Online Education and Assessment: Profiling EFL Teachers' Competency in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The expanding digital era, emerging geopolitical dynamics, and the birth of the new 'normal' that the world has witnessed in the recent times have made the urgency of revamping the academic arena obvious to all. These developments have also made it essential for teachers to be technologically and pedagogically ready to cater to individual needs by being adaptive. This calls for identification of gaps between current pedagogical practices and best practices for the new age classrooms based on the premise that certain competencies in the teachers are essential to ensure the achievement of projected learning objectives in the paradigm of the online learning process. The study uses Ally's (2019) Competency Profile for the Digital Teacher (CPDT) to determine the level of competency of the English Language Instructors at the ELI, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia in the online teaching-learning and assessment process. The study is quantitative in nature using a questionnaire with thirty-five items factoring to nine major themes for online teaching and eight assessment strategies (Best, 2020) that are seen by experts as competencies that teachers will need by the year 2030. The participants are 67 EFL teachers affiliated to the English language Institute, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. An exhaustive 35 item questionnaire with a section each devoted to teachers' general, digital, and assessment competency. Results indicate that EFL teachers at the ELI, Jazan University are competent, digital literate and use online assessment at high levels. The study found only one significant difference attributed to teachers' use of technology across gender. The study recommends EFL teachers at the ELI, the university to cope with the new and emerging needs of the digital learners.

Keywords: competency level, online learning, assessment, EFL teachers, university education

1. Introduction

Online learning has finally found its permanent place across the globe. For teachers this has brought in its wake the new role of facilitators in the process of education, and for learners, greater access to learning with low investment, time and place flexible education available to all. In this paradigm, while it is true that most institutions encourage teachers to be trained before they are employed, they are usually not trained for the specific needs that are created by online education. It is important to note here that ICT as a sub-field of teacher training is still not a high priority for training institutions. This can be a subject area of exclusive research. What is notable is that the online education revolution introduced a large number of instructors to the system with little or no formal training as teachers. Conservative estimates place this number at as many as 50000 instructors in the US alone. Saudi Arabia too has seen a proliferation of courses and study options in the virtual domain since the pandemic hit the country in 2020. However, the concern of this study is with the EFL teachers in the formal education sector comprising government established or recognized educational institution (ELI) running online education programs, and more specifically, with the competency profile of these teachers to adopt online teaching.

Despite the many pros that come with online education such as, cost effectiveness, large learner base, access to rural populations, self-paced learning, apart from time-place freedom, virtual education, especially in traditionally face-to-face courses such as EFL, is viewed with some degree of suspicion, and even disbelief. Twigg (2001) points out that the former is seen as subservient to the latter, rather than its equal counterpart. The above research in other countries have shown that certain background knowledge is required to evaluate teachers' skills in the classroom. Many reports on curricula and educational goals and training methods have been undertaken in Saudi Arabia, but none seem to have to do with the skills and involvement of teachers in the learning process. Evaluating education

outcomes is essential to the potential and motivation of students to make rational choices about their success and successes, as well as to improve performance. Teachers in the classroom should be professional and effective. They need to have a comprehensive knowledge of the topic, to be made conscious of the usage of effective learning approaches and strategies, and to use many tools competently and effectively to ensure satisfactory learning and fulfilment of learning objectives in addition to authentic and accurate assessment of learning. This stresses that not only doctrinal skills are essential, but also that the concept of competency evaluation is vital to better education. Classroom appraisal literature often indicates that there are certain shortcomings in classroom processes that need redressal. This raises the question of the definition of competency. The Illinois Faculty Summer Institute compiled a comprehensive definition of competency and concluded that competency would refer to

appropriate prior knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities in a given context that adjust and develop with time and needs in order to effectively and efficiently accomplish a task and that are measured against a minimum standard.

