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| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

EFL Students' Perceptions of Employing Technology Tools in Learning English at King Khalid University

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| **ABSTRACT**

Technology can be employed as a means of boosting FEL student interaction. Due to the universal use of computers and the internet in academic institutions, EFL teachers are motivated to implement this technology in their classes to facilitate language teaching and the learning English language process. This study purports to identify EFL students' perceptions of the utilization of technology tools in learning English at King Khalid University. This research adopts the descriptive analysis technique. Moreover, the theoretical framework of the study was an opinion poll prepared by the two researchers to get information and was applied to fifty-six selected EFL students to get their perceptions of the utilization of technology tools in learning English at King Khalid University. The results demonstrate that most King Khalid University EFL male and female students had positive responses to employing technology tools in learning English. The study findings have pedagogical implications and some recommendations for strategies and instructions for further investigations and facilitating the utilization of technology in teaching and learning at primary and secondary levels.

| **KEYWORDS**

EFL Students, Employing, King Khalid University learning English, perceptions, technology tools

1. Introduction

Technology tools can be utilized as resources for promising EFL student interaction in the English learning language. Technology tools have attracted the attention of EFL students, instructors, teachers, educators, and course designers as a teaching tool for English language teaching and learning. Also, Technology tools have been the new notion of learning in this digital world and age of technology, which leads to excellent feedback to students and teachers. Khatoony & Nezhadmehr,2020; AbuSa'aleek, 2015). The new Technology tools are integrated into teaching and learning languages extravagantly in general and English languages in particular to support both the process of teaching and learning. By utilizing this new technology, teaching and learning are improved and given a new aspect. It is the best possible road to create language learning, remarkably during important situations of the age of technology (Levy,1997; Collins & Halverson, 2018; Tucker,2012; Alian & Alhaj, 2023).

The new technologies have changed language teaching and learning because they make their materials accessible online and obtainable anytime and anywhere. They also promote individual learning because their use makes it possible to adapt training better. From this standpoint, technology tools can be utilized as resources for promising EFL student interaction in the learning English language; the present study is an effort to scrutinize female and male FEL student's perceptions of technology tools utilization and their application in English language learning in King Khalid University, to improve their four language skills(reading, writing, listening and speaking and. The two researchers hope that EFL teachers, stockholders, policymakers, and institutions to

reap great benefits from the results of the study and use technology tools in teaching, learning, and designing par excellent English textbooks.

1.1 Objectives of the Study
The current study's purpose is to attain the following intents :

1. To peruse EFL students' perceptions of the utilization of technology tools in learning English at King Khalid University

2. To probe how EFL students perceive the utilization of technology tools in learning English, and that can boost their English language skills.

1.2 Research questions:
1. What are EFL students' perceptions of the utilization of technology tools in learning English at King Khalid University?
2. How do EFL students perceive the utilization of technology tools in learning English that can boost their English language skills?

2. Review of related literature
In general, the literature has acknowledged that technology is not a thing and has had an enormous influence on the development of students in classrooms; therefore, the discussion has changed from whether the use of technology should be assisted to that how it can be integrated to provide the greatest achievement in the classroom. (Dexter, Anderson, & Becker, 1999; Ertmer, 1999). Certain investigations mirror the possible positive influence of the utilization of technology in the language classroom; the utilization of technology in the classroom can enormously advantage EFL students. Technology creates opportunities for EFL students to communicate with colleagues or other students who live in different places. It enables FEL students to take part in authentic learning exercises. (Al-Bogami, & Elyas, 2020; Gilakjani, Lai-Mei, & Ismail, 2013).

2.1 The Use of Tablet Computers in the Classroom
The usage of mobile phone and tablet technology has become much more important in the classroom in the current age of technology, the advantages that derive from employing mobile technology in the classroom are absolutely obvious, and they pertain to an assortment of information resources and technological versatility ...mobile technologies enable for a broad spectrum of possibilities and expand the scope for different degrees of teaching commitment.

