online teaching-learning applications helped the teachers to conduct classes smoothly, students have become more receptive remained with medium mean values 3.06, 2.73 and 2.68 respectively.

The responses to the statements that online teaching-learning applications have broken the rigidity in learning ESL, online examination system through LMS brought an element of anxiety among ESL learners, this online teaching-learning system gave ESL learners any easy access to their teachers and vice versa remained with low mean values 2.82, 2.73 and 2.65 respectively.

### Analysis of Interviews

The analysis of interviews is a fundamental component of qualitative research, involving the examination and interpretation of responses obtained through one-on-one discussions. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews have become a vital tool for comprehending the

influence of technology on education, particularly in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) learning. By scrutinizing the experiences and viewpoints of educators and learners, researchers can acquire valuable insights into the efficacy of online teaching and learning systems, as well as pinpoint areas for enhancement. This approach to data analysis is especially pertinent in the current educational landscape, where the use of technology has become an integral part of the learning process. Through a thorough review of interview transcripts, researchers can uncover patterns and themes that can inform the development of more effective and inclusive online learning environments, ultimately benefiting both teachers and learners in the ESL context.

**Q1. How do you see the use of technology during pandemic (Covid-19) at the post-graduate level in ESL Classrooms?**

According to the majority of respondents, technology proved to be highly beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic, serving as a crucial tool for continuing education in a time of crisis. Both teachers and learners found it invaluable in facilitating their teaching and learning activities. Many respondents expressed that the adoption of technology led to an enhanced learning experience, providing a new and satisfactory environment for learners. However, it is worth noting that 20% of respondents held a contrasting view and believed that the use of technology during the pandemic made learners less confident. They felt that the lack of face-to-face interaction with teachers hindered their ability to ask questions and actively participate in discussions. It is important to consider these different perspectives on the impact of technology in education during the pandemic. While many respondents saw technology as a helpful tool, some expressed concerns about its potential drawbacks on learner confidence and engagement. Understanding these diverse viewpoints is crucial for educators and policymakers to address any challenges and provide adequate support for learners in this new learning environment.

**Q2. As a teacher did you face any problems regarding the use of online teaching-learning application to conduct your classes during Pandemic (Covid-19)**

When asked about the challenges faced in conducting online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, the respondents highlighted several issues. Around 30% of the respondents reported connectivity problems while using online teaching-learning applications. This was particularly prevalent among students from rural areas who lacked reliable internet access. Additionally, 10% of the respondents mentioned audio reception issues, which were attributed to poor internet signals. Another concern raised by 20% of the respondents was the decreased interest shown by learners in online learning. The absence of physical classes, where students can freely interact with each other, was thought to be a contributing factor. Additionally, some respondents acknowledged that learners faced resource limitations, as having the necessary gadgets for online classes can be expensive. It was also noted by 15% of the respondents that there was a lack of computer literacy among both learners and teachers. Many learners had never been exposed to online teaching-learning experiences prior to the pandemic, making it challenging for them to adapt to this new mode of education. These difficulties highlight the digital divide that exists, where access to technology and digital skills vary among different individuals and communities.

**Q4. Has (LMS) learning management systems been a reliable source to conduct online examinations during pandemic (covid-19)? What is your take in this regard?**

When respondents were interviewed to gain their insight about the learning management system (LMS) as a reliable source for conducting online examinations during the pandemic, 55% of them answered that this learning management system was not a reliable source for conducting online examinations due to some faults observed during its use. On the other hand, 30% of respondents responded that the LMS had been useful to some extent, as it allowed the conduct of objective-type papers through this system, but did not operate subjective or descriptive papers. Furthermore, 15% of respondents agreed that this learning management system could be a good alternative only when there was no other option for learners' assessment. This indicates that while some respondents found the LMS useful for conducting online examinations, a significant number of them did not consider it a reliable source for this purpose. **In conclusion, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the perceptions of respondents regarding the use of the learning management system (LMS) for conducting online examinations during the pandemic.** The results show that while some respondents found the LMS useful, a majority of them did not consider it a reliable source for this purpose. This suggests that there is a need for improvements in the LMS to enhance its reliability and effectiveness in conducting online examinations, especially during emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. By addressing the identified issues and challenges, the LMS can potentially play a more significant role in supporting online learning and assessment in the future.

**Q5.What kind of strategies did you employ to check an active participation by ESL learners during online classes?**

When teachers were interviewed about the strategies they employed to check active participation of the learners in online classes, most of the instructors responded that they used to ask questions from the learners to check their active participation in online classes. Teachers further added that when they used to ask questions from time to time about the lecture they delivered, it helped them assess their students' active participation because wrong answers to any question might lead to the phenomenon that a student was not paying attention to the lecture delivered. 20% of teachers responded that they would assess their students through formal oral tests (quiz), and the results of the quiz would show whether the students were active, listening to the lecture carefully, or they were just online and not paying heed to the lecture. Very few teachers responded that they employed a learner-centered approach to involve students in different online activities to check their participation and interest through asking about the activities. In another part of the interview, teachers were asked about their perception regarding the use of learning management systems (LMS) for conducting online examinations during the pandemic. 55% of respondents answered that this learning management system is not a reliable source to conduct online examinations because some faults had been seen regarding the use of this learning management system to conduct online examinations during pandemic Covid-19. 30% of respondents responded that the learning management system (LMS) has been useful to some extent because only objective type paper can be conducted through this system and it does not operate any subjective or descriptive paper. 15% of respondents agreed that this learning management system could be a good alternate only when there is no other option of learners' assessment is left.