Thus, it is evident that competency is not the attainment of certain attributes or knowledge, rather it is the synergy of knowledge with application of that knowledge in the teaching and assessment process. Further, online education and assessment call for individuals who are 'competent' in this paradigm. The current study is designed to evaluate the competency of English Language Institute, Jazan University EFL teachers in online education and assessment, and to suggest necessary interventions to improve their competencies which may ensure that digital education yields learning outcomes comparable to face-to-face learning.

1.1 Competency Profile for the Digital Teacher (CPDT)

The digital teacher requires certain specialized competencies to fulfill the learning objectives and ensuring that the educational process is effective. The question is, what are these competencies, and how can the forces that shape education in the current futuristic times be identified? Towards this end, research was conducted (Ally, 2019) in six countries via interviews with focus groups and educationists to identify the CPDT that can serve as a blueprint to train and give direction to the online teacher community.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to assess the competency level of English Language Institute, Jazan University EFL teachers in online learning. The study is intended to apply to the larger field of virtual learning which has pushed classrooms to the fringes in the recent times, and it is of great relevance to the Saudi background, where the practice of online learning has been largely a result of the Covid compulsions rather than a choice of the academic community.

This study specifically aims to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What is level of teachers' competency in online teaching of English Language Institute, Jazan University EFL teachers?
2. What are the English Language Institute, Jazan University EFL teachers' ability level to integrate technology in online teaching?
3. How significantly different are the levels of teachers' competency use of technology and online assessment when grouped according to their profile variables?

1.3 Research Problem

The willingness of teachers to understand and use data in classrooms is vital to quality assessment teaching, traditionally recognized as assessment literacy (Hodges, et al, 2019; Seifert & Feliks, 2019). A learning cycle comprises primarily of three integrated elements, namely instruction, learning and assessment. The appraisal is carried out on a regular basis by the administrators, in order to track the method, development, and enhancement of the learning outcomes of the learners (Hadzhikoleva et al., 2019). Furthermore, the review is an effort to evaluate the accomplishment of the curriculum goals. The aim of the appraisal is to collect information which can indicate the students 'degree of competence and performance to meet the program objectives. It may also be used by instructors and school administrators to assess or analyze the quality of learning events, instructional practices and processes. The role of the assessment in the learning phase may thus be said to be of critical significance (Zhang & Nouri, 2020).

In a wider context, assessment is a means to gather and send relevant knowledge and provide an appropriate decision and enhance teaching and learning. Therefore, every measurement activity is a way of intentionally collecting facts or proof on the basis of the details and then judging. In terms of learning activity appraisal, the degree to which learners have accomplished learning outcomes is a structured procedure. Assessment can take the form of a

formative and summative assessment. In the meanwhile, summative assessments are conceived to assess the learner's performance over a defined span of time (Li, 2019).

In addition to the other components, appraisal strategies and success measures are important variables for learning experiences. The curriculum provides a series of timetables and instructions for goals, knowledge and educational materials and the methods needed to execute an education activity to meet relevant education goals. The method of learning then seeks to accomplish the basic skills learned in the program. Meanwhile, assessment are conducted to evaluate and establish the level of essential capacity performance (Könings, et al, 2019; Pastore & Andrade, 2019). Assessment is also directed at assessing the achievements and shortcomings of the learning method to be used as a reference for making decisions and improving the learning process (Di Lascio, Gashi, & Santini, 2018; Xiao & Yang, 2019). A good, structured and accurate assessment system will also facilitate an effective program and the correct way of learning. Assessment consists of a series of activities to gather, analyze and examine data on the learning method and outcomes performed in a systematic and reliable way in order to provide valuable insights for decision-making (Thawabieh, 2017).

There are limited studies of competency assessment of EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia which is a research gap in this study (Alhujaylan, 2019; Aljoudi, 2019; Alsoliman, 2018; Daif-Allah & Aljumah, 2020). Nevertheless, the inconveniences of online assessment performed by ELI, Jazan University entail student indifference, contradictory appraisal and incoherence of expert assessment. Any students who have carried out peer assessments made small or ambiguous remarks, which have discouraged evaluated students from knowing or improving their analysis. Teachers should honestly and thoroughly discuss assessment criteria with students. They further suggest that teachers follow up on the marking process consistently to avoid unfair reviews from students.

