





# A study of palestinian students' perspectives on their willingness to communicate with foreigners in English

Husam Qaddumi <sup>a,1,\*</sup> , Matt Smith <sup>b,2</sup> 

<sup>a</sup> Department of Languages, Al Istiqlal University, Jericho, Palestine

<sup>b</sup> School of Education, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

<sup>1</sup> dr.hussamqadomi@pass.ps \*; <sup>2</sup> matt.smith@wlv.ac.uk

\* corresponding author

## ARTICLE INFO

Received 2024-03-01

Revised 2024-04-10

Accepted 2024-04-15

Published 2024-04-30

### Keywords

Willingness to Communicate

WTC

EFL

Palestine

## ABSTRACT

Willingness to communicate (WTC) in a foreign language (FL) has become one of the most important affective variables in the context of learning a foreign language including motivation, anxiety, learner beliefs, and many others. This study looks into the underlying causes of English students' propensity to speak English, particularly in higher education settings after the Covid-19 pandemic. The study also determines the WTC of college students in English classes. One thousand students who are presently enrolled in English programs at Palestinian universities constitute the study's participants. The study employed a descriptive research design: a questionnaire was used to collect the data, which were then analyzed using statistical analysis methods in the SPSS program. The findings of the study indicated that the two primary factors negatively affecting the WTC among English learners in Palestine's colleges and universities were personality traits and a lack of confidence in one's speaking abilities.



This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



## 1. Introduction

The teaching-learning process has altered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on interactions between instructors and students in postsecondary educational institutions. Universities were compelled by the pandemic to carry out all of their operations with students virtually [1]. Colleges all across the world started using online learning, and numerous governments took action to stop the virus spreading and to guarantee the continuation of the educational process. While online instruction is typically considered a complement to traditional learning rather than a replacement, Barona noted that, during the coronavirus outbreak, it became essential to the operation of schools and colleges [2]. This paradigm shift may have an impact on how students view this teaching approach. English is the common language used by more people than any other language in the current globalized era, and is employed by people from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Many English dialects have emerged as a result of the global ubiquity of English [3]. Kumar et al. further note that a greater number of individuals now speak English as a second language (L2) than those who speak English as their first language (L1) [3]. As a result, there are English language learners and native speakers, and they need to communicate with one another [2]. Due to its flexibility and student-centered approach, e-learning offers several benefits to students. It can also increase engagement as it offers both synchronous and asynchronous tools such as chat rooms, email, and forums. WTC, or willingness to communicate, can be nurtured and developed through e-learning [4]. Internet technologies also make it possible to distribute material to many different users simultaneously [5], [6]. E-learning platforms offer learners a number of advantages, such as control when accessing material, control over the amount of time they spend learning, and the flexibility to customize the process to meet their needs and achieve their learning goals. This could facilitate improved interaction with students, and e-learning might facilitate better learning for students despite certain intrinsic challenges brought about by local contexts – for example, the Covid pandemic or the current

geopolitical difficulties in, e.g., Palestine and the Ukraine [7]. In Palestine, learning English is mandatory from the very start of a child's education, along with other fundamental subjects. Students must pass each class's English course in order to move on to the next level. Children therefore study English for almost ten years before submitting an application to a university. Nonetheless, it is alarming to learn that a sizable portion of university graduates majoring in English-medium teaching are unable to speak fluently in the language when required to do so in front of an audience but faced with anxiety [8]. For students, communicating in English is a difficult task. Nonetheless, there is little information on students' willingness to communicate (hereafter WTC) in the English language in Palestinian higher education institutions. As a result, the study problem is illustrated by determining the elements that either support or impede students' WTC. Furthermore, it is currently unknown how students believe they are to communicate in English in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) during the period of transition. The following research questions are the focus of this study; (1) Which factors do students think affect their WTC in English language proficiency?; (2) What degree of willingness to communicate (WTC) do Palestinian students feel they have?; (3) Are there correlations between gender, English language proficiency and the WTC level of Palestinian students?

More than the ability alone, it is the willingness to communicate in English, or WTC, that we see as essential as it sets the stage for the growth of communication abilities and influences language learning in general. The two main (perceived) challenges in EFL (English as a foreign language) settings are a lack of target language proficiency and opportunities for meaningful communication, since conversation is learned through meaningful communication. Communication is essential for second language learners because it allows them to interact with others and negotiate meaning. This process improves acquisition because it allows the learners to receive feedback on how well they are using the language [9]. Most students rely on the language input of the teacher and opportunities for communication with other learners in the classroom. Whether or not students make use of these opportunities depends on their willingness to engage in active learning and speak up in class Taglialatela [10]. Global research into emergency online language instruction was prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, Law et al. examined the rapid shift in higher education language programs from traditional to online instruction in Hong Kong [11], and Alhaider sought to observe whether and how the sudden transition to language education via the internet affected the methods used by language teachers for instruction and assessment [12]. Bai examined the behaviors, attitudes, and viewpoints of Chinese college students regarding the study of foreign languages online, as well as the associated factors [13]. Kaspar et al. noted how, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, university students encountered unforeseen obstacles when attempting to learn remotely [14]. Research from both before and during the early stages of the pandemic [1], demonstrates that different students may have different online learning experiences depending on a number of personal factors.

