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Strategising with Presence: An Action Research Study on Enhancing English Language Learners' Production and Perceptions in Blackboard and Flip

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Abstract: *This second-cycle action research study examines the effects of cultivating social, cognitive, and teaching presence on the productive skills and perceptions of English language learners (ELLs) in virtual learning environments (VLEs). Within the context of King Abdulaziz University's (KAU) Foundation Year English program, this research examines the challenges associated with online engagement and the quality of student-produced materials in the post-COVID-19 era. Following Norton's (2009) ITDEM action research model, the researcher, in their capacity as an embedded practitioner, engaged in collaborative work with 76 ELLs (a subset of 30 for core activities and 4 for interviews). Data collection methods included questionnaires (n=30), Blackboard posts (n=47), Flip videos (n=19), and semi-structured interviews (n=4). The analysis employed descriptive statistics, second-language learners (L2) error analysis, and thematic analysis, drawing upon the SOLO Taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982) and the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison et al., 2000). The study demonstrates that ELLs viewed VLEs favourably, exhibiting increased comfort and improved communication skills as a result. Although the quality of posts varied and some instances of plagiarism were observed, Flip videos displayed a demonstrably higher level of originality and intellectual depth. Examination of errors indicated systematic difficulties for L2. ELLs' reflections revealed prevalent themes of power, complex online roles, and a yearning for meaningful online pedagogical experiences. This research highlights the crucial role of teaching presence in fostering both cognitive and social engagement with presence, thereby supporting the implementation of constructivist pedagogical strategies within online English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments. A discussion of the impact on KAU's e-learning strategies and future action research initiatives is provided.*

Keywords: action research, community of inquiry, English language learners, flip, presence, power, solo taxonomy

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically accelerated the worldwide transition to online education, thereby highlighting the critical need for robust and stimulating virtual learning environments (VLEs) in higher education (Keefe et al., 2020). In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), this shift has created distinctive obstacles, most notably in maintaining student engagement, ensuring high-quality online output, and cultivating a meaningful sense of presence comparable to, or exceeding, that of traditional classroom settings (Fischer & Yang, 2022; Keefe et al., 2020; Yeşilçınar, 2019). The successful integration of English Language Learners (ELLs) into digital platforms, fostering genuine communicative competence, is a critical pedagogical and institutional priority. This research is situated within the Foundation Year English program at King Abdulaziz University's (KAU) Faculty of Applied Studies in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In the first researcher's capacity as the KAU instructor of the ELLs that provided data for this study, he possesses unique insights into this study's context which afford this study to gain insight from his multimodal role of being the KAU researcher or instructor when referred to in this study (Alsowayegh et al., 2018; Bardesi & Garba, 2022; Stake, 1981). His direct engagement with ELLs affords a refined comprehension of their learning processes, particular challenges, and the immediate effects of pedagogical strategies. The methodology is centrally structured around this practitioner-based research approach, enabling continuous self-reflection and adaptation. Post-COVID-19, the KAU Foundation Year English department implemented significant modifications to its online English language instruction, encompassing pedagogical approaches, assessment strategies, and learning resources (Figure 1 below).

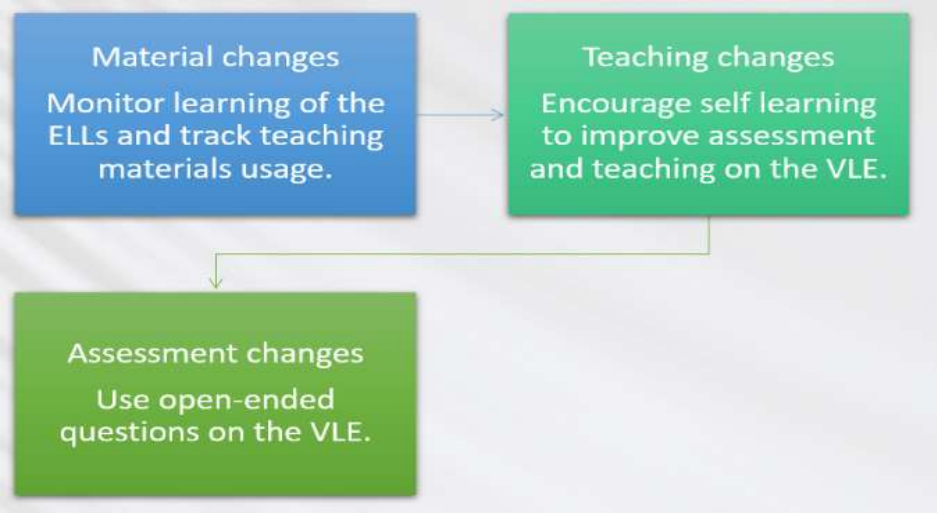

Figure 1. Changes to materials, teaching, and assessment.

This necessitated a shift to online learning supervision, improved online pedagogical and assessment methodologies, and the integration of open-ended assessment questions within the VLE. Alterations to the course significantly affected the online learning environment, particularly the Intensive English II course delivered through Blackboard Collaborate in the 2022 academic year. This research explored how ELLs leveraged shared online links to produce job-related content (videos and posts), assessing both their level of engagement and the quality of their English language production. Also, this study reports on the second cycle of a sustained action research project. The initial phase of the study investigated ELLs' communication patterns within informal online environments, focusing primarily on WhatsApp (Alsowayegh & Garba, 2021; Alsowayegh, & Garba, 2019).

Furthering the investigation initiated in the prior action research cycle, this research cycle focuses on structured online production tasks within designated VLEs (Blackboard and Flip) and undertakes a detailed analysis of how social, cognitive, and teaching presence affect learning outcomes. The primary objective of this action research was to examine the influence of presence on KAU Foundation Year ELLs' use of Blackboard and Flip for creating content, with particular attention paid to their justification of job preferences through the use of the conjunction because.

To achieve this overarching aim, the following sub-research questions guided the investigation:

1. What are the opinions of the ELLs about making their Blackboard posts and Flip videos?
2. What are the levels of quality in the Blackboard posts and Flip videos?
3. What types of language errors are in the Blackboard posts and Flip videos?
4. How do the ELLs reflect on their learning by making Blackboard posts and creating Flip videos?

This action research provides substantial empirical evidence to support practice-based decision-making for KAU stakeholders, particularly within the Deanship of e-Learning and Distance Education (DeLDE) and the English Department, regarding the impact of specific online pedagogical methods on language acquisition. Furthermore, this model's applicability extends to action research within extensive online EFL environments, highlighting the crucial interplay between theoretical structures and practical classroom demands.

The following sections review existing research and highlight five key elements to online learning. We then proceed to elucidate the action research methodology used in this study, comprising quantitative and qualitative data. The findings section presents the perspectives of the ELLs as expressed in their submitted Blackboard posts and Flip videos, quality of work, error analysis, and interview data. The discussion addresses these results within the framework of the aforementioned four sub-research questions. We provide a section of our study's limitations, followed by the conclusion. But first, we begin with the literature review, next.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Five fundamental elements contributing to successful online learning and research are investigated in this review. Firstly, we consider the Community of Inquiry (CoI) (Garrison et al., 2000), which provides the essential theoretical framework for a complete understanding of the complexities inherent in online learning. Secondly, we review the literature on the use of digital tools for learning. Then, we justify learning using videos from Flip, which underpins our approach to supporting the ELLs at KAU. Thirdly, we consider the value of analysing language learning errors, to aid in evaluating language errors in ELLs' work submitted online. Fourthly, we employ the SOLO taxonomy to provide an innovative assessment of the quality of digital content produced by ELLs. SOLO facilitates a structured categorisation of the type of quality in the ELLs' posts and videos. Lastly, our study is grounded in an action research framework, which we also discuss. The synthesis of these five elements from the literature review is crucial to the direction of this actionlinkedinresearch. We begin with the CoI framework.