2. Review of the Literature

There is an increasing need for improved usage of assessment findings to enhance student performance (Alharbi & Surur, 2019; Alsuhaymi & Alzebidi, 2019). Nevertheless, there is little awareness in the study literature regarding expertise and abilities regarding professionals in analyzing and utilizing curriculum evidence to strengthen teaching and learning in classrooms (Alshenqeeti, 2019). Classroom assessments involve a consistent learning and facilitation cycle in order to recognize student achievement. Classroom review requires a method of selection, examination and interpretation continuously in order to enhance the demands of the class through studying (Natalia, et al, 2018). Successful assessment will offer a concise analysis of students' success and therefore enable educators, parents and teachers to take follow-up steps to enhance their academic results. In this phase, teachers must perform their role successfully in carrying out class assessment in order to accomplish their goals. Teachers are responsible for the development of efficient learning methods of excellent pupils. Evidence reveals, however, that teachers have no experience in materials, pedagogical techniques, tools, technology and communication (Al-Ahdal & Algouzi, 2021; Coombs et al, 2018; Zamri & Hamzah, 2019 ;). Training will accomplish its aims by including two-way student-to-teach experiences (Mahamod & Lim, 2011). Two-way learning will improve the cognitive abilities of students and contribute to strong student expertise of training and instructional practice. Nonetheless, there are several classes of teachers that also do not have two-way instruction to ease the assessment efficiently, even though the education program promotes students to study at the maximum standard among the teachers.

Curriculum abilities measured by master's degree in topic matter, system of instruction, exam readiness, state requirement and pupil requirements for learning. Callow (2018) claimed that the successful implementation of the program came from a specific professor's awareness about his current topic. The instructor understands the requirements laid out for the degree, results level and basic program text in the elementary school program. That instructor must have a wide variety of expertise and can also be enhanced to fulfill the current research requirements. Teachers will always recognize the core principles and the nature of the subjects taught. Topic expertise is an essential factor in incorporating high-quality education, according to Netherlands Teacher Educators. The skills of teachers in the program are essential for the conduct of classroom evaluations. The results of teaching and studying should also be better managed. The core purpose of the assessment is to prepare for the next phase of learning, which includes improving student mastery and progress. That is a framework for the review of program creation and administration in the school organization. The goal is to enhance teacher and student learning.

Andrade and Brookhart (2016) reported that teachers regularly engage in continuous professional development activities. Students will ought to supply the students with information and skills. In this group, teachers will also be eager and able to support other skilled teachers. Teachers can develop more successful strategies to address everyday demands with extra resources. More funding frequently helps schools attract and direct teachers on the path to successful partners.

In line with Zamri and Hamzah (2019) it is noted that trained teachers are teachers who contribute facets of professionalism in education such as the exchange of information and actions across the formal or informal contexts. For starters, seminars, workshops, colleges and individual seminars aimed at enhancing instruction, and students learn at the highest stage. Professional growth is also a means for teachers to know, so that they can enhance their competence and maximize their student's success (Al-Ahdal & Alharbi, 2021; Tabuena, 2019). It is necessary to continue this initiative as the new improvements in the curriculum allow the implementation teachers to make a high degree of dedication to maximize their positions in this organization (Hussain, Idris, & Akhtar, 2019). The process of continual development means that teachers continually strive to solve the learning difficulties of students and enhance their results.

For an implementer, teachers need a high level of ability in performing the function and obligation of a successful learning appraisal program. Classroom assessment is a method of gathering evidence on learning from students through evaluating, rating, analyzing knowledge and reflecting on outcomes from students to parents. Parents may not be conscious of the determination that they are unified in their commitment to provide every child with great education every day. The classroom capabilities are the most important school districts to meet this requirement. Competency is a criterion that defines the efficiency and success of an employee's job. Professional skills are the requirements for teachers who develop different professional competences in order to meet current educational demands and improve their expertise in carrying out evaluations. Competence included a professional decision that involved expertise, professional competence, experience and participation of students in fulfilling the obligation for carrying out the classroom evaluation. These components include teacher awareness, expertise and a positive attitude in order to provide accurate evaluation of the classroom in schools.