In a study conducted by Smith et al. examined the extremely unique situation of Palestinians using technological devices to learn English, it was found that, while colonialism permeates most aspects of language learning through digital technology, it is particularly evident for English language learners who are Palestinian [15]. While examination, consciousness, and critical thinking can lead to decolonization, it is also necessary to acknowledge the impact of culture and, in Palestine's case, the historic and ongoing effects of trauma, occupation, and displacement [16]. However, decolonization is problematic because Palestinians need to engage globally in politics, economy, and education [17]. During the 16-month COVID-19 pandemic-induced suspension of in-person instruction, Elhawa et al. conducted a study to examine the attitudes and ideas of five EFL instructors who worked for a Palestinian university [18]. The instructors had switched to online emergency remote instruction. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data during the educational institution's closure. Thematic analysis of the collected data revealed that the teachers, three of whom had no prior experience teaching online, encountered difficulties but ultimately adjusted to the circumstances. Over the duration of the study, a common theme of uncertainty in the teachers' work lives and practices emerged. Three types of classroom impacts were found to be the main contributing factors: labor-intensive instruction conditions, inadequate e-learning infrastructure, and the shock shift to e-learning. At the conclusion of the study, all of the educators agreed that the importance of online learning to Palestine's educational system would only increase, and four of them expressed a willingness to continue teaching online. This study adds to the body of knowledge on the implementation of online education at colleges in developing nations by outlining related advantages and difficulties as well as the impact that both cultural and physical circumstances can have on the shift to online learning. Khawaja et al. presciently looking at the use of English as a mediation tool between Israeli and Palestinian communicants, noted that WTC serves as a vehicle for aiming for improved understanding

and communication between the two linguistic communities, which may promote harmony and understanding throughout the area [19]. Of course, either side could consider the use of learning Hebrew or Arabic, but our main concern here is with the ways in which the common use of English serves as a mediator, or can serve as one.

Zayed et al. studied how 24 high School students in Palestine viewed learning English [20]. Their findings demonstrated that a learner's motivation and attitudes are influenced in part by the social environment in which they flourish. Even in the best of circumstances, learners are driven to learn or are compelled to give up on the process due to their individual differences and personalities. The findings also showed that students think it is important to study English and its culture. It was discovered that the learners' motivation and attitude were influenced by their levels level of proficiency, and that there was a cultural divide between their home and the target cultures. The students also stated that they would like to be exposed to the target society more. Peer pressure, teachers' personalities and support, parents' involvement and support, motivation, anxiety, and the position of the English language as a common language were identified as the major reasons for such attitudes. Al-Safadi et al. studied how to create an online learning environment that would help students in the tenth grade become more proficient speakers of English through artificial intelligence and proficiency [21]. Seventy female secondary school students from Palestine participated in a quasi-experimental study. The experimental group used an online learning environment to receive instruction, whereas the participants in the control group were instructed using traditional methods. The results indicated a noteworthy distinction in the post-speaking skills test scores between the two cohorts, implying that mastery could be attained through e-learning, results somewhat supported by Qaddumi et al [6].

The main objective of instructing and studying a second language (SL) or foreign language (FL) is to increase the communicative skills of the students [22]. In contemporary language instruction, effective communication is highly regarded, and students of languages who achieve this receive praise [23]. As a result, according to Sato et al. teachers of communicative languages are eager to have students who are willing to use language in the classroom [24]. Participation by learners is encouraged in interpersonal language classes, though it is arguable as to the extent that students' use of the target language in class contributes to successful classroom interactions. The importance of linguistic competence is emphasized in the modern communicative method of teaching second languages. A few key elements that can enhance students' WTC are the use of smartphones, mobile language learning (MALL), vocabulary acquisition in foreign languages, and communication anxiety [25]. Smartphones are a great teaching tool and a major communication tool for the advancement of educational methodologies generally [26]. According to Wisnuwardana, respondents to their questionnaires and interviews expressed positive opinions about using cellphones for teaching and learning languages [27]. Kacetl et al. claim that using smartphones opens up new possibilities for creativity in language learning and teaching [28]. An innovative use of the Edmodo app was successfully trialed in Bethlehem, allowing EFL students to initiate and carry out conversations in English with native English speakers visiting the city [29].

