Instructors' Perception on Integrating A Learning Management System in Teaching ESL Adult Learners Online Reading

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ABSTRACT

Most educational institutions utilize Learning Management Systems (LMSs) as learning and teaching portal for online learning programmes. It is a system that allows the institution to manage and monitor instructors, learners and content of courses. Nonetheless, due to this relatively new learning environment, most online teaching methods have not yet incorporated pedagogic principles in which could lead to ineffective teaching thus resulting in unsuccessful learning. In Second Language teaching and learning, it is crucial for instructors to understand and utilize this system for online language learning. Although, the LMS may provide the tools and features that could support teaching in an online learning environment, the lack of instructors' understanding of an LMS environment may prevent learning from taking place. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the instructors' perception of using LMS (i-Class) in teaching, particularly English as a Second Language (ESL) online reading for adult learners of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia. Active and less active instructors were interviewed. This qualitative study revealed that the instructors' perceptions are mainly positive towards integrating the system in teaching online reading, specifically encouraging

online participation and monitoring learners' performance. However, the findings also suggest that learners' online engagement is dependent on the instructors' commitment to online teaching.

Keywords: Learning Management System (LMS), ESL online reading, adult learners, online participation, Second Language teaching and learning

INTRODUCTION

Like many other higher learning institutions that offer online learning, UiTM also utilizes an LMS to connect with learners who have opted online learning. To meet with the demands of online learning, the university has developed i-Class, which is the LMS for learners and instructors to use as a platform for both learning and teaching activities. Using LMSs for online learning has generally received positive reviews from the users especially learners. Previous researchers (Nasir, Alwi & Said, 2007; Steel, 2007; Abdullah et. al., 2008; Palmer & Holt, 2009; Abdullah, Ahmad & Hashim, 2009; Ayub et. al., 2010) indicate that learners have positive attitudes towards the use of LMS technology in their learning process. The features of an LMS like forum, discussion board, e-mail, chat and other technological support learning tools extend face-to-face time with their instructors. This allows instructors to reinforce what is learned in face-to-face classroom. Moreover, because the fact that learning can be done at anytime and anywhere, it inevitably increases learners' online participation and engagement.

UiTM offers various online programmes to those who seek to pursue their education in a flexible mode of learning. The online programmes entail that learners attend face-to-face seminars and also participate online. Such mode of learning attracts working adults or professionals to enrol into various programmes offered by the university. i-Class, acts as a vehicle or tool for the management of the university to update or upload relevant information and materials regarding the courses offered. Besides that, most importantly, the system also serves as a social network where these learners communicate with each other via the technological support features that are available in the system. Among the asynchronous features of i-Class are email, discussion board (i-Discuss) and bulletin board. Institute of Education

Development (InED), UiTM is established to ensure the smooth running of the online learning programmes offered by the university. The learners meet their instructors face-to-face five times for each semester. They interact and meet the instructors and other learners for a 2 hour face-to-face seminar. Among the activities conducted during the seminars are attending lectures, doing on-going assessments, discussing with instructors and other peers.

For all the Diploma and Degree programmes in UiTM, they are required to take up English as a Second Language (ESL) Proficiency courses. Among the ESL compulsory courses are BEL120 (Consolidating Language Skills) and BEL260 (Preparatory English for Malaysian University English Test) in Semester 1 and 2. Each course has a Reading component.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online learning instructors have multiple roles and responsibilities that they have to carry out in making online learning a success. Previous researches reported that instructors have overlapping roles as instructors, designer and manager (Yang & Cornelious, 2004; Langdon & Taylor, 2005; Morris & Xu, 2005; Phillips, 2006; Emelyanova & Voronina, 2014; Toland,White, Mills, & Bolliger, 2014). More often than not, there is a blurring line that delineates among these roles when they are actually put into practice. This means that instructors of online learning have to juggle all these responsibilities. Without this realization instructors may feel overwhelmed or frustrated when they are confronted with multiple tasks which demand more time and work. Palmer and Holt (2009) observe that due to the extra tasks and time, most instructors are less satisfied with using LMS than learners. In the case of UiTM online learning programme, Nasir, Talib, and Hassan (2007) reported that the management often receives complaints from learners regarding instructors' lack of online interaction in i-Class. The cause of these complaints may originate from the responsibilities of UiTM online learning instructors have to take on. Among their responsibilities are to assist and guide learners in reading self-instructional materials and web-based materials. In addition, they have to initiate online discussion among learners, provide the learners with skills to answer questions and manage the assignments and projects. Besides online interaction, they have to conduct face-to-face seminars where they need to distribute, conduct,