2.1 Competency Profile of the Digital Teacher (Ally, 2019)

Based on data collected from focus groups and interviews with educationists across six countries, Ally (2019) developed a CPDT summarizing the competencies required by teachers to function effectively in the virtual classroom. He cites Schmidt's (2017) Fourth Industrial Revolution as an age that will demand of the teachers to train their learners for jobs that do not exist in the present but will appear on the horizon given the emerging technologies and knowledge explosion that is rapidly overtaking the conventional classrooms. This will also create a demand for lifelong learning skills development if these future workers are to stay relevant to their times. With this forecast, teacher education and training need to undergo a paradigm shift, while the current incumbents need to bring themselves up to speed to stay active in the workforce. Mitra (2014) points out that education will rely heavily on technology as a delivery and support tool for the learners. Further, learning will be more learner-centered and individualized which will call for "digital" teachers to take the call.

What makes Ally's CPDT unique is the fact that the experts were asked to think ahead to the year 2030 when identifying the competencies that the digital teacher will require to provide an education that fulfilled the new needs of the learners. This data was in the form of independent written write ups and hence, the amount of time spent by wash contributor in specifying the competencies could not be determined. Finally, the competencies cited by the respondents were grouped under major themes, and the draft competency profile was forwarded to two academicians for validation. The suggestions that came forth were minor which were incorporated into the final CPDT.

The competencies identified in Ally's (2019) study are of two types: General, and Digital, but both are those that will be required by the digital teaching community to meet learner needs in the new academic order. It is projected that the CPDT can be a reference point to train and orient teachers in the digital age. A total of 105 competencies under nine major areas of responsibilities for the digital teacher have been identified in this study, including, general, personal characteristics, pedagogical strategies, assessment of learning, learning facilitation, communication with learners, use of technology, re-mixing of learning resources, and development of digital learning resources. Of these, the competencies categorized under 'general' and 'use of technology' are of specific relevance to the current studies since these are at the very base of the CPDT rubric and the EFL teachers of the ELI, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia, with their nascent steps into fully digitized learning being recent, must strive to achieve these before the other competencies which are of a more specialized nature. Accordingly, the questionnaire is focused on these two areas of CPDT.

3. Methodology

The present study applies the CPDT rubric developed and validated by Ally (2019) to ascertain the level of teaching and assessment competency of the English Language Institute EFL teachers in Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. The researcher used Ally's (2019) CPDT General Competencies (N= 12) and Use Digital Technology Competencies (N= 15) in addition to Best's (2020) Online Assessment Strategies for Distance Teachers and Learners (N= 8) to prepare a

35 item questionnaire to gather CPDT data from a sample of 270 EFL teachers at the English Language Institute, Jazan University. The questionnaires were administered online and only 67 respondents participated in the study. The other teachers who did not participate did not cite any issues as the reason for non-participation. The questionnaires were sent out with University permission in the third week of September 2021 with a request for reverts within three weeks from the date of receipt. All respondents reverted within the stipulated period, this was followed up with analysis of the data.

The questionnaire items required the respondents to choose one of the five options based on the five-point Likert Scale with choices varying from Totally Agree (5) to Totally Disagree (1), with instructions to leave no item unmarked. Table 1 below summarizes the cumulative responses to the questionnaire. The reliability of the survey was checked using Cronbach's Alpha, as displayed in Table 1. It scored .79 which is considered a good consistency level.

Table 1. Reliability test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.796	35

The participants' demographical data will be presented. Sixty-one percent of the participants are males while thirty nine percent are females, see Figure 1. They were distributed among three teaching positions. Nearly about eighy-three of them are instructors/lecturers, while 15% are assistant professors and only one of the participants is an associate professor, see Figure 2. They shared different teaching experiences. Finally, 41% of the participants have been teaching English more than ten years, while 30% less than ten years. Furthermore, 15.7 % of them have been teaching for more than 20 years and only 8.6 % more than 31 years, see Figure 3.