Studies on the aspects of higher education languages classes that most influenced students' WTC have identified variables affecting the willingness of learners to communicate [30]. Several variables were found to have an impact on student WTC. For instance, the ease with which speaking assignments are completed, the classroom environment, and instruction catered to the individual competency level of each student. To increase student engagement, Matuzas further suggested EFL teachers should become knowledgeable about their students' social and educational backgrounds and to practise the assessment and placement process [30]. Numerous factors, such as topic, context, perceived ability to communicate, communication anxiety, and enthusiasm, have been found to impact students' WTC [31]. Teachers of English should be aware, according to Wang et al. that giving students enough time to reflect can boost their motivation to speak or enhance their communication abilities in the language [32]. In direct opposition to this is the rote learning model with few opportunities for language practice and dialogue that is still the norm in many Palestinian contexts [33]–[35]. In English-language classes at universities in Bangladesh, Alam et al. carried out a qualitative study on the students' willingness to communicate (WTC). Children start learning English at a young age because it is a required subject in this country [36]. However, learners' speech abilities are not considered enough when they reach university for tertiary education, even after nearly a decade of studying English. They have been known to refuse to communicate with people on occasion. Using a multiple case study approach (WTC) comprising ten private university undergraduates, it was found

that these students' earlier experiences with studying English were favorable, but they believed that grammar-based English learning is a barrier to their oral communication development. The research also shows that the classroom environment has a big influence on students' WTC, whether it promotes or inhibits their desire to communicate with others. More practice in English classrooms by involving students in real-life focused interactions, and other activities, according to the findings, can improve learners' WTC (see also Itmeizah, Khalil et al. [1], Bakeer [37], Dweikat et al. [37] for similar outcomes in Palestinian contexts). As a result, policymakers and language teachers would be better able to analyze the issue and come up with timely remedies if learners' actual perspectives were heard.

Noorbar et al. carried out a study on the effects of the switching of codes on the oral proficiency, accuracy, and interactions willingness of Iranian kindergarten EFL learners [38]. According to the study, experts have differed on whether native languages spoken by second-language students in the classroom are acceptable, each one having their own justifications. The study examined the effects of code-switching (CS) on the oral fluency, accuracy, and communication readiness of preschool EFL learners to try and ascertain which of the competing theories stood up in the Iranian context. The study involved the selection of sixty EFL students in upper elementary school. The students were divided into two groups – the experimental group and the control group – after finishing the Key English Test (KET). Homogeneity was ensured by doing this. A quasi-experimental design was used for this investigation. Oral accuracy and fluency of learners were evaluated using pre- and post-tests on verbal communication skills from KETs to determine whether or not there was a significant improvement during the intervention. Specific information about students' willingness to communicate in both environments of the classroom inside and outside was obtained through a WTC survey. The results demonstrated that CS had a positive effect on the participants' oral correctness, fluency, and WTC. The study's conclusions may be useful to practitioners of English language teaching (ELT) and those who create instructional materials.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Sample

1002 Palestinian EFL students from seven Palestinian universities make up the sample. An Arabic translation of the survey was given to the participants. The instrument had been translated into Arabic and then edited, revised, and discussed with a colleague who is a translation instructor. The description is clear in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Sample based on the study variables

Variable	Scale	N
Gender	Male	492
	Female	510
	Total	1002
Competence in English language	Beginner	300
	Intermediate	502
	Upper intermediate	100
	Advanced	100
	Total	1002

### 2.2. Instrumentation

This study employed a quantitative approach. Before being administered to the participants, we adapted and developed a five-point Likert questionnaire and open-ended questions about factors contributing to WTC, positively or negatively. In the first section of the survey, participants were requested to supply their gender and level of English language proficiency as personal information. The second section of the questionnaire asked participants to self-report their WTC in relation to the study's objectives. The participants then answered the questionnaire items. These consisted of fifty-four statements divided into seven domains. The instrument also included open-ended question to identify factors which influence WTC negatively or positively. We designed 29 questions to evaluate the factors that negatively or positively affect the WTC in English, based on previously validated and employed questions and question types in the research literature [38]–[41].

## 3. Results and Discussion

The first research question identified which factors students think affect their WTC in English language proficiency. Table 2 explains the results.