collect and grade the assignments. Finally, they are responsible to grade the tests and exams as well as provide feedback to the managers. These responsibilities may have affected the instructors' commitment in teaching online. According to Al-Busaidi and Al-Shihi (2010) the success of the use of LMS in any institution begins with instructors' acceptance which is then followed by participation from learners. Therefore, successful online learning requires involvement from not only the learners, but also most importantly the instructors.

In making learners engaged with online learning, instructors are the key players to use the LMS system to its most potential. Morgan (2003) discovers that initially the reason behind the adoption of using LMS by instructors was the novelty and potential of the technology that it has to offer. From a survey of faculty members of University of Wisconsin System, the use of LMS then deteriorated over time among 5% of the surveyed respondents because they resented the time consuming process of uploading materials (Morgan 2003). This seems to be the main factor to reduce the use of the LMS. However, they maintained that the LMS is integral in terms of managing and supplementing face-to-face teaching especially in areas of learners participation and feedback, grading and maintaining communication with learners. Instructors are keen to use the system because it reduces administrative tasks and supports the traditional classroom. Harrington, Staffo, and Wright (2006) believe that effective management means efficient loading of teaching materials without consuming too much time when using the LMS. If it takes more time than usual, instructors may not be able to manage other workload. Therefore, these instructors use the LMS as an adjunct to their teaching. However, how the instructors adapt the LMS to convey their teaching is not really clear. Garrote and Pettersson (2007) argue that instructors use the tools in the LMS not because they are IT savvy but they think more on saving time and merely support a traditional teaching process. In their study, instructors do not use the tools in the LMS based on pedagogical impact that they would have on learners. Instructors are more concerned on using the technology to lessen the burden of managing classes. Yang and Cornelious (2005) mentioned that there is a tendency for instructors to translate the pedagogic principles in face-to-face classrooms to online learning scenario which leads to unsuccessful learning.

Steel and Levy (2009) believe that whether the tools in the LMS are successfully used or not depends on the individual, the instructor. Instructors may have differing pedagogical philosophies and beliefs that they transfer or assert in their teaching. Thus, when there is a mismatch, it creates tension and could only overcome if there is a solution for it. This diversity seems to be bane of using a standardized LMS which does not fit all. It can be said that, there has been mixed perceptions on using LMS despite of the technological features and benefits that it offers. In spite of these discrepancies in views of instructors using LMSs, researches on instructors using LMS are still lacking (Palmer & Holt, 2009; Steel & Levy, 2009; Al-Busaidi & Al-Shihi, 2010; Little-Wiles, Hundley, Worley & Bauer, 2012).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Several researches that investigate learners' perception on the use of LMS further revealed that their participation is dependent on the instructors' involvement in engaging them in online learning. For example, a survey by Steel (2007) on Australian G08 sandstone university students reveals that they do not expect the online instructors to be IT savvy, but they expect consistent and quality teaching in using the LMS. Another study on learners of University Putra Malaysia shows that instructors play an important role to initiate and motivate the learners to continue using the learning portal (Ayub et al., 2010).

These findings are also consistent with a study on the use of i-Class, UiTM, whereby learners expected everything to be taught by instructors just like the full time mode of instruction (Nasir, Talib & Hassan, 2007). Due to this expectation, the management of online learning programmes in UiTM, often received complaints about instructors who seemed to be under utilizing the system. Another study on an evaluation of UiTM online learning programmes reveals that learners have differing opinions when asked about their instructors (Nasir, Alwi & Said, 2007). These findings highlight the fact that most learners have positive experience in integrating technology in their learning experience. On the contrary for the instructors, their experiences using the LMS may not be as positive as to the learners. Harrington, Staffo, and Wright (2006) concur that learners usually pressure and expect instructors to use technology as frequently and effectively as

possible. In defence of the instructors, nonetheless, Nasir, Talib, and Hassan (2007) suggest that learners should have a better grasp of the concept of online learning, mainly to be autonomous, so that the pressure is lessened. From these studies, there are discrepancies in terms of the expectations from learners and instructors in using LMSs. A study by Mohd Ramli, Darus and Abu Bakar (2011) explored the use of UiTM LMS for ESL Reading through investigating learners' metacognitive online reading strategy. It was revealed that learners did not utilize the available features as they should. Learners were found to mostly use Global Strategy that puts priority on having a purpose to log in. Thus, this indicates that learners needed a specific task or instruction from the instructors to be given to them in order to get them engaged on the LMS. One of the major points emphasized in these studies, is the expectation for the instructors to provide quality and consistent online learning experience to the learners.