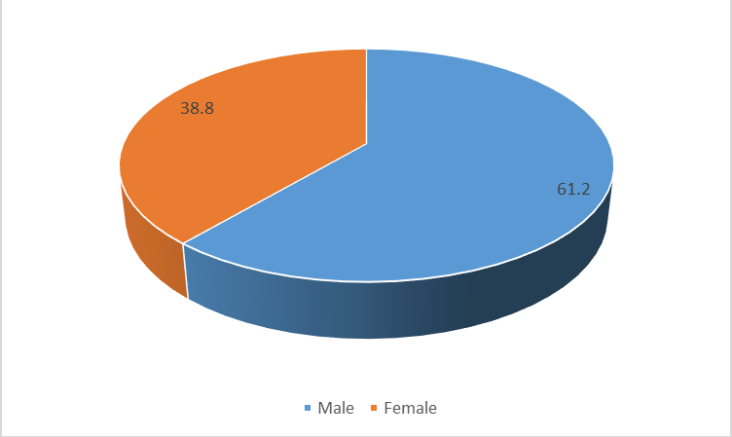

Figure 1. Gender

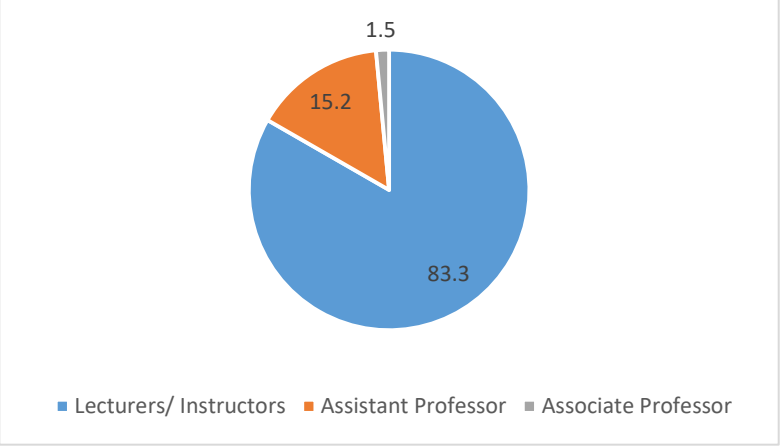

Figure 2. Teaching positions

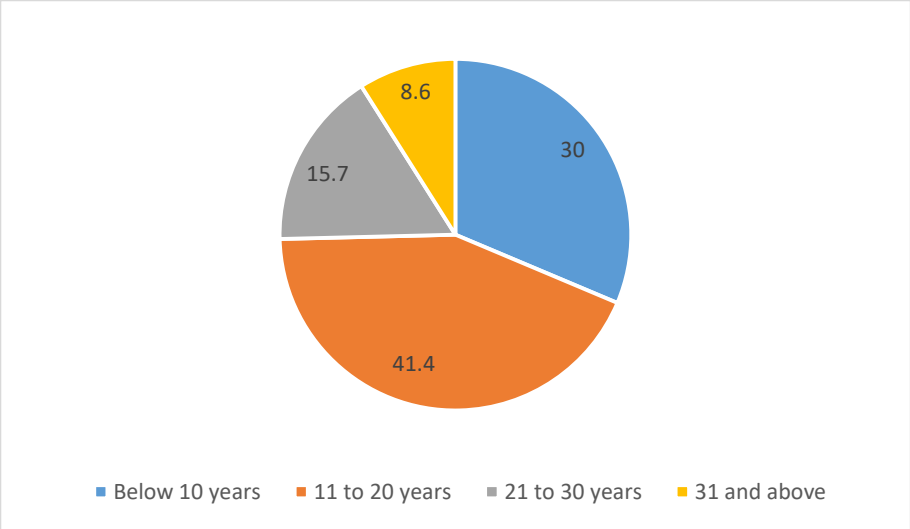

Figure 3. Years of services

4. Results

Results of the study will be classified according to the three research questions. The first research question aims to investigate teachers' digital literacy in virtual teaching.