A CoI Theoretical Framework

Before exploring the complexities of online learning, we must define our core beliefs about online learning. This study thus demonstrates that online learning's nature is not static, but rather a malleable and interactive process shaped by the active participation of learners (Driver et al., 1994). Accordingly, the defining characteristic of online learning is viewed as the dynamic interaction and diverse perspectives of all participants on the VLE, superseding mere adherence to established guidelines (Garrison et al., 2000). This viewpoint proposes an epistemological framework grounded in constructivist and interpretivist principles (Driver et al., 1994). Therefore, we propose that knowledge acquisition for ELLs is an active process. Understanding in this context demands more than simple fact-finding; it involves the sophisticated interpretation and integration of subjective opinions from the ELLs. Accordingly, this study prioritises learners' perceptions and levels of engagement within the VLE. This study adopted the well-regarded CoI framework (Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison, 2011) to investigate the dynamics of successful online learning. Garrison et al., (2000) supplies the CoI as a robust analytical structure for understanding essential aspects of successful online learning environments, we concur. The structure emphasises the convergence of three types of presence. Accordingly, to Garrison et al. (2000) social presence is the capacity of participants online to project their distinct personalities and emotions, creating a sense of authenticity for other users. So, at KAU, successful language learning on the VLE depends on learners feeling comfortable connecting with peers and instructors and expressing themselves openly. The overarching objective of social presence, especially for the ELLs, is to cultivate a sense of community and interpersonal relationships.

Within the CoI is a second element, cognitive presence, which signifies the extent to which learners actively construct and validate meaning through thoughtful reflection and interaction (Garrison et

al., 2000). This necessitates higher-order thinking skills, such as critical analysis, problem-solving, and the construction of new knowledge from diverse sources (Moore & Miller, 2022). At its core, cognitive presence is about ELLs engaging with learning English on an intellectual level. Thirdly, Teaching Presence constitutes the instructor's essential role in designing the learning experience, facilitating discussions, and delivering direct instruction to cultivate meaningful educational outcomes (Anderson et al., 2001). This entails establishing transparent expectations, directing the progression of activities, and providing explicit support and feedback.

The final element form the CoI is teaching presence which signifies the KAU instructor's deliberate attempt to cultivate a cohesive and productive learning environment for the ELLs. These three interconnected forms of presence create a richer, more effective online learning experience, based on the CoI framework. This belief is reflected in the approach taken in this study. To cultivate a robust online learning environment, the KAU instructor implemented specific learning activities, monitored ELLs participation, and meticulously assessed their influence.

Through continuous design, observation, and reflection, our review of the CoI highlights the significance of the CoI for improving teaching methods. It further highlights the importance of elevating the quality of online learning. Thus, the CoI framework can guide where researchers can find where the ELLs are actively learning.

Online Language Learning and Digital Tools

Successful online language learning today depends heavily on effectively using VLEs and digital tools. The influence of platforms such as Blackboard for discussion forums and synchronous sessions (Blackboard Collaborate), in conjunction with emerging technologies like Flip (formerly Flipgrid), necessitates rigorous analysis. Asynchronous communication (Marshall & Kostka, 2020) and student English confidence (McLain, 2018) may be improved by using the video discussion platform Flip. Further, research indicates that Flip improves learning in online discussions (Lowenthal & Moore, 2020) and lessens feelings of isolation among online students (Moore & Miller, 2022). Consequently, empirical findings suggest that the purposeful employment of Flip in education, prioritising ethical application, data security, and appropriate permissions, is paramount to effective student learning (Cormack et al., 2009; Hartley & Norton, 2002; Norton, 2009). We agree. And we highlight how such usage may be seen in Figure 3, where the KAU instructor used Flip with his ELLs between 2021-2022 to generate 21 topics that garnered 152 responses at KAU during the peak of COVID-19.

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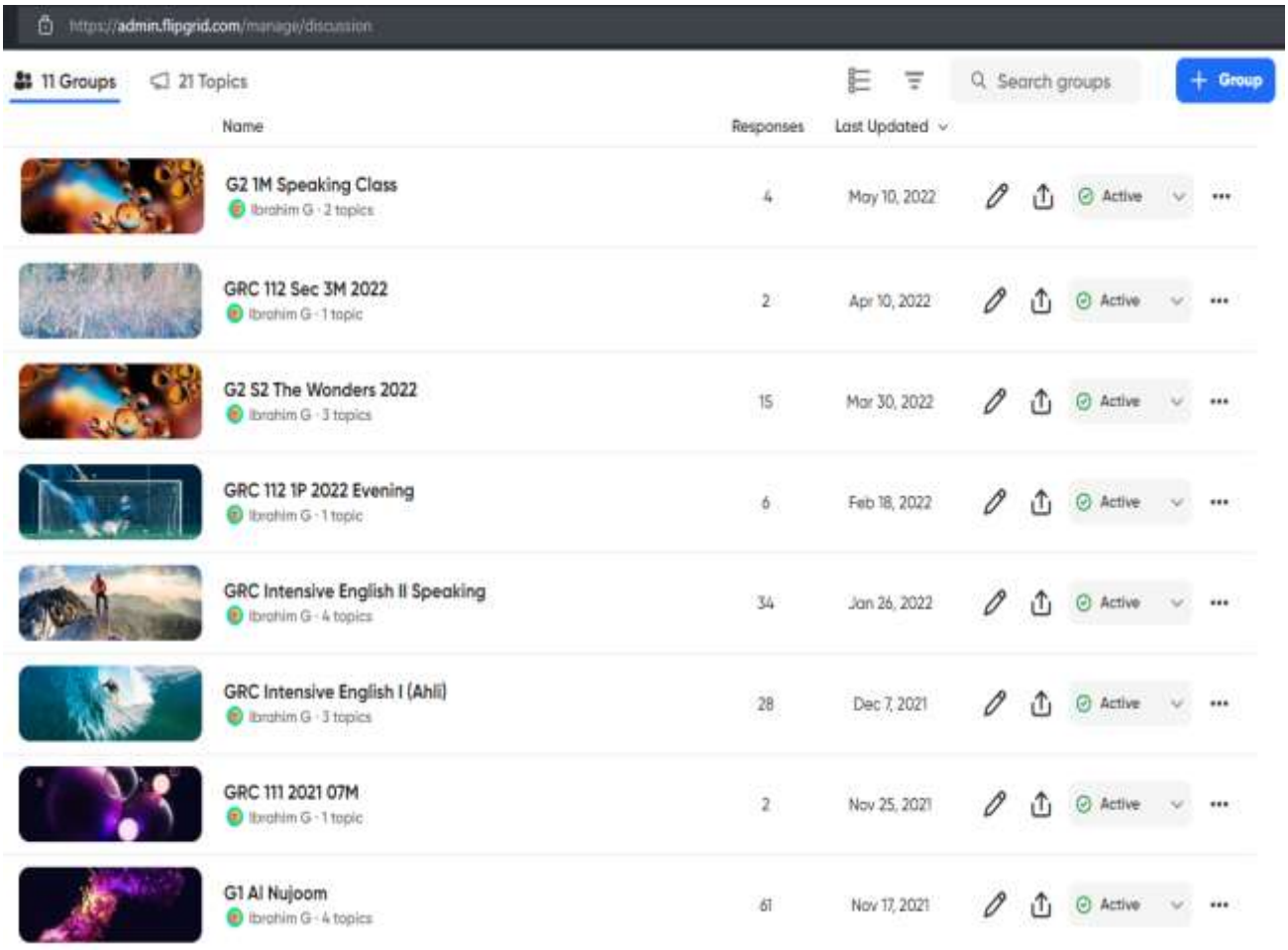

Figure 2. Image of English courses during the 2021-2022 academic period.