**Table 2.** Factors that Students Believe Influence their WTC in English Language in Online Classes

Statement		Positive influence	Negative influence	Mean	Standard division
Class size	N	540	170	2.44	0.71
	%	76%	24%		
Vocabulary stock	N	360	250	2.10	0.61
	%	59%	41%		
Teachers' behavior	N	840	60	3.10	0.86
	%	93%	7%		
Classroom online environment	N	620	210	2.86	0.83
	%	75%	25%		
L2 anxiety	N	570	190	2.62	0.76
	%	75%	25%		
Lack of actual pronunciation	N	620	210	2.86	0.83
	%	75%	25%		
Shyness to speak online	N	610	170	2.86	0.78
	%	78%	22%		
Peers' attitude	N	300	450	2.58	0.75
	%	40%	60%		
Fear of making mistakes	N	620	180	2.75	0.80
	%	78%	23%		
Learners' views	N	50	22	2.48	0.72
	%	69%	31%		
Online learning motivation	N	88	5	3.20	0.93
	%	95%	5%		
Metacognition of oral communication	N	320	290	2.10	0.69
	%	52%	48%		
Universal attitude	N	380	340	2.03	0.66
	%	53%	47%		
Communicative assurance	N	330	370	2.11	0.79
	%	47%	53%		
Competency in English	N	520	170	2.02	0.55
	%	75%	25%		
Level of confidence	N	640	120	1.90	0.77
	%	84%	16%		
Foreign language enjoyment	N	180	370	1.89	0.42
	%	33%	67%		
Use of English by the L2 instructors	N	700	140	1.98	0.51
	%	83%	17%		
Technology (e.g. voice search)	N	570	200	2.07	0.72
	%	74%	26%		
Teachers' positive and direct involvement	N	630	180	2.14	0.67
	%	78%	22%		
L2 competence	N	540	160	2.04	0.88
	%	77%	23%		
The way of teaching (for example, grammar-based learning)	N	630	130	2.08	0.74
	%	83%	17%		
Previous experience of learning English	N	350	220	1.96	0.49
	%	61%	39%		
Interaction with natives online	N	320	300	2.13	0.68
	%	52%	48%		
Interaction among the students	N	380	220	2.01	0.61
	%	63%	37%		
Unwillingness to communicate using English online	N	440	150	2.03	0.66
	%	75%	25%		
Group activities	N	400	290	2.13	0.56
	%	58%	42%		
Students speak in their native language	N	360	200	1.96	0.76
	%	64%	36%		
Suitable setting for beginning English instruction in the first grade of primary school	N	610	150	1.93	0.65
	%	80%	20%		
Mean					2.45
Std. Deviation					0.35

Table 2 shows that the mean of the respondents was 2.45 while the largest arithmetic mean was for the learning motivation item (3.20), followed by the teacher behavior item (3.10), followed equally

by the classroom environment items, the lack of actual pronunciation and shyness (2.86), then The fear of making mistakes (2.75) clause is in addition to the L2 anxiety (2.62) clause, and then the rest of the clauses. As for the standard deviation of respondents from the questionnaire (0.35), the learning motivation item had the largest share (0.93), followed by L2 skill (0.88), then teachers' behavior (0.86), and followed equally by classroom environment and L2 anxiety (0.83). Table 2 also shows that, on this section of the questionnaire, participants agree that there are a moderate amount of factors that can either positively or negatively impact students' WTC in the English language. We asked students how they perceive their WTC level and how the Palestinian students feel when they communicate in the English language using a Likert scale of 0-5 (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Means, Percentages and SDs of Students Perception of their Level of WTC in English Online Classes

Statement	Mean	SD	Percentage
If I meet some foreigner on online or everywhere; I hope to get a chance to talk to them	4.68	0.47	93.6%
When I encounter foreign students in my online instruction who are struggling because they don't speak our language, I seize the chance to speak with them	3.56	1.58	71.2%
I would like to accompany some foreigners for a whole day and be their guide for free	4.40	0.78	88.0%
If someone introduces me to a foreigner on social media, I often try to test my communication skills and talk to him	4.32	1.06	86.4%
If I meet some English speakers (not their mother tongue) online I hope I get a chance to talk to them.	4.46	0.70	89.2%
Whenever I come across English speakers on social media, I try to think of a reason to chat with them.	4.51	0.56	90.2%
When I come across individuals who speak English as a second language and are struggling as they cannot comprehend our language, I seize the chance to speak with them.	4.10	0.56	82.0%
For free, I would like to go with some English speakers who don't speak it as their first language and act as their tour guide the entire day.	4.26	0.58	85.2%
I want to speak with people who speak English as their first language.	4.28	0.62	85.6%
English speakers have an experience that I would like to share on line.	4.30	0.83	86.0%
I would like to speak English outside of online classes in order to develop my communication skills.	4.32	0.63	86.4%
I like to speak and express my opinions in English and in front of my classmates online and on camera.	4.03	0.72	80.6%
I would like to participate in online group activities that enable me to speak English.	4.17	0.59	83.4%
I am keen to speak with my teachers online in English.	4.14	0.78	82.8%
I like to give speeches in English in front of my classmates online.	4.28	0.62	85.6%
Speaking in front of my friends in an online class is something I enjoy doing.	4.30	0.83	86.0%
Speaking in front of strangers in an online classroom is something I enjoy doing.	4.32	0.63	86.4%
I often ask a lot of questions in English class online.	4.03	0.72	80.6%
I like to talk and communicate with foreigners via social media and online.	4.17	0.59	83.4%
Mean	4.24	0.39	84.9%