RQ1: What is level of teachers' competency in online teaching of English Language Institute, Jazan University EFL teachers? Table 2 shows that the questionnaire items 1-12 dealt with the general competencies required in the digital teaching of 2030. The findings show that the teachers reported high competency in online teaching with a mean score and standard deviations of (4.0643, 0.38315) respectively.

Items 1, 2, 3, 8 pertained to teachers' ability to explore and exploit the possibilities of virtual education as in ensuring smooth contact with the learners, being available to learners at any time and place, and having adequate knowledge of latest technology to benefit the learners to the optimum. Mean scores of (3.8209, 4.1493, 2.7273 & 4.1940).

to these queries show that EFL teachers at the English Language Institute, Jazan University are equipped to make the most of virtual education and this calls for more comprehensive inquiry to understand the causes.

Table 2. Teachers' general competency in online teaching

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I am comfortable working in a virtual environment.	3.8209	.83349
2. My support is available to learners irrespective of time and place.	4.1493	.98863
3. I feel constrained by time and place in teaching EFL online.	2.7273	.93719
4. My EFL classes also comprise life skills training for learners.	3.8507	.97318
5. I stay updated with latest educational technologies in foreign language teaching.	4.1940	.78313
6. My content knowledge is updated.	4.4179	.55457
7. I encourage my learners to be good citizens.	4.6269	.51745
8. I possess basic knowledge of AI application in language learning-teaching.	4.1940	.72276
9. I have get knowledge of the latest trends in ELT.	4.2388	.71963
10. I interact virtually with my peers to share information on my learners' progress	4.1493	.67988
11. I share effective ELT pedagogies with my peers	4.0746	.78458
12. I prepare my learners to live in harmony with the environment around them.	4.2985	.73886
Sum	4.0643	.38315

Responses to items 5, 6, 9 (items that elicited responses on subject area knowledge and updated inputs) scored (4.1940, 4.4179 & 4.2388) respectively. It shows that, in general, these EFL teachers possessed high knowledge in subject knowledge which may be attributed to long hours of teaching duties at the Saudi universities.

Further, teacher collaboration in sharing teaching experience and resources is poor as reflected in response to items 10 and 11 which show (M = 4.1493, 4.0746) that EFL teachers are mostly fend for themselves with little peer assistance which was natural in face-to-face classes when teachers had ample opportunities to interact with each other, and share their experiences which could be guidelines for others. Finally, three items that deal with EFL teachers' contribution in making the learners into global are well-rounded beings. It appears from responses to items 4, 7, 12 (M= 3.8507, 4.6269 & 4.2985) that teachers are aware of their larger role as guides and philosophers to their learners. So far, teachers' competency in using virtual teaching was presented. Below, the method of assessment will be presented under the second research question.

The second research question: RQ2. What are the English Language Institute, Jazan University EFL teachers' ability level to integrate technology in online teaching? Table 3 presents the responses to the 'use of digital technology competencies' extended from items 13- 27 in the questionnaire. Teachers reported high ability level in integrating technology in teaching with a total mean score and standard deviations of (4.2324 & .47426) respectively.

Item 13, which is also the first query in this category, response in favour with all participants acknowledging their digital literacy. However, items 14, 18, 21, 26, pertaining to the ability to integrate technology or associated tools into the curriculum or teaching process indicate that teachers are fully equipped to do so. Further, items 15, 19, 24, 25 which dealt with teachers' comfort with technology use and technological ability to manage obstacles (troubleshoot) were high. This finding is corroborated by responses to items 16, 23, 27 which elicited information on teachers' ability to understand learners' needs and fulfill them. Only items 17 showed that teachers reported medium ability (M= 3.7313, Std= .82723) in integrating technology with people of special needs.

Finally, items 20, 22 under this category, which pertain to teachers' competency to adapt materials and technology to be in sync, indicate a negative feedback as teachers acknowledge a high positive.