Second Language Error Analysis

A fundamental component of language pedagogy involves the scrutiny of errors made by second language (L2) learners, providing insights into their developing interlanguage systems (Corder, 1967; Ellis, 2008). Despite the absence of a universally accepted criterion for second language error analysis (He & Oltra-Massuet, 2021), systematic approaches are of paramount importance. Digital tools facilitate error detection in digital environments (Al-Ahdal, 2020; Spector, 2022). However, human analysis remains crucial for sophisticated interpretation, especially concerning plagiarism (García-Sánchez, 2022; Liu & Yang, 2014). Furthermore, verifying the originality of student submissions poses a considerable problem, as authentic language facilitates the identification of language learning progress (Armellini & De Stefani, 2016; Jou et al., 2021).

Corder's (1967) and Ellis's (2008) research on error analysis informed the interpretation of errors in the oral and written work of the ELLs in this study as they highlight type of errors L2 learners produce in written or spoken forms. In this study, we use the research on error analysis to ground the ELL s' errors on Blackboard and Flip.

2.4. Comprehension Analysis: The SOLO Taxonomy

To achieve a ground-breaking analysis of ELLs' learning outcomes, this study uses the Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome (SOLO) Taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982). SOLO offers a hierarchical structure for assessing the complexity and depth of student understanding, thereby evaluating cognitive engagement beyond mere accuracy. Five differentiated outcomes exist within the SOLO model to represent the ELLs' progress in their posts or videos.

- Outcome one is pre-structural, which shows that an ELL lacks comprehension by observing their produced work.
- Outcome two is uni-structural, which shows an ELL's focus being limited to their single relevant detail they produced in their work.
- Outcome three is multi-structural, which shows an ELL employing a tactic to learning by identifying several relevant points, but fails to connect them.
- Outcome four is relational, where an ELL combines various elements to create a coherent whole.
- Outcome five is where an extended abstract usage sees the ELLs extending their holistic understanding to new situations and contexts.

Studies show SOLO's effectiveness in evaluating the quality of online content, including Blackboard posts (Keiper et al., 2021; Pearson, 2018) and the quality of Flip videos (Crompton et al., 2021; Keiper et al., 2021; Freislich & Bowen-James, 2020). Therefore, SOLO can objectively assess how ELLs at KAU also connect their learning across various VLEs.

2.5. Action Research as a Methodological Framework

This study employs an action research paradigm, a cyclical and participatory methodology well-suited to practitioner-led inquiry focused on enhancing educational practice (Lewin, 1946; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Burns, 2010). It recognises the practitioner's insider knowledge (Stake, 1981), allowing for a systematic examination of immediate, contextual problems. Given the ever-shifting landscape of online language learning (Driver et al., 1994; Murray, 2000), the flexible approach of action research proves highly advantageous for researchers in this area.

Following Norton's (2009) ITDEM action research process, we structured this research. ITDEM follows a clear, iterative process explained below according to its acronym. ITDEM summarises

the main stages of research and development. This method offers a systematic process for identifying problems, planning investigations, implementing solutions, assessing results, and making adjustments as needed. For a step-by-step explanation, please refer to Figure 2 below.

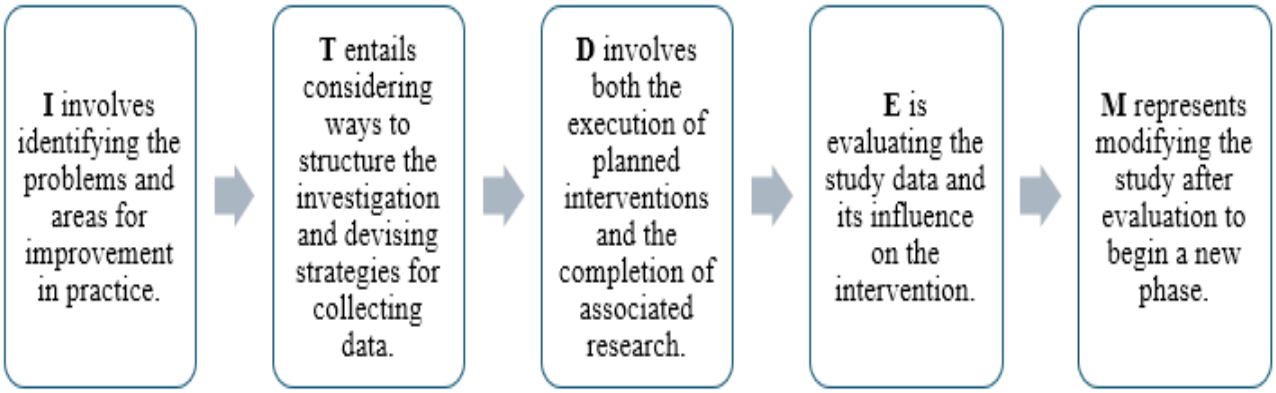

Figure 3. The ITDEM action research process

The review has helped identify areas for improvement and guides future research. So, this section concludes by redefining online learning from KAU. It demonstrates that online learning uniquely facilitates the observation of ELLs in dynamic online situations. This ITDEM action research incorporates the KAU researcher-instructor's insights to analyse Blackboard posts and Flip videos, gathering ELL student perspectives on their learning to inform further evaluation.

However, defining the state-of-the-art approach for L2 learning online has identified the research gap that this action research fills from different perspectives. One perspective is from our assumption about learning, which led to applying the CoI framework in this study. Another perspective is from our view of second language errors and usage of SOLO to ground quality ELLs posts and videos. Thus, this literature review occupies the space related to how ELLs working online can be studied to learn from their perception of their learning in the VLE at KAU. Also, we use the cyclical nature of ITDEM processes as the locus for ongoing improvement, keeping the research relevant to both learners' lived experiences and the realities of the classroom. Building on preliminary research into online communication (Alsowayegh & Garba, 2021), this study uses the ITDEM cycle to evaluate how to improve the ELLs engagement and academic success for L2 learning online.

METHODOLOGY

Based on an interpretivist approach, this action research acknowledged that the meaning of online learning is subjective, shaped by participants' experiences and interactions (Garrison et al., 2000).

The foundation of our ontology is the socially constructed nature of the online learning environment, including the concept of presence, which emerges from the interactions and interpretations of its participants. Instead of relying only on objective facts, our approach to acquiring knowledge uses qualitative and quantitative data, focusing on the subjective experiences of the ELLs and their observable work. This aligns with the action research tradition of seeking practical understanding to improve practice. Therefore, we present the ITDEM cycle followed by the participants and data collection below.

The ITDEM Cycle

Norton's (2009) ITDEM cycle provided the framework for this action research, structuring our investigation across several integrated stages. By using a cyclical approach, research directly informs practical improvements to the learning environment.

