

ANALYSIS OF DISTANCE TEACHING PRACTICES BY FRENCH DEPARTMENT TEACHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAIDA (ALGERIA)

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Abstract: Distance learning has become an unavoidable reality in recent years in Algeria. With the advent of new information and communication technologies, universities have had to adapt to this mode of distance learning to meet the needs of students. This transition has been a challenge for many education stakeholders, but it has also opened up new opportunities to rethink traditional teaching method. Thus, in this article, we are interested in the following questions: have teachers received adequate training to use the Moodle platform? Are they able to explore the various functionalities of this platform? Our objective is to present and discuss the practices of teachers in the French department at the University of Saida (Algeria) regarding the use of distance learning via the Moodle platform.

Keywords: Teaching practices; Training; Distance learning; Moodle; Teachers

ANALYSE DES PRATIQUES D'ENSEIGNEMENT A DISTANCE PAR LES ENSEIGNANTS DU DEPARTEMENT DE FRANÇAIS A L'UNIVERSITE DE SAÏDA (ALGERIE)

Résumé : L'apprentissage à distance est devenu une réalité incontournable ces dernières années en Algérie. Avec l'avènement des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication, les universités ont dû s'adapter à ce mode d'apprentissage à distance pour répondre aux besoins des étudiants. Cette transition a été un défi pour de nombreux acteurs de l'éducation, mais elle a également ouvert de nouvelles opportunités pour repenser les méthodes d'enseignement traditionnelles. Ainsi, dans cet article, nous nous intéressons aux questions suivantes : les enseignants ont-ils reçu une formation adéquate pour utiliser la plateforme Moodle ? Sont-ils capables d'explorer les différentes fonctionnalités de cette plateforme ? Notre objectif est de présenter et de discuter des pratiques des enseignants du département de français à l'Université de Saïda (Algérie) concernant l'utilisation de l'apprentissage à distance via la plateforme Moodle.

Mots-clés : Pratiques d'enseignement ; Formation ; Apprentissage à distance ; Moodle ; Enseignants

Introduction

Like many countries around the world, the Algerian government has decided to completely or partially close the majority of administrative institutions, schools, universities, as well as certain economic and service activities to curb the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, Algerian universities have faced an unprecedented situation, and distance learning became the only alternative to ensure educational continuity. Therefore, the integration of Information and Communication Technologies in Education (ICTE) in higher education caused a disruption in the relationship with the teaching-learning process.

Indeed, «ICTE offers real potential to significantly increase the quality of higher education and to change our relationship with knowledge» (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD,12: 2005), cited by Ben Youssef and Hadhri (Ben Youssef and Hadri,23: 2009). Furthermore, Karsenti and Larose (Karsenti and Larose: 2001) identify numerous advantages that could result from the integration of ICT in education, including increased motivation among learners, improved learning, more effective and individualized teaching, enhanced and improved communication, greater access to information and knowledge, more efficient management of education, and greater learner autonomy. In this regard, Algerian universities are called upon to take advantage of the enormous potential of ICTE, especially e-learning devices, such as the Moodle digital educational platform, which provides opportunities to enrich face-to-face teaching and offer hybrid or fully online learning modalities. Our study is based on the analysis of a questionnaire aimed at identifying relevant information regarding: (1) the mastery and integration of ICTE in the pedagogical practices of teachers at the University of Saida, particularly those in the French department; (2) their use of the Moodle platform; and (3) their perceptions of their training related to the Moodle platform. In this sense, we will attempt to answer the following questions: Do teachers manage to integrate ICTE into their teaching practice? Do they explore the different tools of this platform? Have they received adequate training to use the Moodle platform? To provide elements of answers to our questions, we put forward the following hypotheses: - Teachers would all try to use ICTE to provide quality education to their students. - A large majority of teachers would feel that they have not received sufficient training to take full advantage of the platform. - They would like to receive additional training to discover all the advanced features of the platform. It is in this context that our exploratory study aims to highlight the perceptions of teachers at the University of Saida regarding the use of ICTE through the Moodle platform.