Table 3. Teachers' use of technology in teaching

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
13- I am digitally literate.	4.3333	.73030
14- It is easy for me to integrate technology in my curriculum.	4.3433	.64084
15- Technology use is comfortable for me.	4.4478	.55823
16- I monitor individual learner progress.	4.1791	.81511
17- I am able to use assistive technologies to support learners with special needs.	3.7313	.82723
18- My online classes integrate multiple technology realities to give a real-life experience to learners.	4.1493	.67181
19- I can manage basic technology problems in my online teaching process.	4.2985	.65169
20- My lessons are adaptable to changing technologies.	4.2388	.65342
21- I use multimedia technologies to vary the formats of my materials.	4.2424	.67297
22- It is easy for me to learn new technologies independently.	4.1493	.83944
23- Technology helps me provide efficient support to my learners.	4.3939	.74167
24- I am conscious of the technology that is most appropriate for my learners.	4.1642	.66508
25- I make an effort to explore new learning technologies.	4.1818	.82105
26- I make use of the features of the technology I am applying to enrich the learning process.	4.2985	.62801
27-Being conscious of my learners' learning needs, I adapt technology accordingly.	4.3433	.64084
Total	4.2324	.47426

RQ3. How significantly different are the levels of teachers' competency use of technology and online assessment when grouped according to their profile variables? Before answering this question, a brief summary of the teachers' use of online assessment will be stated. The last section of the questionnaire comprised 8 items to form a digital profile of the EFL teachers at the English Language Institute, Jazan University to conduct online assessments. The model used here was an exhaustive collection of online assessment strategies proposed by Best (2020). It is educative to note that only two (29, 34) of these best practices are followed by the EFL teachers at the English Language Institute, Jazan University. The strategies are independent projects, and video presentations and podcasts. Other activities which call for collective effort such as peer assessment, project work, shared assignments, self-assessment rubrics, learning journals, LMS, and online message boards are not used for assessment. These responses are in line with those in the earlier parts of the questionnaire, such as, where teachers reported that that did not use all available tools in the technology applied for EFL in their classes, or expressed their limitations with technology use. According to Table 4, teachers responded positively to all the various adaptability of assessment

strategies with high general mean score and standard deviations of (3.8080 & .44924) respectively. Only for two of the assessment strategies i.e. items 32 and 33teachers responded in moderate level, whereas in the remaining items, teachers scored nearly high level in applying assessment strategies.

Table 4. Teachers' adaption to online assessment

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
28- I encourage learners to evaluate their peers as part of the assessment process.	3.9851	.68518
29- Independent projects are a regular feature of my assessment procedure.	3.879	.7945
30- Learners' collaboration through shared projects is included in my assessment.	3.8507	.83944
31- I frequently assign self-assessment rubrics to my learners.	3.8507	.76384
32- Maintenance of learning journals by my learners on specific aspects of learning constitute my assessment system.	3.4627	.82257
33- I use LMS or learning portfolios to assess my learners online.	3.6515	.61999
34- I include video presentations and podcasts as assessment tools in my EFL classes.	3.8485	.88130
35- I assess my learners using online message boards where we undertake discussions as part of the online assessment process.	3.9254	.78458
Average	3.8080	.44924

To answer RQ3, a Three-Ways Annova was applied to compare between teachers' competency in technology, use of technology in teaching, and online assessment in accordance with gender, teaching position and years of teaching. According to Table 4, there is no significance differences between teachers' competency in technology according to the gender, teaching position and year of teaching. Sig. values are bigger than .05 (Sig. = .406, .*380* and .875) respectively. Teachers' use of technology was also compared with the three variables.

The study found that there is significant differences between teachers' use of technology and gender. The Sig. value is significant (Sig. =.029). It is less than .05. To decide which sex is superior to the other in using technology, the researcher needed to check the mean scores for both. Males scored 4.327 whereas females scored 4.095, see Table 6. It can be drawn that the significant value is associated with the bigger mean score, i.e., male. Finally, the study reported that there is no significant differences in teachers' use of online assessment across gender, teaching position and years of teaching. Sig. values in tables 4 show that (Sig. = .186, .676 & .271) respectively. All are greater than 0.05.