This action research started by identifying the problem, as the KAU instructor pondered on English ELLs using online platforms like Blackboard and Flip to discuss job preferences. However, their engagement often lacked depth. Doubts were raised regarding the quality of their input and the possibility of uncritical engagement. This initial identification clearly focused this research.

This research then considered various investigative approaches by the KAU researcher, staging the study in a three-part phase. Phase one was dedicated to thorough preparation: a comprehensive literature review, collaboration with KAU's e-Learning Deanship, and the securing of full ethical clearance. Phase two involved considerations about how to prepare data collection instruments using MSN Forms, emailing and inviting ELLs to complete the form and using Excel to download the data. Careful planning ensured our action research was both systematic and ethically designed. With ethical permission granted, phase three involved how the KAU researcher ethically gathering data via questionnaires, interviews, and VLE work samples.

The ITDEM process continued with doing the investigation. Here, the KAU researcher implemented a meticulously planned data collection that involved collecting diverse data, encompassing objective facts (first-order data) and subjective ELL perspectives and experiences (second-order data) (Jones et al., 2007; Norton, 2009; Oppenheim, 2000; Orne, 2017). This two-pronged approach was crucial to fully answering this study's research and sub-research questions.

After collecting the data, the KAU researcher also evaluated it. This crucial stage demanded a thorough analysis of the collected data. The impact of VLE activities on student learning and ELL views of the process is discussed further in the Results section.

This comprehensive discussion led to evaluating and reaching the final ITDEM process: modifying the investigation. This research directly influenced the KAU instructor's practices. Also, we

identified concrete ways to improve future teaching and suggested specific changes to our teaching methods using this action research because it directly improves what to do on the VLE and sets the stage for future cycles of inquiry, leading to continuous refinement and growth.

Study Context and Participants

This research was conducted within the Foundation Year English program at KAU during the 2022 academic year. Blackboard Collaborate, discussion forums, and Flip were employed to facilitate the online instruction of English Department courses, such as Intensive English II, which used Interchange 2 and the English learning course book. ELLs activities and interactions within this study were primarily supported by the Blackboard and Flip VLEs.

Purposive sampling was useful for this study for several reasons (Cohen et al., 2007; Norton, 1992). First, action research leverages purposive sampling, enabling teachers to collect focused evidence related to specific issues they identify (Edge & Richards, 1993). Second, accurate data is crucial for insightful analysis, which helps teachers make sound decisions about modifying their practice (Alsowayegh & Garba, 2021). Finally, context is crucial in action research (Çelïk & Dïkïlitaç, 2015), which makes purposive sampling ideal for gathering relevant viewpoints, thus boosting the validity and applicability of the findings for the KAU researcher to develop and improve the ELLs language achievement in this study.

Table 1 indicates that 76 ELLs participated in the KAU instructor's Intensive English II courses during the fall 2022 semester. Data for this study were collected from 30 male ELLs who voluntarily completed an online questionnaire and granted access to their Blackboard posts (*n=47*) and Flip videos (*n=19*). Purposive sampling ensured direct alignment with the KAU-instructor's classroom setting.

Table 1. No. of ELLs enrolled in the Intensive English course during the 2022 semester.

Course code	Course name	Number of ELLs in Blackboard
32219		27
32217	Intensive	26
44201	English II	12
44202		11
	Total ELLs	**76**

A purposeful sample of four ELLs participated in semi-structured interviews to obtain rich qualitative data. A significant majority of participants (80% aged 18-24) were members of Generation Z, a demographic documented as favouring active learning approaches (Rue, 2018). Participant self-assessments revealed a broad spectrum of English proficiency, with levels ranging

from beginner (34%) to advanced (33%), consistent with their self-reported online learning skills (40% beginner; See Figure 4 below).

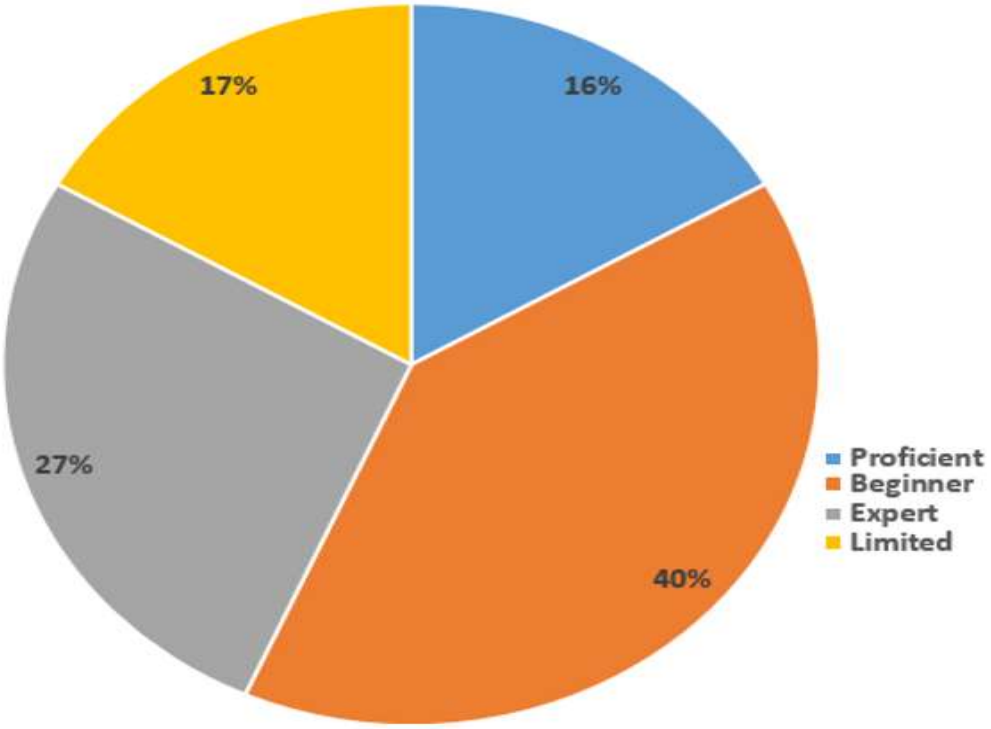

Figure 4. ELLs online learning proficiency.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

For a thorough understanding of the data, we combined first-order-quantitative and second-order-qualitative data sources using a mixed-methods approach (Lowenthal & Dunlap, 2020). Data was collected from the online questionnaire, Blackboard posts and Flip videos, and semi-structured interviews.

Data Collection: The Online Questionnaire

Our data collection started with a carefully designed online questionnaire. First, the questionnaire items were based on validated item CoI framework, thus grounding the questionnaire in established online learning theory (Garrison et al., 2006; Lin, 2004). Second, the questionnaire, developed using MSN Forms, incorporated nine Likert-scale items, each employing a 1-to-5 Likert-scale response format ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These items directly

addressed the issue of social presence. To obtain more comprehensive feedback on ELLs, an open-ended question was included, resulting in a total of ten items: nine closed-ended and one open-ended.

The KAU researcher piloted the questionnaire on ELLs (*n=5*). This crucial step identified potential problems and ensured questions were clearly stated (Jones et al., 2007; Oppenheim, 2000). Pilot testing indicated that offering the questionnaire in both English and Arabic significantly improved understanding for ELLs, so the MSN form included both language options.

For administrative reasons, the KAU instructor sent the questionnaire link to all 76 ELLs in Intensive English II classes through Blackboard Collaborate and WhatsApp. Thirty completed surveys were received, representing a 41% response rate, after a two-week period.