2.2 The Use of the Web Sites in the Classroom
Technology tools are at present time being used to make teaching and learning English more interesting and energizing. We see more and more websites and applications such as Web 2.0, which comprise social networking communities (SNCs), wikis, blogs, communication tools, and Blackboards that facilitate online teaching and learning processes and also serve to facilitate online communication, interrelation, and cooperation. A large number of students rely on Web 2.0 tools as a means to get in touch with friends. (Ferdig et al., 2007; Cummins & Sayers, 1996; Chisholm, 1998).According to Hossain & Aydin, 2011).

Web 2.0 is a collaborative web development platform that refers to the cumulative changes in how software developers and end-users benefit from the web (O'Reilly, 2005). In recent years, Web 2.0 technologies have become popular among the younger generation to make communication effective and interactive.

The possibilities of using Web 2.0 tools in teaching and learning of English language could be boundless. Directness, collaboration, and acquiescence traits of Web 2.0 technology can allow teachers of English to engross EFL students in acting together in a different language situation or to produce many virtual communities at home and abroad. Web 2.0 tools can provide excellent ways to help EFL students understand various cultural aspects of the world, particularly to find out something about the social attribute of their own and other cultures (Solomon and Schrum, 2007).

2.3 The Use of computers and the internet in the classroom
Due to the wider application of computers and the internet in educational establishments, English language teachers, for example, are inspired and encouraged to apply this technology in their classes to promote language teaching and the learning process. Having positive attitudes toward internet use can encourage EFL students to learn the necessary skills which are crucial for applying technology-based drills and activities in classes. Although it is evident that technology is a considerable number of student's life as well as language teaching.

2.4 The Use of blog platform technology
Blog (i.e., weblog) is a form of online application that manifests sequential entries with date and time stamps. Entries are typically displayed in reversal chronological series with the most current first (Puschmann, 2010; Hoffmann,2012; Schmidt,2007; Alhaj & Albahiri, 2022). Blogs also have some characteristics that might contribute to alleviating L2 learning. As blog technology is easy

to employ for both teachers and students, the implementation of blogs in the area of teaching and learning is becoming more prominent. (Albahiri,& Alhaj, 2020; Albahiri,& Alhaj, 2023)

2.5 Google Docs
Google Docs is a text processing implementation produced by Google and is accessible as a web and mobile application for Windows, Mac, Android, and IOS operating systems. Google Docs permit instantaneous feedback and cooperation on student-generated text when students are online simultaneously. (Khalil, 2018; Aisyah, Yuniarti, & Ihsan,2021; Alsubaie, & Ashuraidah, 2017). To utilize Google Docs or any other application supplied by Google, the students and instructors need to make a Gmail account. When they act in this way, they can easier access their work from a computer or mobile phone in whatever place and at any moment. (Iftakhar, 2016; Gupta, & Pathania, 2021; Azhar, & Iqbal, 2018).

2.6 Previous studies
Abu-Ayfah (2020) investigated the EFL College students' perceptions of employing Telegram for English language learning. The results of the study showed that the majority of EFL students perceived Telegram as a useful tool for English language learning, particularly in vocabulary learning. The findings of the study may contribute to developing the process of improving learning techniques in higher education in Saudi Arabia. Behroozian & Sadeghoghli(2017) undertook a study to pinpoint EFL students' perceptions towards the role of technologies such as computers and the internet in English language classes. Furthermore, the findings revealed the FEL students' positive direction toward technology. They are appreciated and gratified with it a foreign language learning in classes because of its appliance and feasibility, which promote their accomplishment of learning skills. Wu & Wu (2011) explored learners' perceptions of the use of blogs for EFL (English as a foreign language) learning. The findings of the study indicated that most of the FEL students positively perceived the use of blogs for EFL learning. Only a few students responded to the use of blogs negatively. The results also showed that blogs have the prospective for improving reading and writing skills. Pardede (2020) examined secondary school perceptions of ICT use in the EFL classroom. The results showed that the participants' perception was positive and high in some dimensions of ICT use in learning in one dimension**.** Liton (2015) investigates students' real perception and efficacy of technology-mediated language classrooms through survey questionnaires and observation. The study findings indicated that the students are absorbed in the learning process ardently and zealously, but many don't know how to incorporate technologies into their learning process. It, therefore, proposes that technology-facilitated EFL text curriculum needs to be suggested, and instructor trainers should organize training for EFL students on how to incorporate technology into their learning practices. Kasapoğlu-Akyol (2010) conducted a study to identify what educational technology tools international students at Eastern Michigan University employ to boost their language and communication skills. The results of this study showed that students are utilizing technological tools in their routine activities for many different purposes, particularly for their learning. It is also seen that employing educational technology tools will help both the students and instructors to be more fruitful, proficient, and functional people in their lives.