Table 3 (M=4.24, SD=0.39) indicates that 84.9 percent of respondents were highly willing to engage in virtual English classes and to communicate in English when speaking online. The highest item is 1 *If I meet some foreigner on online or everywhere; I hope to get a chance to talk to them* (M= 4.68, SD=0.47). Then comes item 6 *If I meet some English speakers on social media I try to find an excuse to talk to them* (M= 4.51, SD=0.56). However, item 2 *When I encounter foreign students in my online instruction who are struggling because they don't speak our language, I seize the chance to speak with them* scored much lower (M= 3.56, SD= 1.58). Such results concur with both Amiryousefi [39], and Ilyas [40], [42]. The third and fourth questions testing whether any differences in Palestinian students' level of WTC in English are due to gender and/or to proficiency of English are summarized in Tables 4 and Tables 5. Table 4 shows the willingness of responding students in Palestinian educational institutions to communicate in English displayed according to gender. As can be observed in the above table, the gender variable had no apparent impact on the WTC in English levels of students ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ). This means that both male and female students as living under the same circumstances on campus, receiving the same education, having the same opportunity in interaction,

express the same feelings towards communicating in English language and the level of their linguistics self-confidence is the same. Such result is consistent with Amiryousefi [39].

**Table 4.** Independent Sample T-test of WTC in English in Online Classes among Students in Higher Education Institutions due to Gender Variable

Level of WTC in English language in online classes due to gender	Gender	N	M	SD	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Factors influence the interest of learners to speak in English	Male	492	2.03	0.15	0.02	0.169	.930
	Female	510	2.04	0.16	0.02		
The English language Willingness to communicate	Male	492	4.21	0.40	0.06	0.988	.408
	Female	510	4.28	0.38	0.05		

The table displays significant variations ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the degree of desire among students in educational institutions to speak in English based on their English proficiency. The above table shows that, despite the pandemic, there were not any significant variations at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in the WTC language skills among students attending higher education institutions. This could be attributed to students' English proficiency. This shows that the extent of the desire to speak in English among students in universities based on their proficiency is nearly the same for all learners in Palestine. All learners in Palestine receive the same language education and all of them are exposed to the same linguistic and communicative competence language input.

**Table 5.** One –Way ANOVA of levels WTC in English among students due to the proficiency in English

Field	Levels	Sum Of Squares	Degrees	Average Squares	F Value	Sig. Level
Factors influencing the interest of learners to speak in English	Between Groups	.101	3	.034	1.385	.252
	Within Groups	2.345	96	.024		
	Total	2.447	99			
The English language Willingness to communicate	Between Groups	.052	3	.017	.109	.954
	Within Groups	15.167	96	.158		
	Total	15.219	99			

#### 4. Conclusion

The findings of this study have several implications for English as a Foreign Language educators, curriculum developers, and institutional policymakers. It follows naturally that the greater confidence one has in one's proficiency in a foreign language the more willing one is to use it with peers, tutors and native speakers. This study has proven that this is true for Palestinian students in Higher Education. Thus, educators need to plan for and expose students to enhanced language learning experiences, especially through the development of motivational language acquisition skills, such as opening spaces for presentation, debate, discourse and discussion in lessons rather than following the more traditional rote learning styles still employed in many Institutions. We suggest that curriculum developers and EFL Leads might consider incorporating the opportunities for any off-site and group work that local contexts offer [29] to support autonomous learning via the creation of effective language learning environments to address the evolving needs of language learners in Palestine. We must acknowledge certain limitations of this study. Its specific context and sample size may lead to a limited generalisability from the results: the research could be usefully replicated in a wider range of settings and with a larger sample size of participants (both experimental and control) to boost the validity of the findings, although the specificity of our focus on EFL leads to limited transferability to other subjects. However, investigating a broader set of opportunities for speaking and listening, and a wider range of pedagogies that encourage dialogue and discussion could allow teachers, researchers and curriculum designers to better understand the potential benefits and any limitations of the wider use of discursive EFL methods. It was found from this study that student predisposition to actively use the English language for communication is influenced by several factors, divided into positive and negative, and that some of the factors are direct, such as breadth of vocabulary and English language proficiency and pronunciation, which formed a negative factor towards an individual's willingness to communicate if these were low, but a positive factor if students' confidence was high.