The online questionnaire was developed and used with a strong focus on ethical practices. All participating ELLs gave their informed consent online before the study began. To emphasise the voluntary nature of participation, the KAU researcher implemented strict measures to prevent the collection of any personally identifiable data, like emails or confidential information. This ensured both ELLs privacy and the ethical collection of our data.

Data Collection: Blackboard Posts and Flip Videos

For their classwork, the ELLs made online posts (see Table 2). Blackboard posts and Flip videos were key parts of our ELLs' curriculum (Garba, 2016; Littlejohn, 2011; Tomlinson, 2009). They needed to go online and explain their job preferences and give reasons. For clarity, the KAU instructor posted detailed assignment instructions to Blackboard and Flip on March 28, 2022, see Appendix 1.

Table 2. The online sessions between the students, their instructor, and the materials.

Online sessions Items	Purpose	Engage with who	Time / posts
	First session		
Introduction	Provide background on job skills important in the workplace	Teacher to ELLs	5 minutes
Image	Welcome to Student X's world Remind students of start and end of session when played back	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	
Objectives	To discuss types of skills, jobs, personality adjectives To use gerunds and clauses with because	Teacher to ELLs	2 minutes
Identifying with 21st Century Skills	To identify with jobs and skills they like	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	12 minutes
Video introducing 21st Century Skills	To introduce collaoration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking	ELLs watch	6 minutes
Discussion	To use gerunds to discover use of job skills	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	20 minutes
Offline practice	To play online game at Kahoot to practice use of gerunds and job skills	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	16 minutes
	Second session		
Traits and personalities	To connect traits to postive or negative meaning and practice use of dictionary	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	20 minutes
Clause with because	To link job preference with skills	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	26 minutes
Discussion	To use clause with because	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	20 minutes
Online student interaction			
Blackboard discussion	To practice clause with because and link with job preference	Teacher to ELLs ELLs to ELLs ELLs to teacher	
Flip video	To speak about job preference with a reason	ELLs work	5 minutes 42 seconds

After receiving ethical approval from the Dean and the ELLs, the KAU researcher reviewed their completed work. In March and April of 2022, he transferred 47 Blackboard posts and 19 Flip videos to his computer for analysis.

The KAU researcher found some potentially plagiarised or copied material in several Blackboard posts during data collection. The data analysis section below delves deeper into this key observation.

Data Collection: Semi-structured Interviews

The KAU researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to gain a richer understanding of ELLs' experiences (see Appendix 2). Some criteria were used to select interview participants who had completed the online survey. One needed ELLs that shared posts on videos on the VLEs. A second required ELLs willing to participate in the semi-structured interviews by informing their KAU instructor in class. A final criterion included using WhatsApp to invite those willing to participate and give online consent after carefully reading the information sheet about the interview before participating. This established their informed consent to participate on the study. Thus, Zoom was used for all interviews *(n=4)*, each roughly 25 minutes long. The questions prompted reflective consideration of participants' learning experiences using Blackboard and Flip, soliciting feedback on potential improvements to these platforms and related activities. Finally, the Zoom video recordings of the interviews were downloaded and transcribed into text data for detailed analysis.

Data Analysis

A rigorous analysis of the collected data was performed, employing descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and error analysis (see Table 3 for details on data sources and analytical methods). A comprehensive analysis provided a holistic understanding of the various aspects of online learning engagement, thereby enabling us to address the four sub-research questions (1-4).

Table 4. Four data and analysis

No.	Data	Analysis	Purpose (VLEs refer to Blackboard and Flip)
1.	Questionnaire	Descriptive analysis	To describe the ELLs' opinions about using the VLEs.
		Thematic analysis	To gain insight from the ELLs about working on the VLEs.
2.	Blackboard posts	Descriptive analysis	To describe the ELLs' work on the VLE.
3.	Flip videos	Error analysis	To describe the ELLs' language errors in the VLE.
		Quality analysis	To gain insight from the quality of the work in the VLE.
4.	Semi-structured interviews	Thematic analysis	To explore the ELLs' views about learning English on the VLEs.

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and percentages, were computed using Microsoft Excel to analyse the questionnaire data (Cohen et al., 2007). This quantitative methodology facilitated precise measurement of ELLs' opinions and perceptions, thereby directly addressing the first research question. Moreover, thematic analysis of the open-ended questionnaire item yielded qualitative data on ELL experiences and perspectives.

A multi-layered analysis of Blackboard posts and Flip videos was conducted. First layer analysis involved counting the posts and videos. Second layer analysis employed SOLO Taxonomy to ensure the quality of the analysis. SOLO facilitated a rigorous assessment of both comprehension depth and language production quality in the collected posts (*n=47*) and videos (*n=19*). The unit of analysis comprised the meaning expressed in the posts. A meticulous coding scheme, based on

SOLO's five-tiered taxonomy, was applied to each meaningful unit, encompassing individual sentences (Holbeck & Hartman, 2021; Keiper et al., 2021; Pearson, 2018; Crompton et al., 2021). The second sub-research question was directly addressed by this thorough qualitative assessment.

Third, a systematic error analysis was conducted using frameworks of Ellis (2008) and Corder (1967). First, the analysis focused on identifying any deviations from Standard English in production. Second, this allowed pinpointing the ELLs' specific language challenges. Therefore, the third sub-research question was addressed via an analysis of the 16 ELLs sentences (*n=83*) from their online posts and Flip videos (*n=6*).

The semi-structured interview data was thematically analysed after the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The transcribed interviews were anonymised, with participants labelled ELL1 through ELL4, before being imported into NVivo 12 (See Appendix 3). This process (See Figure 5) revealed recurring themes and patterns in ELLs' reflections on their learning, directly answering our sub-fourth research question.