3. Method
3.1 Research Design
The descriptive analysis technique was employed by the two researchers to explore EFL students' perceptions of employing technology tools in learning English at King Khalid University.

3.2 Participants
The purposive sample of the study consisted of about 56 EFL male and female students from several academic campuses at King Khalid University who joined this study of their free will and self-determination. The total number of participants is considered adequate to give positive or negative feedback on EFL students' perceptions of employing technology tools in learning English at King Khalid University. Finally, participants were asked to answer a questionnaire of 15 items.

3.3 Study Variables
The independent variable included in this study was employing technology tools in learning English. The dependent variable included in this study was King Khalid University EFL male and female students' perception of employing technology tools in learning English.

3.4 Research instrument
Insofar as the present-day investigation aimed to scrutinize King Khalid University EFL male and female students' perception of employing technology tools in learning English. Correspondingly, the two researchers use one of the justice instruments to attain this goal: it is an opinion survey prepared by them to have King Khalid University EFL male and female students' perceptions. The opinion poll was composed of fifteen items concerned with King Khalid University EFL male and female students' perception of employing technology tools in learning English. The questionnaire requests participants to express their views on each item in a five Likert-type questionnaire: (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.). To test the validity of the questionnaire, it was referred first by six proficient professors from Jazan, Najran, and King Khalid Universities, who checked the

instrument for its validity. To improve the reliability of the instrument, it was piloted by a group of twenty King Khalid University EFL male and female students.

Table (1)
Cronbach's Alpha for the Reliability of the questionnaire
(Pilot Sample: n=20)

Statement	No. of Items	Alpha
The overall Reliability of the questionnaire	15	0.98.8

The amendments were recommended by six expert professors in the opinion poll done by the two researchers. At the end of the second semester of 2022/2023 AD, about fifty-six King Khalid University EFL male and female students were given the questionnaire and were asked to provide their correct responses through Google Forms.

3.5 Reliability Statistics of the questionnaire

Table (2)
Cronbach's Alpha for the Reliability of the questionnaire
(All Sample: n=56)

Statement	No. of Items	Alpha
The overall Reliability of the questionnaire	15	0.98

As indicated in table 2 value of Cronbach's α(internal consistency**)** for all items (1-15) was high (0.98). The overall alpha reliability coefficients for King Khalid University EFL male and female students' perception of employing technology tools in learning English.

Table (3) EFL Students' Perceptions of the Utilization of Technology Tools in Learning English
Rating Scale: Strongly Disagree (SD= 1), Disagree (D= 2), Neutral (N = 3), Agree (A= 4), Strongly Agree (SA = 5)

Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Neutral (N)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
1	2	3	4	5

Statements		SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5	Mean	St. Deviation	Ranking
1. I use technology in computer or language labs.	F	0	2	4	28	22	4.25	.744	2
	%	%	3.6%	7.1%	50%	39.3%			
2. I use in-class technology to learn different English language skills.	F	0	3	12	22	19	4.01	.884	8
	%	%	5.4%	21.4%	39.3%	33.9%			
3. I utilize technology to participate in distance learning activities with my classmates from other English Language Centers.	F	3	3	9	22	19	3.91	1.10	9
	%	5.4 %	5.6 %	5.4 %	39.3%	33.4%			
4. I use a computer to develop my English language skills.	F	0	2	9	13	32	4.33	.879	1
	%	%	3.6%	16.1%	23. %	57.1%			