There is a need to investigate instructors' use of i-Class. Thus the objective of this study is how instructors perceive in using i-Class for online reading of ESL adult learners. To gain an in-depth investigation, active and less active instructors were interviewed.

These research questions guide the study:

1. What is the active instructors' perception of using i-Class in ESL online reading?

2. What is the less active instructors' perception of using i-Class in ESL online reading?

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study intends to investigate the use i-Class by online learning instructors of UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor campus in teaching ESL online reading to adult learners. In order to gain insights of the use of i-Class by the instructors, a case study research design is considered appropriate. A case study is the study of a single phenomenon (Bogoan & Biklen, 1998; Bryman, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). A series of one to one interviews with the instructors was conducted to obtain descriptive data on their use of i-Class.

A distinction of active and less active instructors was made to provide a better insight of the investigated phenomenon.

PARTICIPANT

The research participants were the instructors of UiTM. The instructors of ESL proficiency courses of UiTM are appointed by the Academy of Language Studies (ALS), UiTM and InED, UiTM. In order to get a comprehensive description of the situation, both active and less-active instructors using i-Class were selected. Identifying the lecturers was based on information from the ESL Proficiency Course Coordinator. According to the Course Coordinator, every semester the instructors' performances are evaluated based on their login frequencies and learners' evaluation. Active instructors are categorized as instructors who logged into i-Class frequently. On the other hand, the less active instructors are those who seldom log into i-Class. It is stipulated by InED that instructors must log into the system at least 10 times. The categories of instructors are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Instructors Interviewed for the Research

Instructor	Courses taught	Active	Non active	Experience (no of semesters)
1 (I1)	BEL260	√	-	4
2 (I2)	BEL120	-	√	8
3 (I3)	BEL120	√	-	3
4 (I4)	BEL120	√	-	10
5 (I5)	BEL120/260	-	√	10
6 (I6)	BEL260	-	√	6

The instructors' teaching experience in teaching UiTM online programmes using i-Class ranged from 3 to 10 semesters. Three instructors were identified as active and 3 instructors were identified as less active. The researcher made several appointments and conducted recorded interviews.

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RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Semi-structured interview questions were used during the interviews with the instructors (Appendix I). These types of questions were used because they allow flexibility for the researcher to adapt and adjust questions as the interview progressed.

Analysis of Data

All the recorded interviews were recorded using MP3 recorder and transcribed verbatim using Microsoft Office Word. Then, the transcriptions were uploaded and analysed using a qualitative data analysis software, NVivo Version 8.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Initial analysis of the interviews of Active Instructors and Less Active Instructors shows that i-Class is mainly used to complement learning and teaching. The most used feature as mentioned by these instructors is i-Discuss, an online forum in i-Class. A more in-depth analysis of the interviews of the 6 active instructors of the use of i-Class revealed the following sub themes. These sub themes highlight the differences of perceptions between Active Instructors and Less Active Instructors in using i-Class.

Active Instructors

In the interviews it was found that the active instructors had put emphasis on online participation when they were asked to describe the learners' online activities, even though the requirement for online participation is only 10%. Though this may seem to be minimal requirement, these active instructors had developed online activities on their own in order to get the learners engaged in learning online.

Specific Instructions

As far as online participation was concerned, active instructors found this aspect to be as important as face-to-face learning. To urge the learners

to participate further, an active instructor explained explicitly to learners at the beginning of the semester what is considered as online participation.

> "And for reading as well, each of the students for participation mark, from the first seminar itself, I inform them that their participation marks, the ten marks will come from online participation." (II1)

Another consideration that these active instructors revealed that, to increase online participation is by giving specific instructions or train learners with specific skills on how to participate in online discussions. As this excerpt of the interview reveals:

> "I do tell them that if you do not participate from time to time and I actually specified that answers like... "Yes", "No," "Okay"... does not count as participation. Some of them just, "Uhhh." [noded] "I see." I tell them that does not count, if you want to discuss, you really want to be online, you give something constructive." (I3)

This interview excerpt with I1 also stated the significance of specific instructions.