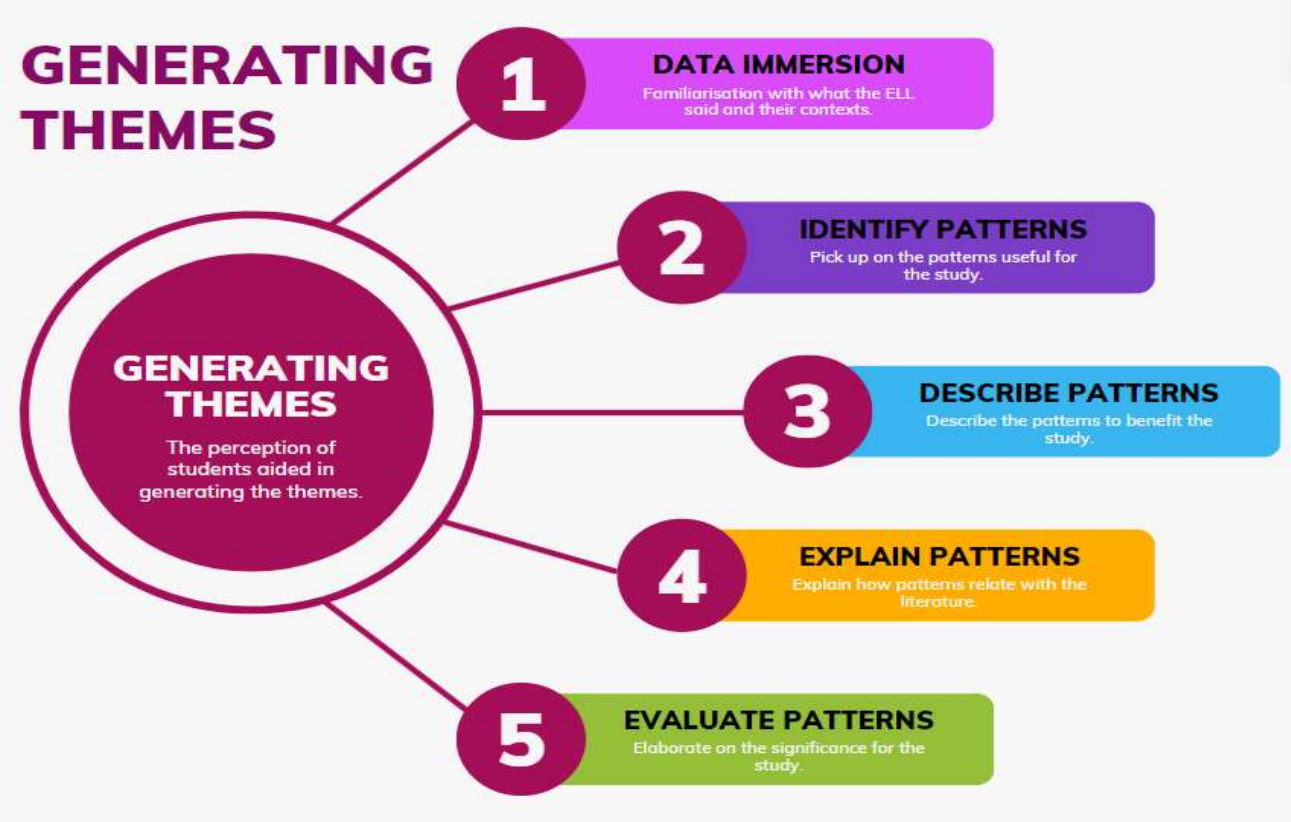

Figure 5. Thematic approach adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006)

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FINDINGS

This section meticulously presents the findings derived from the various data sources, each contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the research questions posed in this study. The analysis reveals nuanced insights into ELLs' opinions, the quality of their linguistic output, the types of errors they produced, and their overarching reflections on engaging with VLEs.

ELLs' Opinions about Making Blackboard Posts and Flip Videos (RQ1)

Despite active participation in an online course, a surprising 40% of ELLs rated their online learning skills as beginner (Figure 6), highlighting a possible disconnect between experience and perceived language proficiency.

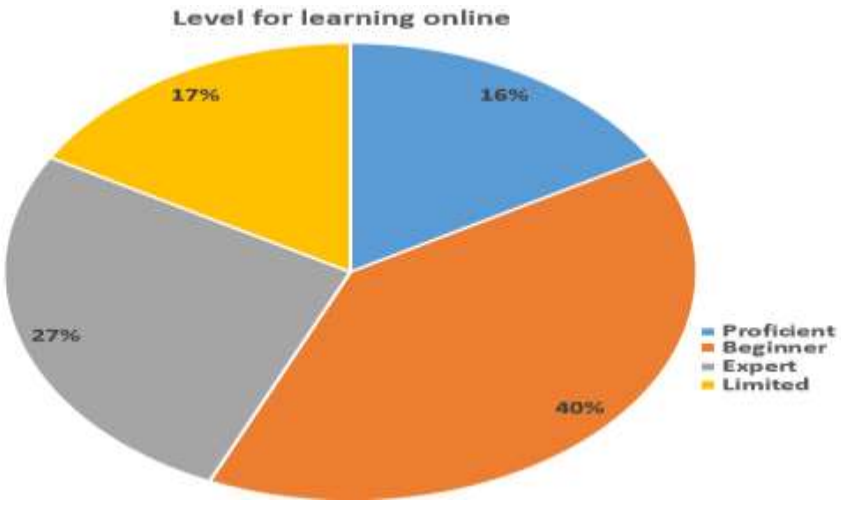

Figure 6. ELLs' Level of learning online.

Closed-ended questions in the survey (see Table 3) indicated largely positive perceptions of presence. ELLs reported feeling very comfortable creating online posts (*M=3.97*) and collaborating with classmates online (*M=3.77*) (See Appendix 1). This is an indicator of positive social presence.

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Table 3. Average response related to presence.

Items	Questions	Response	Mean	SD	Value
1	I was comfortable with making posts online.	30	3.97	1.16	
2	I felt comfortable with everyone online.	30	3.77	1.41	
3	I felt I can make videos about what I want on Flip.	30	3.90	1.24	
4	Knowing what to do online improved my communication in English.	30	4.17	1.13	
5	Knowing what to do online helped to make my video in Flip.	30	3.83	1.09	Agree
6	Action from others helped me to make my videos in Flip.	30	3.63	1.22	
7	Reading posts online was helpful for reading in English.	30	4.13	1.11	
8	Making videos in Flip was helpful for speaking in English.	29	4.21	1.05	
9	Watching videos from others was helpful for listening in English.	30	3.97	1.12	

The survey showed in general that the ELLs had a positive perceptions of their active L2 learning online. For instance, the importance of language development is strongly suggested by Item 8 (M= 4.21). Also, a level of agreement was found for the statements regarding knowing what to do online and ELLs communication (Item 4, M=4.17). These are useful indicators of ELLs perception of their active English production online. While most participants (*M=3.90*) felt comfortable selecting their video topics, a sizable portion (*17%*) disagreed, citing communication issues (*Item 4*) as a factor. The situation calls for either more precise instructions or allowing ELLs to select their own topics. Participants showed moderate agreement (*M=3.63*) with Item 5 regarding how others' Flip activity facilitated their video creation. (See Figure 7 below)

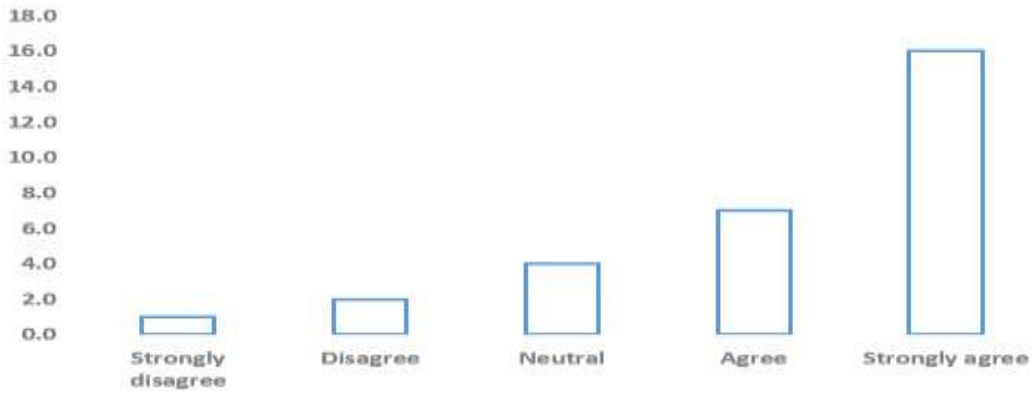

Figure 7. ELLs' response to knowing online and communicating in English.

More information came to light through the questionnaire's open-ended question. In response to questions about preferred work environments, 33% said they preferred working in class, while 30% used a combination of class, WhatsApp, Flip, and Blackboard. A significant majority (27%) primarily used WhatsApp, while a smaller portion used Flip (7%) and Blackboard (3%). This

shows how their online learning blends the real and virtual worlds. The blend results from integrating structured online learning with informal communication and readily available information, connecting digital learning to personal technology (Alsowayegh & Garba, 2021; Alsowayegh, & Garba, 2019). Moreover, a significant portion (48%) of respondents reported positive collaborative experiences with friends prior to filming, underscoring the value of informal teamwork in pre-production (see Figure 8 below).