1. Research Protocol

The data analyzed in this study is derived from a questionnaire administered to 35 teachers from the French department at the University of Saida. The questionnaire focuses on their usage of the Moodle platform. It consists of 12 questions divided into three themes: 1. Mastery and integration of ICT in pedagogical practices. 2. Usage of the Moodle platform. 3. Evaluation of training programs. The questionnaire comprises four types of questions: Two closed-ended ordinal scale questions (Unsatisfactory/Somewhat satisfactory/Satisfactory/Very satisfactory). These questions efficiently and quickly measure the degree of satisfaction among teachers; three closed-ended dichotomous questions (Yes/No/Don't know) accompanied by open-ended questions (If no, please specify why); Six multiple-choice closed-ended questions (Individually/with fellow teachers, etc.); One open-ended question to express their opinions. The aim of this research is twofold. Firstly, we seek to understand the teachers' opinions regarding the usage of Moodle, including the different tools they have utilized, the most and least relevant tools, and the positive and negative aspects of using the platform. Secondly, we aim to measure the level of satisfaction with Moodle training programs. The questionnaire was distributed to the teachers via email, ensuring anonymity. All the collected information was transcribed into digital format for subsequent processing and analysis using Excel software. This computer tool facilitated obtaining results in the form of sector charts for yes/no questions and histograms for questions related to levels of questions related to levels of satisfaction. We aimed to analyze the statements of teachers from the French department regarding their usage of the Moodle platform. These representations provide valuable and relevant information as they allow us to understand how they utilize the platform and measure the level of satisfaction with their training. By examining

their statements, we gain insights into the specific ways in which they engage with Moodle, as well as their overall satisfaction with the training provided. This analysis helps us to better understand their experiences and perceptions, which can in turn inform improvements and adjustments to enhance the effectiveness of Moodle as a learning tool.

2. Results

In the following section, we present the results collected from a questionnaire addressed to the teachers of the French department. This questionnaire consists of 12 questions focusing on the following themes: 1. Mastery and integration of ICT in pedagogical practices. 2. Usage of the Moodle platform. 3. Evaluation of training programs.

Theme 1: Proficiency and integration of ICT in pedagogical practices. This theme consists of four questions:

Question 1: Do you have any computer skills (basic computer skills)?

Mastery of computer skills	Yes	No
Percentage of teachers.	91%	9%

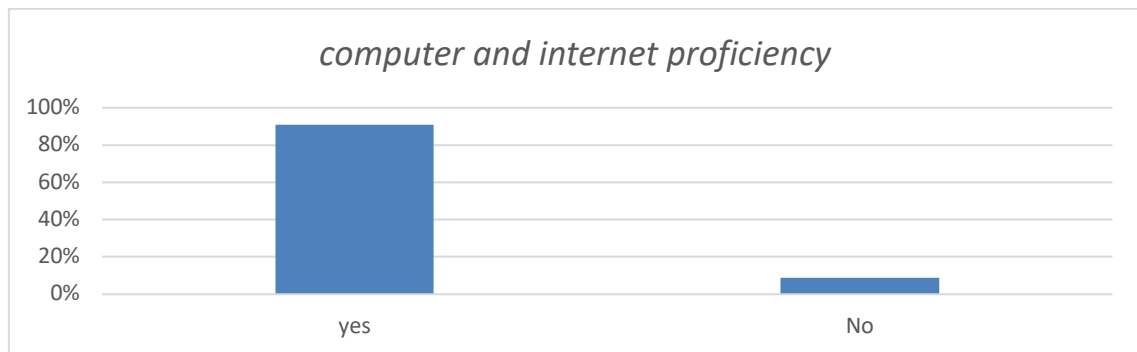


Figure 01 computer and internet proficiency

Question 2: Do you use a digital collective broadcasting tool with your students?

Usage of computer tools	yes	No
Percentage of teachers	27	73

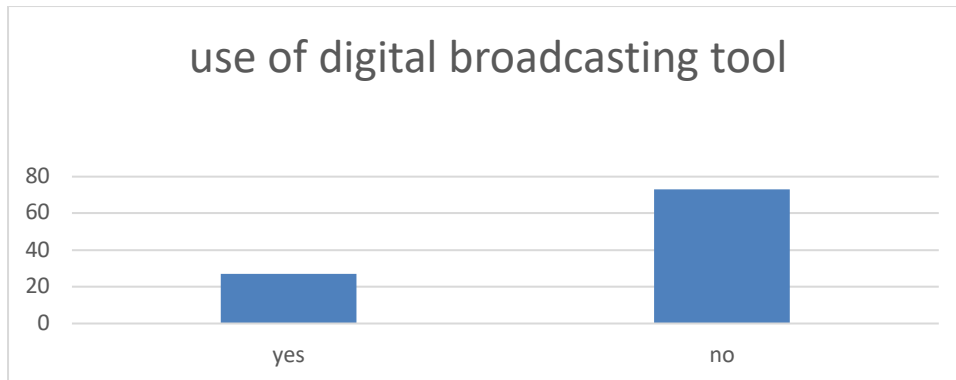


Figure 02 use of digital broadcasting tool

Question 3: Do you think that ICT enhances student motivation? Please explain.