Table 5. Three-Way ANOVA comparison between dependent and independent variables

	General Competency					Use of Technology					Online Assessment				
Independent variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	.111	1	.111	.703	.406	1.054	1	1.054	5.023	.029	.349	1	.349	1.799	.186
Teaching Poistion	.311	2	.155	.985	.380	.600	2	.300	1.429	.249	.136	2	.068	.351	.676
Years of Teaching	.109	3	.036	.230	.875	.593	3	.198	.942	.427	.780	3	.260	1.339	.271
Error	8.367	53	.158			11.120	53	.210			10.291	53	.194		
Total	1096.201	66				1190.054	66				966.822	66			
Corrected Total	9.496	65				14.247	65				13.122	65			

Table 6. Statistic of independent variable and genders

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
General competency	Male	41	4.0604	.38088	.05948
	Female	26	4.0705	.39419	.07731
Use of technology	Male	41	4.2335	.45724	.07141
	Female	26	4.2308	.50920	.09986
Online assessments	Male	41	3.8479	.49560	.07740
	Female	26	3.7452	.36483	.07155

7. Discussion

The study showed that the English Language Institute EFL teachers have high competence in technology. This finding is a result of the high efforts that the English Language Institute, Jazan University paid in the pre-pandemic times, to train in-service teachers to cope with the challenges of transition to virtual teaching mode. This finding is in line with Andrade and Brookhart (2016) who reported that teachers regularly engage in continuous professional development activities, which enhance their abilities. This finding is still a debatable though. Some may criticize it as it just stemmed from perceptions. Nevertheless, it contradicted with Hazaea et al., (2021) who reported that elder teachers found it difficult to cope with the teaching online, as it required many preparations.

The study also reported high level of teachers' ability to integrate technology in teaching. This finding is a result of the high care and efforts of the English Language Institute, Jazan University and the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom made to digitize teachers' experience in online teaching. This finding, however, it needs more justification, seems natural due to the high working hours that teachers did through Covid-19 overspread. In contrast, many researchers showed that teachers have no experience in integration technology in teaching (Al-Ahdal & Algouzi, 2021; Coombs et al, 2018; Zamri & Hamzah, 2019).

Finally, the study found that there is only one significant difference in the use of technology across gender. However, there is no significance differences between teachers' competency of technology and the use of online assessment attributed to gender, teaching position of years of teaching experience. This finding means that male teachers integrated technology in teaching more than female teachers. It can be justified to the more duties that female teachers have in their families.

Teachers owned the same relative competency in technology and the use of online assessment. It can be justified to the new shift from conventional assessment in face to face using a paper and pen to an online platform. Bin-Hady et al., (2020) found that the gender did not play significant role in using language learning strategies in online environment between Saudi and Yemeni learners.

8. Conclusions

The study set out to create an online education and assessment competency profile of the EFL teachers at the English Language Institute, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. The stimulus for undertaking this was the need to evaluate how far the teachers were competent to fulfil the emerging needs of the digital learners, both in the immediate context of the pandemic, and in the projections for the coming years as education all over the world is moving towards the virtual mode. The study reported high competency level, high level of integration technology in teaching and high level of using online assessment. It also found that there in only one significant difference in one of the variable, integration of technology in teaching across gender. Amongst the other variables, teachers' competence, and use of online assessment were no significant differences. Some limitations were obvious in this study. The researcher just used a survey to collect data form the teachers. Thus, the findings reached at could not be generalized or even build any conceptions on them. There is a need to duplicate the same study using triangulations which assured the validity of the finings. It is more natural if students were integrating in this sampling. It definitely gives more accurate results. The findings call for pursing similar correlation studies between students and teachers' attitudes. Furthermore, it is recommended to conduct a qualitative research to confirm or refute the findings of this study.

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