> "I highlight this is the kind of question you can ask; what, when, who, but I do tell them do not ask too many who and make sure it's not a Yes and No question. Not only requiring a Yes or No, but you has to have at least one sentence to answer the question." (I1)

Instructions were given by the instructor so that the learners were aware of the extent or the value of their online participation. It can be said that these active instructors, explicitly outlined and demonstrated the importance of online participation to the learners.

Follow-up and Structured Activities

Realizing that learners were not going to participate online unless proper and guided instructions were given, another active instructor contended that an instructor cannot simply leave the learners to discuss on

their own in discussion boards or online forums. She insisted that online activities needed to have immediate feedback and follow up activities. When asked the significance of following up and constant feedback, she claimed that,

> "Err... yeah... better than just open discussion you know when you just open up. 'Okay, today we discuss about reference' that method doesn't work." (I1)

This finding corroborates with Garrett's (2009) view that only structured feedback and activities ensure learners make full use of the features and tools that technology provides.

Furthermore, the instructor contended that cutting down tasks that are considered unnecessary or troublesome by the learners, like downloading reading materials, increases this sense of responsibility and thus elevate online participation. The instructor explained that she had provided hardcopies of the reading materials instead of uploading the materials to i-Class because of the reasons in the interview excerpt below,

> "The reason being is that when you entrust student with too many responsibilities, they will tend to delay, do not want to do it. They will give all sorts of excuses." (I1)

She also added that,

> "[...] I do it for them is because through my experience when you cut down the amount of works that they have to do, they are more willing to responds to whatever you want them..." (I1)

This particular instructor took on extra responsibilities so that learners would feel obligated to participate since they run out of excuses not to.

In the interviews with the active instructors, it did not only show that initiatives were taken to make learners engaged by developing online activities, but they also sought other means to increase participation. When there is a loophole in i-Class, they seek other alternatives for instance other messaging platform. An active instructor used Yahoo Messenger, another

chat platform that may be more accessible to encourage learners to interact and participate online. She expressed this in this interview excerpt,

> "Yes. And I don't encourage them to call me, especially when I'm teaching I don't entertain phone calls. So, I just tell them you either e-mail me and if I'm on YM, you just give message there. Or either you can just simply text me, "Puan, I have an enquiry here. I really need to know when you are free to talk." Then, we'll get back..." (I3)

All in all, the motivating factor for learners to participate online is widely determined by the extent of the weight of assessment and the assistance from the instructors. This is because these adult learners have professional and personal commitments which may be the factors that influence their learning commitment like time spent online. Also, the problem of online participation is not isolated to reading online. It is a problem of online learning as a whole. Therefore, instructors play a significant role to ensure learning also continues outside the walls of the classroom. Al-Busaidi and Al-Shihi (2010) indicated in their study that instructors who embrace the use of technology in online learning usually portray personal innovativeness to engage learners to use the LMS. The active instructors of this study developed online activities that fit the learners' motivation to go online and be engaged.

Autonomous Learning

A recurring theme that emerged in the interviews with the active instructors is regarding the learners' lack of motivation to participate not only for online reading, but also for overall online participation. These adult learners' needed to be given constant motivation to keep them engaged in learning especially learners who are working adults. This challenge was expressed by this active instructor, as shown in the transcript below,

> "Ermm... I guess it is attitude, but my bigger concern of ePJJ is the participation. You need to participate, not only attend the seminar, to actually put yourself into this class, your effort. Most of them think that you can just like attend one or two seminars and then you know there are couple of questions on portal and they can get by. But, that's not the case." (I3)

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The instructors see the need for these learners to be autonomous in order to make online learning beneficial for this target group. However, they expressed their frustrations that learners seemed refuse to be autonomous and preferred the instructors to design and develop a structured learning approach. For instance, an active instructor maintained that it is the attitude of learners that determine the extent of use of i-Class as this excerpt illustrates,

> "I don't face many problems. The problems are not i-Class, the problems are more of the students. They want to participate or not, you know..." (I4)

Furthermore, Instructor 3 felt that the learners should continue to learn language beyond the classroom by getting engaged online as in this quote,

> "That's the problem for me. That's why I always tell them, 'You need this book' or 'You need to go onto this website, and then try to understand on your own. I cannot really be there for you.' I do tell them this is more of independent learning thing. If you think you can do this, okay, you are good. But if you can't be independent, I really can't help you. Hmm..." (I3)

Therefore, essentially, the availability of the online learning features and tools of i-Class does not ensure that learners would use them. This finding further support the idea by Garrett (2009) that for ESL learners to continue using the language outside the classroom, instructors and content developers and designers have to stress on following up activities.