The majority of teachers believe that information and communication technologies (ICT) in education offer the advantage of providing new ways to approach learning and present course content. Regarding language learning, these technologies enable the provision of resources that target various language skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Teachers, also questioned on the matter, seem to find that this improvement in motivation during classes with the use of digital technologies is variable. While students seem more attracted to the use of these types of tools, this motivation is subject to the aspect of novelty, and their motivations are mostly extrinsic.

Question 4: What applications do you use to communicate with your students and ensure pedagogical continuity?

Here is the translation of the table into English:

Applications Used	Percentage
Social media	10
Forums	0
Platforms	60
Email	30
Virtual classes	0

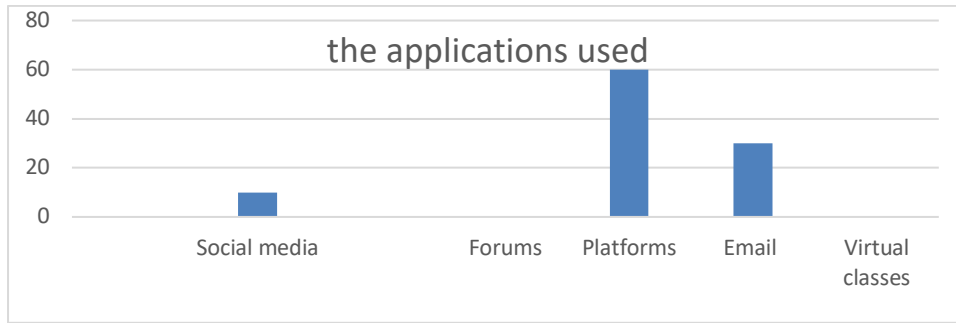


Figure 03 the applications used

Theme 2: Use of the Moodle platform

The second theme addressed in the aforementioned questionnaire focuses on the following questions:

- Does the platform meet your expectations?

Usage of the platform				
To share resources with students	To structure courses	To interact with students	To share resources with other teachers	To facilitate student evaluation
100	50	25	0	20

- What level of skills do you currently attribute to yourself as a user of the Moodle platform?

Skill Level		
Novice	Intermediate	Expert
20	80	0

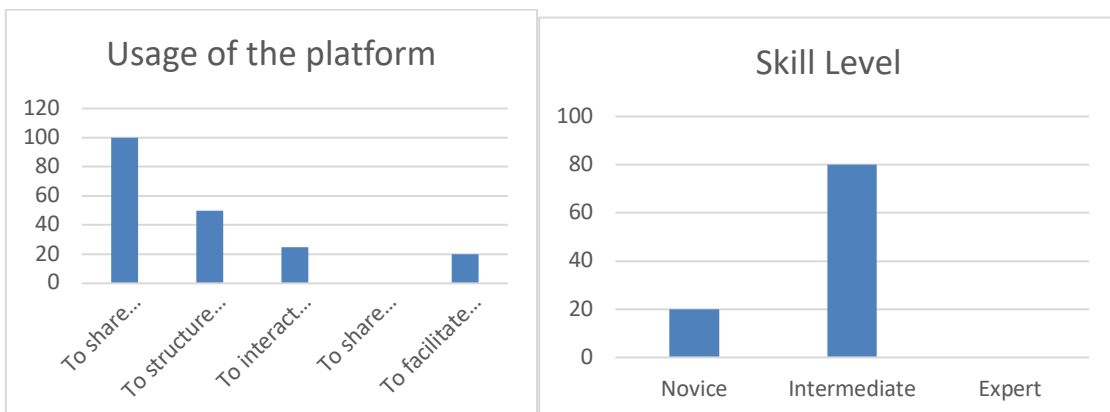


Figure 04 using the Moodle and skill level

- Among the following platform functionalities, which ones do you use in your teaching practices?

Platform Features Usage					
Resource Repository	Forum	Test	Assignment	Chat	Others
100	20	30	20	15	0

- Do the configuration screens (course settings, activities, resources, etc.) seem understandable to you?