WTC in English varies from one student to the next based on the student's personality and information, such as their competence and enjoyment in using the second language in front of the teacher and peers, or with native speakers of the second language. Work must be done to improve or eliminate the factors that negatively affect a student's willingness to communicate in English using

various methods, such as technological methods. The two main variables that adversely impacted EFL learners' WTC in the second language in Palestine's higher education institutions were personality and a lack of confidence when speaking. Language ability and anxiety are negatively correlated. That is, anxiety has a debilitating effect on WTC. A number of language learning-related variables, including the number of students and the teachers' positive and direct involvement, were found to have been associated with WTC both inside and outside of the classroom. The correlation between learners' WTC and English proficiency is moderate. A portion of the success of foreign language learners in mastering the language can be attributed to their willingness to take advantage of opportunities for communication in the target language. Researchers should investigate the ways in which gender and culture impact WTC in future studies. Depending on the results of this study, teachers should promote students to use English both inside and outside of the classroom, teachers can boost linguistics self-confidence and lower anxiety. Teachers also should increase learners' willingness to communicate by making them participate in short conversations and group discussion. The instructors of modern languages faculty should generate situational and familiar topics of interest for learners to motivate their WTC in English. Finally, teachers should not use traditional rote teaching methods and replace these with new effective teaching methods which, particularly importantly for this present study, focus on autonomous, dialogic, discursive and authentic speaking and listening activities.

### Acknowledgment

We thank our colleague for his assistance in translation from Arabic to English and vice versa, and also all the participating students. We also would like to thank the Department of Languages, Al Istiqlal University, Jericho, Palestine and School of Education, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, United Kingdom for the granted supports.

### Declarations

- Author contribution** : All authors have equal contributions to the paper. All the authors have read and approved the final manuscript
- Funding statement** : The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.
- Conflict of interest** : The authors declare no conflict of interest.
- Additional information** : No additional information is available for this paper.
- Ethics Approval & Informed Consent Statements** : Not Applicable

### References

- [1] J. Smith, M. & Traxler, *Digital Learning in Higher Education*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022. doi: [10.4337/9781800379404](https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800379404)
- [2] D. V. Barona, "Native and non-native speakers' perceptions of non-native accents," *Números*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2024.
- [3] M. Kumar and P. Mamgain, "Generation-Z Student Video-Based Learning Pedagogy Preference and Teaching Challenges," in *Redefining Virtual Teaching Learning Pedagogy*, Wiley, 2023, pp. 155–167. doi: [10.1002/9781119867647.ch9](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119867647.ch9)
- [4] I. Yuyun, "Investigating university student engagement in online learning: A case study in EFL classroom," *Indones. J. Appl. Linguist.*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 648–667, Jan. 2023, doi: [10.17509/ijal.v12i3.46035](https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v12i3.46035).
- [5] N. Mukati, N. Namdev, R. Dilip, N. Hemalatha, V. Dhiman, and B. Sahu, "Healthcare Assistance to COVID-19 Patient using Internet of Things (IoT) Enabled Technologies," *Mater. Today Proc.*, vol. 80, pp. 3777–3781, 2023, doi: [10.1016/j.matpr.2021.07.379](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.matpr.2021.07.379).
- [6] H. A. Qaddumi and M. Smith, "Implementation of learning management systems (Moodle): effects on students' language acquisition and attitudes towards learning English as a Foreign Language," *Trends High. Educ.*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 260–272, 2024. doi: [10.3390/higheredu3020016](https://doi.org/10.3390/higheredu3020016)