Figure 8. Sample responses from the open-ended item 10 about views of working online.

Levels of Quality in Blackboard Posts and Flip Videos (RQ2)

The ELLs' work underwent careful scrutiny to determine levels of understanding and writing quality. This qualitative assessment, employing the SOLO Taxonomy as its framework, involved analysing a subset of 47 Blackboard posts from 495 posts (See Table 4 below) and 19 Flip videos.

Table 4. Posts made in three sections during the 2022 semester.

Section	Posts
32219	398
32217	4
44201	49
44202	44
Total	495

Analysis of sixty coded Blackboard postings revealed four distinct thematic categories, reflecting diverse levels of cognitive engagement (See Table 5).

Firstly, the *extended use of language* theme, comprised only three sentences, effectively illustrated a relational or extended abstract understanding. ELLs in this category demonstrated advanced vocabulary and abstract concepts (e.g., *astronaut, obsessed*), exceeding the scope of the course

material and indicating a high level of cognitive presence. Secondly, the predominant thematic element, identified in 31 sentences, was *interconnectedness* with other topics, categorised as multi-structural. Although these submissions demonstrated a logical correlation between the skills and justifications offered, the terminology employed remained limited to concepts introduced in the course. This indicated an emergent, albeit limited, cognitive presence. Thirdly, a subgroup of six sentences, themed as *addressed job skills*, exhibited a uni-structural code. These contributions offered isolated pieces of information without full coherence or contextualisation, indicating a more limited cognitive depth. Finally, twenty sentences were themed as *copied*, thereby indicating a pre-structural level of composition. These instances comprised direct replication of content from other ELL, indicating a significant deficiency in independent thought and minimal cognitive engagement. This thematic observation of ELL work quality revealed a significant challenge in achieving authentic production within online, text-based discussions.

Regarding Flip videos, a qualitative analysis (using thematic analysis) of 18 sample videos (see Table 5 below) indicated superior production authenticity and integration, revealing four prominent themes.

Table 5. Flip video quality.

Flip video quality	ELLs Videos
Pre-structural – no sound.	1
Uni-structural – understands and speaks about one thing.	1
Multi-structural – introduces self and then required task.	12
Relational – speaks clearly and connects course content with personal narratives with minimal linguistic errors.	4
Total 18	

The first video coded as FV1 was themed *pre-structural* because it lacked audio and thereby revealed a basic misunderstanding of the assignment's requirements, in spite of the ELL's demonstrably high level of course participation. While the ELL was participating in the semi-structured interview, the ELL confirmed the misunderstanding of the task because only this ELL submitted a video recording of text without audio.

However, the rest of the Flip videos contained audio, which allowed the KAU researcher to convert them to textual data and use some of them as samples presented below for this qualitative analysis. For instance, the second video (FV16) themed as *uni-structural* revealed a rudimentary understanding of the task, yet exhibited notable instances of linguistic blending. FV16 demonstrates a superficial grasp of English language usage, as exemplified below:

I am good at in doctor because I like help people I hate work alone never be a cashier.
Sample from FV16

Significantly, the third set of videos (12 videos, 67%) showed a preponderance of belonging to the *multi-structural* theme. These Flip videos generally demonstrated strong English language skills, clear introductory statements, and successful task completion, thus indicating a high level of cognitive engagement, as exemplified by FV10 below:

> *I am Sal...; I used to work in a shop enjoyed it because I like dealing with public people...*
>
> Sample from FV10

Finally, 22% of videos (*n=4*) attained the highest observed quality level, themed as *relational*. A notable connection between course content and the ELLs' personal narratives was evident, characterised by a minimal incidence of linguistic errors, which signifies a substantial cognitive presence alongside genuine self-expression, as exemplified by FV5 below:

> *"I can't be a nurse because I can't stand blood, I can be a gamer because I am great with games"*.
>
> Sample from FV5

The transition from text-based Blackboard posts to multimodal Flip video production demonstrably enhanced the articulation of cognitive understanding. Analysing the Flip videos using SOLO indicates that the engaging, multimodal design of Flip may foster increased personal engagement, thus mitigating the likelihood of uncritical content copying.

4.3. Types of L2 Errors in Blackboard Posts and Flip Videos (RQ3)

In-depth error analysis was performed to ascertain specific insights into the interlanguage development of ELLs. The analysis included examining 83 sentences from 16 ELL's Blackboard posts, and 20 errors in 6 multi-structural Flip videos. Distinct linguistic difficulties emerged from the results of these dual modalities. Blackboard posts revealed a preponderance of errors related to writing conventions and minor errors. Punctuation related to the first identified errors. This was the most prevalent error comprising 40%. For instance, ELLs contained errors related to adding apostrophes between the subject and the verb to be when contracted as in this example, *...because im not working**. Spelling errors comprised 30% of the second total errors identified with the following example of the misspelled word self as, *shef**. Capitalisation errors comprised 14% of the third identified errors where a common noun is in a sentence is incorrectly capitalised as in the following example, *l'd make a good Accountant**. Finally, minor recurring errors included the inappropriate addition of a space before terminal punctuation (8%, e.g., "*I love to travel .**"), superfluous word insertions (5%, e.g., "*I could never be a successful because..**"), and the omission of apostrophes (3%, e.g., "*I im not working**"). Thus, the recurrence of these errors in

written work indicates a fundamental requirement for explicit instruction in basic English spelling conventions, especially for the substantial number of ELLs who identified themselves as beginners that needed more practice, especially in a VLE (Basham & Kwachka, 1991; Shi, 2001).

In contrast, the Flip video error analysis, concentrating on spontaneous speech production, revealed a distinct array of language challenges (See Appendix 4). For instance, grammatical errors constituted the most significant error category, comprising 70% of all identified errors (e.g., "*Sorry for take more time**,")**.** Further, mispronunciations constituted 25% of all errors, exemplified by such phrases as "*I am going to take about my job…**". A noteworthy 15% of errors stemmed from first language (L1) interference, as exemplified by phrases such as "*I can't become a teacher math**," which mirrors the Arabic grammatical structure where the noun precedes its descriptor, contrasting with the English *math teacher* convention. Thus, the video errors predominantly impacted the fluency and meaning of spoken language, illustrating typical challenges encountered by pre-intermediate ELLs during spontaneous oral communication (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). The demonstrable L1 interference evident in their spoken production constitutes a key diagnostic indicator, precisely identifying areas where cross-linguistic influence markedly affects their target L2 acquisition (Alsowayegh et al., 2018; Hammond, 1990).

Conducting a dual-modality error analysis of the ELLs' written and spoken language offers a more comprehensive and diagnostically robust understanding of ELL interlanguage, illuminating specific areas for targeted pedagogical intervention in both written and spoken English when teaching online (Alsowayegh et al., 2019; Nation & Newton, 2009; Yeşilçınar, 2019).

4.4. ELLs' Reflections on Their Learning (RQ4)

Qualitative data on the ELLs' online learning experiences were thoroughly examined via a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews. Analysis of the interview transcripts yielded four significant themes namely, principal workspace, power, online role, and experience of learning online.