Configuration Screens		
Understandable	Somewhat understandable	Not understandable at all
85	15	0

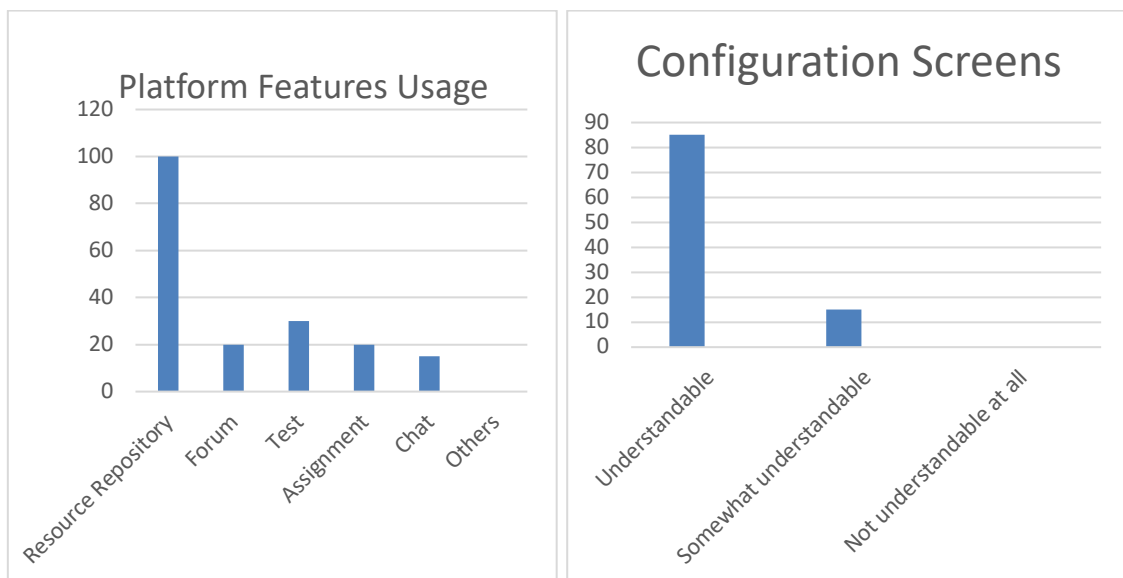


Figure 05 use of platform features screens and the setting

Theme 3: Evaluation of training

This theme consists of four questions:

- How were you introduced to the use of the Moodle platform?

Introduction to Moodle Platform Usage		
During trainings offered by your institution	Individually	With fellow teachers
85	15	0

- In general, did you find your training?

Evaluation of Training Programs		
Not at all satisfactory	Satisfactory	Not very satisfactory
15	85	0

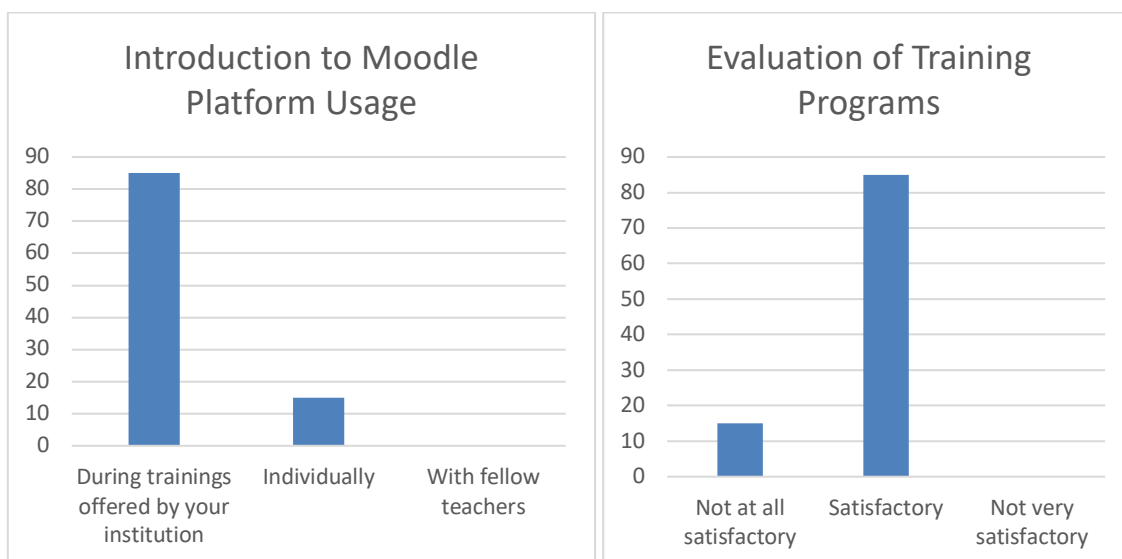


Figure 06 introduction to using Moodle evaluation and training evaluation

- Would you like to be accompanied to develop your skills/knowledge on your training platform?

Training on Moodle Usage		
yes	No	May be
91	0	9

- What type of training/information would you like to have?