LESS ACTIVE INSTRUCTORS

From the interviews, the less active instructors described that they prefer face-to-face instruction. The implication is that there were less online activities that led to less learners' online participation. The less active instructors were asked about learners' online participation which, make up 10% of their final grade. They described that these learners did participate online without specific instructions or follow-up activities.

Less Online Instruction

A less active instructor stated that for the adult learners, the Internet is easily available and accessible to them. Thus, the learners participated online regardless whether there was or was not any instruction as this interview with Instructor 5 shows,

> "...and Internet is very much connected to English and we have lots of English materials in the internet. So, if the face to face student, we have to ask them, either they have the Internet facility to ask them to do some more research and things like that but for this adult student who is online learners we can take things for granted. We can be sure that Internet is the facility that is with them, so then, there will be easier for us to ask them to search for current issues, things like that." (I5)

Instructor 2 concurred that specific instructions were not necessary as these excerpt reveals,

> "I: Do you, I mean teach your students or tell your students how to ask the questions in i-Class?
>
> I2:   Honestly, I did not. Do we need to teach them how to ask questions? [LAUGH]" (I2)

When further asked about the rationale for lack of online instructions, a less active instructor justified that specific instruction might discourage learners to participate as this excerpt reveals,

> "But, what is countered for is active participation for you to say, to agree or for you to disagree even though you have reason or not that is the secondary. Because not many student can disagree with reason and provide reason. If we expect too much, it will be a building block when they can't give reason, so they won't participate. I say the minimum is that I want to have participation where agree or disagree." (I5)

Face-to-face Instruction

A sub theme that echoes among the less active instructors is the preference of face-to-face instruction in teaching reading. All instructors have printed modules and textbooks to assist them in teaching the course. The less active instructors used these texts to teach reading face-to-face. Therefore, most reading activities were done during the face-to-face seminars as this particular instructor expressed that,

> "Uhmm... I would say depends, actually. Sometimes, if they don't understand in the seminar, they will ask again in i-Class. But, most explanation in reading I would prefer in the seminar. Yeah..." (I2)

The less active instructors claimed that certain reading concepts or skills were better explained face-to-face. For example, teaching reference words in particular was taught face-to-face by using modules or textbooks to assist the learners and they were able to grasp the concept easier.

> "The module because there are past years questions over there and then, it's easy for me to say, the word 'they' over here refers to the Malaysian citizens. For example, this line - I would easily okay now, you put an arrow to your anaphoric or cataphoric references. It's easier for me to show them face to face with the help of markers and whiteboards, easier... rather than to do it online. I don't know how to put the arrows and [show it to them?] Yes, and to type things again it will be hmmm... time consuming." (I5)

This instructor felt that she could explain a certain concept clearly face-to-face, especially when it involves teaching items that are pertinent to their examination. In addition, the instructor suggested that understanding of the text can be measured immediately through learners' facial expressions or verbal discussions. The immediate response that the instructors received from learners face-to-face ensured that the taught skills were acquired. In contrast, she claimed that using features like forum discussion in i-Class might not reflect learners' level of comprehension. For example, learners' responses in discussion thread like "I agree" or "I understand" might not

reflect the level of comprehension. The instructor felt that i-Class might not provide a supportive or non-threatening environment for these adult learners.

Based on the analysis of interviews with the less active instructors, it can be assumed that they were doubtful of themselves as moderators for the online learners due to the demanding and time consuming tasks.

Use LMS to Manage Learners

The less active instructors described that online activities using i-Class were mainly for managing learners online. i-Class features that were frequently used were features that allow them to perform these managing tasks.