- [7] H. Reinders, C. Lai, and P. Sundqvist, *The Routledge Handbook of Language Learning and Teaching Beyond the Classroom*. London: Routledge, 2022. doi: [10.4324/9781003048169](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003048169)
- [8] H. A. Qaddumi, M. Smith, Y. Alawneh, N. Shawamreh, A. Bakeer, and M. Itemizeh, "Palestinian undergraduate learners' foreign language classroom anxiety in online environments," *Stud. English Lang. Educ.*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 1358–1378, Sep. 2023, doi: [10.24815/siele.v10i3.30031](https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v10i3.30031).
- [9] J. A. Miranda and A. Y. Wahyudin, "Pre-service teachers' strategies in improving students' speaking skills," *J. English Lang. Teach. Learn.*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 40–47, 2023.
- [10] A. Tagliatalata, "ELF- or NES-oriented pedagogy: enhancing learners' intercultural communicative competence using a dual teaching model," *Appl. Linguist. Rev.*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 377–401, Mar. 2024, doi: [10.1515/applirev-2020-0154](https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2020-0154).
- [11] V. T. S. Law, H. H. L. Yee, T. K. C. Ng, and B. Y. F. Fong, "Transition from Traditional to Online Learning in Hong Kong Tertiary Educational Institutions During COVID-19 Pandemic," *Technol. Knowl. Learn.*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 1425–1441, Sep. 2023, doi: [10.1007/s10758-022-09603-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10758-022-09603-z).
- [12] S. M. Alhaider, "Teaching and learning the four English skills before and during the COVID-19 era: perceptions of EFL faculty and students in Saudi higher education," *Asian-Pacific J. Second Foreign Lang. Educ.*, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 19, Jul. 2023, doi: [10.1186/s40862-023-00193-6](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-023-00193-6).
- [13] S. Bai, "The predictive effects of foreign language anxiety and boredom on willingness to communicate among Chinese struggling EFL learners," *Heliyon*, vol. 9, no. 9, p. e19610, Sep. 2023, doi: [10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e19610](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e19610).
- [14] K. Kaspar, K. Burtiak, and M. R uth, "Online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic: How university students' perceptions, engagement, and performance are related to their personal characteristics," *Curr. Psychol.*, vol. 43, no. 18, pp. 16711–16730, May 2024, doi: [10.1007/s12144-023-04403-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04403-9).
- [15] M. Smith and H. Scott, "Distance Education under Oppression: The Case of Palestinian Higher Education," *Educ. Sci.*, vol. 13, no. 7, p. 729, Jul. 2023, doi: [10.3390/educsci13070729](https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13070729).
- [16] H. Ramahi, "Education in Palestine: Current challenges and emancipatory alternatives," *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Regional Office Palestine*. pp. 1–51, 2015.
- [17] J. Traxler, "Decolonising Digital Language Learning in Palestine," *J. Res. Appl. Linguist.*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 20–29, 2023.
- [18] H. A. Elhawa, C. Alexander, and J. Krajka, "Online Education in Palestine: ELT Teachers doing ERT (again)," *Teach. English With Technol.*, vol. 2024, no. 1, 2024, doi: [10.56297/FSYB3031/EWWI7109](https://doi.org/10.56297/FSYB3031/EWWI7109).
- [19] A. J. Khawaja, V. S. Jakar, and B. R. Schvarcz, "English as a Mediator for Communication and Understanding: The Case of Israel and Palestine," in *Policy Development in TESOL and Multilingualism*, Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2021, pp. 217–230. doi: [10.1007/978-981-16-3603-5\\_17](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-3603-5_17)
- [20] N. Zayed, "Palestinian High School Students' Attitudes towards Studying English Language and Culture," *Int. J. Arab. Stud.*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 7–28, Jun. 2021, doi: [10.33806/ijaes2000.21.2.1](https://doi.org/10.33806/ijaes2000.21.2.1).
- [21] K. S. Al-safadi, H. A., Shgair, M. S. A., & Al Qatawnih, "The Effectiveness of Designing E-Learning Environment based on Mastery Learning and Artificial Intelligence on Developing English Speaking Skills among Tenth Graders in Palestine," *Education, Computer Science*, vol. 31, no. 1, Jan. 2023, doi: [10.33976/IUGJEPS.31.1/2023/22](https://doi.org/10.33976/IUGJEPS.31.1/2023/22).
- [22] J. Jelinkova, P. Petrus, and A. Laue, "The impact of feedback on students' willingness to communicate in foreign language learning: Systematic review," *Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*. p. 663, 23-Jan-2024, doi: [10.22190/JTESAP230911051J](https://doi.org/10.22190/JTESAP230911051J).
- [23] D. Chun, R. Kern, and B. Smith, "Technology in Language Use, Language Teaching, and Language Learning," *Mod. Lang. J.*, vol. 100, no. S1, pp. 64–80, Jan. 2016, doi: [10.1111/modl.12302](https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12302).
- [24] K. Sato and R. C. Kleinsasser, "Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Practical Understandings," *Mod. Lang. J.*, vol. 83, no. 4, pp. 494–517, Dec. 1999, doi: [10.1111/0026-7902.00037](https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00037).
- [25] Z. C. Aratusa, "Students' Perceptions on the Use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in Learning Pronunciation," *Int. J. Curr. Sci. Res. Rev.*, vol. 05, no. 07, Jul. 2022, doi: [10.47191/ijcsrr/V5-i7-50](https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V5-i7-50).