Types of Training		
Workshop	Webinar	Video Tutorials
70	25	5

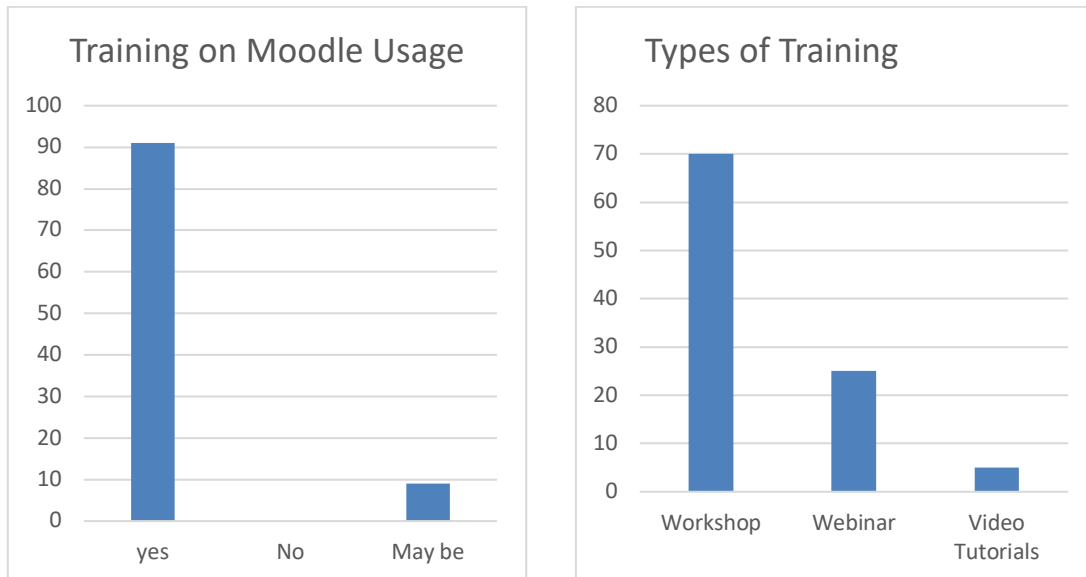


Figure 09 to learn how to use Moodle and type of training

3. Discussion

More than 90% of teachers state that they have basic computer and internet skills, but they rarely use them in their pedagogical practices. Several obstacles hinder the effective integration of digital tools in the classroom, such as the level of computer literacy, hardware maintenance, proficiency in relevant software, time and content management, pedagogical and technical support, availability of necessary resources, and continuous teacher training. Furthermore, a significant majority of teachers believe that integrating digital tools is unnecessary in their disciplines, reflecting a lack of interest and willingness. The results indicate that the Moodle platform is used by all French department teachers as a means to ensure pedagogical continuity alongside face-to-face instruction. However, the usage of the platform appears to be primarily passive, with a strong majority of teachers using it solely to upload resources (courses, exercises in PDF or HTML formats, etc.). It seems that teachers prioritize a supplementary use of Moodle, considering it as an additional space for resource sharing with students, rather than fully exploiting its potential as a comprehensive didactic tool. Consequently, many of the platform's features are underutilized by the respondents. Approximately 80% of teachers consider themselves moderately competent in using Moodle, while 20% identify as novices. Additionally, 15% find the configuration screens somewhat confusing, while 85% find the overall interface of the platform clear. However, teachers have not yet reached an optimal level of proficiency in using Moodle, and they express a desire for further support and training to enhance their skills on the platform. The existing training

programs offered by the University of Saida seem inadequate in meeting their needs. As a result, teachers express a strong interest in receiving additional techno-pedagogical support, such as workshops, webinars, and video tutorials, to increase their usage of the various tools available on the Moodle platform.

Conclusion

This research contributes to the field of studies on the usage of new information and communication technologies (ICT). Its objective is to analyze the statements of teachers in the French department regarding the usage of the Moodle platform and determine their level of satisfaction with the training provided. The methodology employed relies on the results of a questionnaire administered to all teachers in the department. The questionnaire reveals that the use of the Moodle platform is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. While the teachers express satisfaction with the training they received during the academic year (2022 - 2023), it did not enable them to fully grasp all the tools available. They struggle to use certain features of the platform and express the need for more comprehensive training. It would be interesting to examine the daily practices of these teachers one or two years later, analyze their practices, and determine the factors that stimulate or hinder their development, for example, by analyzing the digital traces provided by the platform. In order to enhance the utilization of Moodle and support the ongoing professional development of teachers, it is recommended to provide further training opportunities that address specific needs and challenges identified by the teachers. This could include advanced workshops, personalized coaching, and continuous support to help them fully harness the potential of Moodle for effective pedagogical practices.

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