5. I increase my different levels of interaction as a result of employing technology in my learning of the English language.	F	0	6	13	9	28	4.05	1.08	5
	%	%	10.7%	16.1%	23.2%	50%			
6. I become more independent as a result of using electronic dictionaries and cyclopedias.	F	0	0	22	18	16	3.89	.824	12
	%	%	%	30.3%	32.1%	37.6%			
7. I engaged more in different activities outside the university as a result of utilizing technology.	F	0	10	10	33	3	3.51	.852	15
	%	%	17.9%	17.9%	58.3%	6%			
8. I become more involved as a result of utilizing technology.	F	0	5	16	16	19	3.87	.992	13
	%	%	8.9%	28.6%	28.6%	33.9%			
9. It will be good to use the technology for other academic purposes, such as to communicate with the lecturer and other fellow students on Facebook using my phone.	F	0	0	12	22	22	4.17	.765	3
	%	%	%	21.4%	39.3%	39.3%			
10. I believe utilizing technology facilitates collaborative learning; I can collaborate with my instructors as well.	F	0	0	12	25	19	4.12	.740	4
	%	%	%	21.4%	44.6%	33.9%			
11. I think proper training on the use of technology can enhance my performance and may result in successful learning.	F	0	0	15	28	13	3.96	.712	10
	%	%	%	23.8%	50%	26.2%			
12. I think the most common challenge encountered by me and other learners is our lack of proper technological knowledge.	F	0	0	16	28	12	3.92	.709	11
	%	%	%	21.6%	50%	28.4%			
13. I think some EFL instructors don't know much about technology. They have only limited skills and knowledge of technology; therefore, students also see and learn in limit.	F	0	6	15	28	7	3.64	.840	14
	%	%	10.7%	26.8%	50%	12.5%			
14. It's easy for me to get caught through Technology tools. Technology facilitates learning and activates the	F	0	0	15	25	16	4.01	.750	7
	%	%	%	26.8%	44.6%	28.6%			

right brain, which makes learning faster.								
15. I feel more motivated in SMART class than in general class because if Technology tools are used in teaching English, students could understand fast.	F	0	2	16	16	22	4.03	.913	6
	%	%	3.6%	22.6%	34.6%	39.3%			

3.6 Data analysis

The responses to the questionnaire were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were studied to test data. This measurement was used to describe the results of Khalid University EFL male and female students' perceptions of employing technology tools in learning English.

4. Results

After verifying the reliability and validity of the opinion survey, the results of the twenty items of the questionnaire have been discussed scrupulously. In response to the statement, '' I use a computer to develop my English language skills, ''. The respondents perceived that they use a computer to develop their English language skills, as 23. % agreed, and 57.1%strongly agreed and ranks No1**.** In response to the statement, '' I use technology in computer or language labs. '' The respondents perceived that they use technology in computer or language labs., as 50. %agreed, and 39.3%strongly agreed and ranks No2**.**In response to the statement, ''It will be good to use the technology for other academic purposes such as to communicate with the lecturer and other fellow students on Facebook using my phone.'' The respondents perceived that It would be good to use the technology for other academic purposes, such as to communicate with the lecturer and other fellow students on Facebook using their phones, as 39.3 %agreed and 39.3%strongly agreed and ranks No3. In response to the statement '' I believe utilizing technology facilitates collaborative learning; I can collaborate with my instructors as well, ''The respondents perceived that they believe utilizing technology facilitates collaborative learning; they can collaborate with their instructors as well, as 44.6 %agreed, and 33.9%strongly agreed and ranks No4. In response to the statement,'' I increase my different levels of interaction as a result of employing technology in my learning of the English language.'' The respondents perceived that they increased their different levels of interaction as a result of employing technology in their learning of the English language, as 23.2 %agreed, and 50%strongly agreed and ranks No5.