- [26] G. M. Nalliveetil and T. H. K. Alenazi, "The Impact of Mobile Phones on English Language Learning: Perceptions of EFL Undergraduates," *J. Lang. Teach. Res.*, vol. 7, no. 2, p. 264, Mar. 2016, doi: [10.17507/jltr.0702.04](https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0702.04).
- [27] I. Wisnuwardana, "Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Smartphone for Language Learning Purposes," *JET (Journal English Teaching) Adi Buana*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 178–191, Oct. 2019, doi: [10.36456/jet.v4.n2.2019.2080](https://doi.org/10.36456/jet.v4.n2.2019.2080).
- [28] J. Kacetyl and B. Klímová, "Use of Smartphone Applications in English Language Learning—A Challenge for Foreign Language Education," *Educ. Sci.*, vol. 9, no. 3, p. 179, Jul. 2019, doi: [10.3390/educsci9030179](https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci9030179).
- [29] Mahmoud Itmeizeh, Zeiadee Khalil, and Matt Smith, "Palestinian EFL Students' Perceptions of Using Edmodo in Developing their Writing Skills," *Education, Linguistics.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 132–143, Dec. 2022, doi: [10.59994/pau.2022.1.132](https://doi.org/10.59994/pau.2022.1.132).
- [30] M. A. Matuzas, "Factors Influencing Students' Willingness to Communicate in Korean Elementary School EFL Classrooms," *Networks An Online J. Teach. Res.*, vol. 23, no. 2, Jan. 2022, doi: [10.4148/2470-6353.1359](https://doi.org/10.4148/2470-6353.1359).
- [31] X. An et al., "Modeling English teachers' behavioral intention to use artificial intelligence in middle schools," *Educ. Inf. Technol.*, vol. 28, no. 5, pp. 5187–5208, May 2023, doi: [10.1007/s10639-022-11286-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11286-z).
- [32] J. Wang and B. Bai, "Whose goal emphases play a more important role in ESL/EFL learners' motivation, self-regulated learning and achievement?: Teachers' or parents'," *Res. Pap. Educ.*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp. 520–542, Jul. 2023, doi: [10.1080/02671522.2022.2030395](https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2030395).
- [33] R. Bianchi and A. Hussein - Abdel Razeq, "The English Language Teaching Situation in Palestine," 2017, pp. 147–169. doi: [10.1007/978-3-319-46778-8\\_10](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-46778-8_10)
- [34] R. Dwaik and A. Shehadeh, "Motivation Types among EFL College Students: Insights from the Palestinian Context," *An-Najah Univ. J. Res. - B*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 333–360, Jan. 2010, doi: [10.35552/0247-024-001-011](https://doi.org/10.35552/0247-024-001-011).
- [35] H. Scott and M. Smith, "Innovation from necessity: digital technologies, teacher development and reciprocity with organisational innovation," *Open Learn. J. Open, Distance e-Learning*, vol. 39, no. 2, pp. 170–187, Apr. 2024, doi: [10.1080/02680513.2024.2307627](https://doi.org/10.1080/02680513.2024.2307627).
- [36] M. R. Alam, D. Ansarey, H. Abdul Halim, M. M. Rana, M. R. K. Milton, and R. K. Mitu, "Exploring Bangladeshi university students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English classes through a qualitative study," *Asian-Pacific J. Second Foreign Lang. Educ.*, vol. 7, no. 1, p. 2, Dec. 2022, doi: [10.1186/s40862-022-00129-6](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-022-00129-6).
- [37] A. Bakeer, K. Dweikat, and M. Smith, "The effectiveness of project-based learning on improving the undergraduate students' speaking skills through M-learning." Rihan, 2023.
- [38] E. Marton and P. D. MacIntyre, "Feedback from L1 users – a potential facilitator of L2 use," *J. Multiling. Multicult. Dev.*, vol. 41, no. 5, pp. 457–470, May 2020, doi: [10.1080/01434632.2019.1634721](https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2019.1634721).
- [39] M. Amiryousefi, "Willingness to communicate, interest, motives to communicate with the instructor, and L2 speaking: a focus on the role of age and gender," *Innov. Lang. Learn. Teach.*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 221–234, Jul. 2018, doi: [10.1080/17501229.2016.1170838](https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2016.1170838).
- [40] F. S. Ilyas, "Exploring University Students' Willingness to Communicate and Unwillingness to Communicate in EFL," *J-SHMIC J. English Acad.*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 28–41, Feb. 2022, doi: [10.25299/jshmic.2022.vol9\(1\).8743](https://doi.org/10.25299/jshmic.2022.vol9(1).8743). doi: [10.25299/jshmic.2022.vol9\(1\).8743](https://doi.org/10.25299/jshmic.2022.vol9(1).8743)
- [41] A. Nugroho, "Learners' Willingness to Communicate in a Foreign Language: The Role of Informal Digital Learning of English," *ELE Rev. English Lang. Educ. Rev.*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 125–133, Nov. 2021, doi: [10.22515/ele-reviews.v1i2.4396](https://doi.org/10.22515/ele-reviews.v1i2.4396).
- [42] A. Soyooof, "Unearthing Iranian mothers' mediation strategies during their children's home digital literacy practices in English," *Interactive Learning Environments*. pp. 1–15, 14-Sep-2022, doi: [10.1080/10494820.2022.2121732](https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2022.2121732).