For the less active instructors, one of the managing tasks using *i-Class* as a platform is to disseminate information to these distant learners. Among the features used by the instructors were for example, i-Discuss as a forum for discussion, *Announcement* as a bulletin board to put up course information, *myDrawer* as a storage to upload examination papers and other relevant teaching and learning materials. In between face-to-face seminars, the instructors usually uploaded examination questions to the LMS as this instructor described in the interview,

> "What I do basically is I give them the... err... past years questions, right? Because they only have five meetings, so I give them online, right? Past year exam paper, so what they do is they answer the questions and we meet in class and I go through the answers with them." (I6)

These asynchronous features were used by instructors to post information, questions or announcements. Instructor 6, who is a less active, further described that online interactions between the instructor and learners were most of the time restricted to sending and receiving assignments as she stated, "That's what I do with writing, then I print their... whatever they wrote, then I mark the paper and give it back to them. I don't give them through online, but in the class." (I6).

i-Class helped Instructor 5 to gauge whether the learners are motivated to learn and stay in the programme as this interview excerpt reveals,

"I do not realize that but, I realize that because I usually calculate the participation mark at the end of semester. I allow the student to participate till the last day, okay. [You open the channel until the last] Yeah... it's an opportunity for them. I assume if you're not free now, you might be free later. As long as you participate, right, so at the end of the semester we can... we'll have to check the reason for the students who disappear from the exam, right? [Give reason...] or whatever it is, so, there is strong relationship of few participation and disappearance at the end of the semester." (I5)

Interestingly, the instructor drew attention to the correlation between low online participation and the rate of drop outs. To this particular instructor, i-Class helped her to identify problematic learners and thus, managing these distance learners was easier. i-Class plays a significant role of not just to make learners engaged online but also engaged throughout the course of their learning programmes.

DISCUSSION

It can be said, overall, the active instructors have a positive attitude in integrating technology into their teaching. These instructors spent time in creating materials and activities to get learners engaged. Most importantly, from this study, these active instructors highlighted the significance of follow-up and feedback activities in order to get learners engaged, particularly ESL adult learners.

Assessment is part and parcel of any learning programmes to measure achievement and performance. In the case of this study, the active instructors put priority in achieving examination goals and completing assessment requirements. These active instructors were aware of the potentials of the technology of i-Class, but they have to adapt their pedagogical beliefs and practices to accommodate and encourage learners. It is a practice that they were accustomed to do because of learners' expectations.

Overall, the less active instructors also have positive views on using i-Class in their teaching practices. The findings of the interviews with the less active instructors suggest that the instructors were using i-Class for mainly two reasons. i-Class was used to assist them in monitoring learners' online participation and distributing materials to learners by uploading examinations to these distant adult learners. This current study appears to support the idea by Weaver, Spratt and Nair (2008) who found in their study that the instructors focus more on the administrative issues when using the LMS than teaching itself.

Another important finding, the less active instructors indicated that spending time for conducting online activities was a burden. This seems to be a major obstacle that hinders these instructors to integrate technology as an effective language teaching tool. The less active instructors have the perception that integrating technology burdens their teaching and increases their responsibility. The less active instructors should be exposed to the possibilities of integrating i-Class to enhance their teaching through proper training. They are actually moderators or facilitators that could extend the use of the language outside the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Apparently, from the findings of the interviews of both groups, i-Class needs to be improved in terms of connectivity and user-friendliness. The instructors remarked that the management should assist online instructors in terms of making the system more accessible. Harrington, Staffo, and Wright (2006) found that adequate technical support from the management is usually the uppermost concern expressed by online learning instructors. With the technical problems faced, nevertheless, the active instructors indicated that they sought other online platforms to compensate the flaws in the system. Such effort is commendable but the management of the institution needs to seek for practical solutions and viable alternatives to support these instructors. Though other means may be effective as well, the management or the institution should take the instructors' views and experiences into consideration to improve i-Class.

In a nutshell, i-Class is used as online learning platform for these instructors to connect with learners outside the four walls of the classroom. The extent whether i-Class plays a significant role as a means to ensure continuous use of the targeted language largely depends on the instructors.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Questions

1. What are the difficulties that you face when teaching online reading skill? Vocabulary?

2. Do you use the current LMS to teach reading skills? Is it sufficient? Why?

3. Can you describe how do you usually teach reading skill? How much time do you spend teaching reading?

4.   Are you satisfied with the present online learning environment in teaching reading skills?

5.   If you wish to improve the teaching process of reading skills online, how would you do it?