In response to the statement,''. I feel more motivated in SMART class than in general class because if Technology tools are used in teaching English, students could understand fast.'' The respondents perceived that they feel more motivated in SMART class than in general class because if Technology tools are used in teaching English, students could understand fast, as 34.6 %agreed and 39.3%strongly agreed and ranks No6.In response to the statement,''. It's easy for me to get caught through Technology tools. Technology facilitates learning and activates the right brain, which makes learning faster..'' The respondents perceived that they. It's easy for them to get caught through Technology tools. Technology facilitates learning and activates the right brain, which makes learning faster., as 44.6 %agreed, and 28.6%strongly agreed and ranks No7. In response to the statement,''. I use in-class technology to learn different English language skills. '' The respondents perceived that they use in-class technology to learn different English language skills, as 39.3 % agreed and 33.9%strongly agreed and ranks No8. In response to the statement,''. I utilize technology to participate in distance learning activities with my classmates from other English Language Centers '' The respondents perceived that they utilize technology to participate in distance learning activities with their classmates from other English Language Centers, as 39.3 %agreed and 33.4%strongly agreed and ranks No9**.** In response to the statement,''. I think proper training on the use of technology can enhance my performance and may result in successful learning.'' The respondents perceived that they think proper training on the use of technology can enhance their performance and may result in successful learning, as 50 % agreed and 26.2%strongly agreed and ranks No10**.**

In response to the statement,''. I think the most common challenge encountered by me and other learners is our lack of proper technological knowledge.'' The respondents perceived that they think the most common challenge encountered by their and other learners is their lack of proper technological knowledge, as 50 % agreed and 28.4%strongly agreed and ranks No11**.** In response to the statement,''. I became more independent as a result of using electronic dictionaries and cyclopedias,'' The respondents perceived they became more independent as a result of using electronic dictionaries and cyclopedias, as 37.6 %agreed, and 28.4%strongly agreed and ranks No12**.** In response to the statement,'' I become more involved as a result of utilizing technology,'' The respondents perceived that they become more involved as a result of utilizing technology, as 33.9 % agreed and 28.4% strongly agreed and ranks No13**.** In response to the statement,'' I think some EFL instructors don't know much about technology. They have

only limited skills and knowledge of technology; therefore, students also see and learn in limit. '' The respondents perceived that they think some EFL instructors don't know much about technology. They have only limited skills and knowledge of technology; therefore, students also see and learn in limit., as 50 % agreed and 12.5%strongly agreed and ranks No14**.** In response to the statement,''. I engaged more in different activities outside the university as a result of utilizing technology '' The respondents perceived that they engaged more in different activities outside the university as a result of utilizing technology., as 58.3 % agreed, and 6%strongly agreed and ranked No15.

5. Conclusion

The current research paper aimed to probe King Khalid University EFL male and female students' perception of employing technology tools in learning English. This study posed two major questions: What are EFL students' perceptions of the utilization of technology tools in learning English at King Khalid University? How do EFL students perceive the utilization of technology tools in learning English can boost their English language skills ?The major results can be summarized in such wise: most of the King Khalid University EFL male and female students had positive responses on employing technology tools in learning English. Table (3) shows the general average of King Khalid University EFL male and female students' perception of employing technology tools in learning English (4.20).

5.1 Pedagogical implication

Some pedagogical implications are given contingent on the results of the study. For instance, teachers are proposed to post suitable reading materials in the blog based on EFL students' English capabilities.

5.2 Recommendations

Although this study has made real academic contributions, the topic needs to be explored further by probing the perception of employing technology tools in learning English at the primary or secondary level**.** To provide appropriate training to in-service teachers to use technology for English language teaching. **(**Alian, & Alhaj, 2023**)**

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