## **Should this online teaching-learning system be adopted for the teaching and learning of ESL?**

5% of respondents replied that this online teaching system can only be adopted partly when there is no other system left to teach ESL. When the teachers were asked to express their views on whether the online teaching system should be adopted for the teaching of ESL, 25% of teachers replied that this online teaching system should only be adopted in emergency situations when physical classes for ESL learners are impossible to conduct. 60% of respondents were of the view that this system should not be adopted because it is not reliable for teaching ESL, as it created hindrances in the way of teaching ESL. Both the learners and instructors faced connectivity problems, and they also had issues regarding audibility on both ends. Loss of connection and proper network for operating online teaching-learning applications was absent most of the time.

## **DISCUSSION**

The study aimed to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the use of technology in ESL classrooms. A questionnaire was developed for 150 ESL learners, consisting of 30 items, with the first 15 statements addressing the first research question and the remaining items focusing on the second research question. The responses to the first research question indicated that the shift to online classes was initially challenging for the majority of students, as they were not accustomed to using technology before the pandemic. However, the use of technology was found to enhance coordination between teachers and learners, and it motivated students to become more proficient in using technology. Additionally, the study found that the use of technology broke the rigidity in ESL learning, providing students with alternative methods of learning beyond traditional lecture-based approaches. The study also revealed that the Zoom application was the most widely used platform for conducting online classes during the pandemic. While the majority of respondents, including teachers, found the use of technology beneficial, some concerns were raised about the online examination system and connectivity issues, particularly for students in rural areas. The study's findings shed light on the challenges and opportunities of technology-enhanced learning in ESL classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the education sector, leading to a rapid shift towards the use of technology for teaching and learning. According to a study by Shahzad et al. (2020), the majority of respondents, including teachers and learners, found technology to be highly beneficial during the pandemic, serving as a crucial tool for continuing education in a time of crisis. Many respondents expressed that the adoption of technology led to an enhanced learning experience, providing a new and satisfactory environment for learners. However, 20% of respondents held a contrasting view and believed that the use of technology during the pandemic made learners less confident, as the lack of face-to-face interaction hindered their ability to ask questions and actively participate in discussions. These diverse perspectives on the impact of technology in education during the pandemic are crucial for educators and policymakers to address any challenges and provide adequate support for learners in this new learning environment. When asked about the challenges faced in conducting online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, the respondents highlighted several issues. Around 30% of the respondents reported connectivity problems while using online teaching-learning applications,



particularly prevalent among students from rural areas who lacked reliable internet access. Additionally, 10% of the respondents mentioned audio reception issues, which were attributed to poor internet signals. Another concern raised by 20% of the respondents was the decreased interest shown by learners in online learning, with the absence of physical classes and resource limitations being contributing factors. It was also noted by 15% of the respondents that there was a lack of computer literacy among both learners and teachers, highlighting the digital divide that exists among different individuals and communities. These difficulties underscore the need for improvements in the use of technology for teaching and learning, particularly in addressing issues related to connectivity, audio reception, and learner engagement.

### **Conclusion**

The research aimed to investigate the responses of postgraduate ESL learners from the Department of English Linguistics and The Department of English Literature at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur regarding the use of technology during the pandemic Covid-19. The sample consisted of almost 150 ESL learners, selected through purposive sampling technique. The questionnaire consisted of 30 items, with the first 15 statements related to the first research question and the remaining items related to the second research question. The Likert scale was used in the questionnaire, and the data was analyzed using SPSS software. The collected data from ESL teachers through interviews was thematically analyzed. The findings showed that the technological shift from physical classes to online classes was difficult for the majority of students to adopt initially, but it strengthened the coordination between teachers and learners. The use of technology broke the rigidity in learning ESL, and ZOOM was found to be the most useful application during Covid-19. However, connectivity issues were faced by teachers and learners during online classes. The study is similar to other studies that showed mixed results regarding the effectiveness of online teaching during Covid-19.

### **Recommendations**

In light of the above discussion and conclusion, several recommendations have been drawn for the improvement, positive impact, and constructive role of technology in ESL classrooms for learning ESL. Firstly, it is crucial to develop a comprehensive plan for implementing the use of technology in education at all levels, from higher education to primary education, in collaboration with the higher education commission and other decision-makers.

1. Technology should be prioritized and used on a larger scale to enhance the learning experience for ESL students
2. All educational institutions should be equipped with internet access and other necessary resources for smooth online operations.
3. Instructors and ESL learners should receive training on the use of technology and online teaching-learning applications.
4. Students should be provided with computers and other related resources by the government.
5. The use of technology in education should be promoted, especially in the ESL sector, to align with global trends. Lastly, educational institutions should be funded by the government to promote the use of technology in education.



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