Firstly, ELLs identified the VLE as their principal workspace for learning English. The data presented in Table 6 reveals a consistent pattern of ELLs' reliance on VLE platforms, namely WhatsApp, Blackboard, and Flip, for course participation and assignment submission. WhatsApp and other virtual learning environments have proven effective for ELLs. Our initial action research on using WhatsApp with ELLs is further developed by this theme of principal workspace (Alsowayegh & Garba, 2021). Moreover, the principal workspace theme broadens the scope to encompass the use of multiple workspaces and online tools to improve the appeal of learning. The KAU instructor has added brackets to clarify participants meaning when using pronouns, phrases or emphasis noted during the interviews.

Table 6. Responses about where the ELLs worked on the VLEs.

9: ELL2: It [working in Flip] was good.
119: ELL3: No problem [making videos in Flip]
41: ELL4: In WhatsApp
67: ELL1: In discussion? [meaning online Blackboard]

Secondly, the theme of power constituted a particularly striking observation. First, ELL2's narrative included the term power (see Table 7, below), as a description of his enhanced English communication. Such enhancement describes his *sense* of confidence and motivation using the term power. Second, this *sense* is a belief called self-efficacy (Graham, 2022) which helps learners feel confident. So, while ELL2 might have felt he had power when studying in the VLE, his confidence was boosted to control and create the Flip videos (Bandura, 1986). Finally, the enhancement of self-efficacy and perceived competence in ELL2 is demonstrably linked to the generation of spoken content within low-stakes environments, thereby indicating increased linguistic self-efficacy (Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Nunan, 1999), as ELL2 indicates: *I'm talking anything*.

Table 7. Responses about power.

8: Ibrahim: What do you think about using BB and FG for learning?
9: ELL2: It was good. Before, I'm not have power. It gave me power. Before I'm not power now I making video and speaking. I'm talking anything.

Thirdly, online role was a theme that illuminated the intricate social dynamics inherent in the VLE, underscoring peer observation and the problem of plagiarism. Analysis of ELL4 responses revealed that learning through observing peer-created videos was effective, thus supporting the beneficial effects of peer modelling. The inherent tension highlights the ethical dilemmas and potential negative consequences of perceived plagiarism regarding individual motivation and authorship within a prominent online environment, notwithstanding the generally interactive community. Conversely, participant ELL3 expressed openness to replication of their work, thereby underscoring the diverse viewpoints regarding this aspect of online collaboration. In essence, online role shows how active the ELLs have become because of their access to content online, pointing to a more pressing need of issues in plagiarism and generating authentic work (Krolak-Schwerdt et al., 2008; Lee & Liu, 2022).

Table 8. Responses about online role.

44: ELL4: …first time I did the flip, I saw ELL3 [video].
117: ELL3: No problem [if others] want to copy
106: ELL1: I have problem in this way some students copy my answer copy my homework [emphasis on my homework]

The study concluded by examining ELLs' thorough reflections on the positive and negative aspects of their VLE experience. ELLs valued the online format's flexibility and extended periods for reflection prior to content generation. The chance to compare and choose the best solution was highly valued by ELL1, showcasing a preference for evaluative and interactive learning styles. In his reflection, ELL4 underscored the VLE's vital contribution to his ongoing English language development beyond the college environment, noting its consistent opportunities for practice. Upon reflection, ELL2 recognised a deficiency in the incorporation of personal experiences within his video content, highlighting a need for enhanced self-expression. This theme emphasises the interactive nature of online learning, aligning with Garrison's (1997) model, and highlighting the importance of reciprocal communication, considered responses, and active engagement in achieving meaningful learning outcomes (see Table 9 below).

Table 9. Responses about learning online.

¶71: ELL1: I think because share different answer and determine the best answer, make the session active.
¶34: ELL4: I feel like my English is going low and low and low. Out of the college I can't speak English a lot.
¶22: ELL2: Maybe I make for me about my life, about my experience.
¶50: If I made the video again, I will add the pilot.
¶97: ELL1: I feel strangely a little bit. But this another level in my life.

DISCUSSION

This second cycle of action research yielded crucial insights into the interplay between presence and English language acquisition within a VLE, thereby addressing our research questions and informing future pedagogical enhancements.

ELLs' Opinions and the Cultivation of Social Presence (RQ1)

The significant positive feedback from ELLs regarding enhanced comfort and improved English communication through VLE activities strongly indicates successful social presence development. The high mean scores for items including *Knowing what to do online improved my communication in English* (*M=4.17*) and *Making videos in Flip was helpful for speaking in English* (*M =4.21*) align with prior research demonstrating a correlation between Flip and social presence (Green et al., 2021; Lowenthal & Dunlap, 2020; Oyarzun, Barreto, et al., 2018; Pinsk et al., 2014). ELLs reported high levels of comfort, a crucial element of social presence. Conversely, the limited number of participants reporting reservations about producing videos on selected subjects indicates a nuanced grasp of the interplay between individual autonomy and societal pressures.

Despite the effectiveness of the teacher's explicit instructions (teaching presence), a less structured approach to topic choice could potentially improve ELL participation through increased intrinsic motivation and opportunities for self-expression (cognitive presence). Examination of the *Action*

from others helped me item (*M=3.63*) indicates mixed findings; while social interaction occurred, its perceived direct effect on productivity proved less influential than explicit guidance. Our research also demonstrates that improved communication skills among ELLs in our online course at KAU provided increased opportunities for interaction with peers and instructors (Keefe et al., 2020). The ELLs comfort levels have also indicated that the online platforms provided the ELLs with a welcoming and open to everyone on the VLE. Additional research is necessary to investigate the pedagogical efficacy of peer interaction within the context of observed ELL comfort in online learning environments (Fischer & Yang, 2022).

Quality of Production and the Interplay of Cognitive and Teaching Presence (RQ2)

SOLO Taxonomy analysis revealed a significant improvement in cognitive skills demonstrated in a comparison of Blackboard posts and Flip videos.

Several posts coded for copied suggest a lack of original thought, prompting concerns about academic honesty in online text-based discussions due to their pre-structural quality. Conversely, the video format seemed to cultivate more authentic and complex relational interactions. The postings served a vital role in archiving concepts, thereby emphasising their cognitive significance during the initial stages of ideation (Krolak-Schwerdt et al., 2008). Ideation, in this context, is defined as the cognitive process of brainstorming for video production or the use of cognitive presence.

The structured pedagogical approach, incorporating initial the ELLs' drafting and subsequent video productions, demonstrably enhanced teaching presence (Fiock, 2020; Shea et al., 2019; Toohey, 2002). Structured guidance and sequenced tasks facilitated by the instructor fostered cognitive presence, enabling the ELLs to progress from superficial knowledge to a more integrated and personally relevant grasp of the target language.

The increased presence of multi-structural and relational themes within the videos suggests that the multimodal nature of Flip fostered a more sophisticated display of understanding and self-expression, thereby potentially increasing the difficulty or decreasing the appeal of plagiarism compared to text-based formats. These findings suggest the pedagogical approach effectively promotes learning through structured opportunities for progressively complex and diverse language production (Nunan, 1999).

Error Analysis: Diagnostic Power and Learner Autonomy (RQ3)

A systematic analysis of errors in written and spoken communication yielded crucial diagnostic data. A discrepancy is observed between the grammatical and mechanical errors (missing

punctuation, capitalisation) in written posts and the spoken errors (incorrect forms, mispronunciations, L1 interference) noted in videos (Corder, 1967; Green, 2022).

A multimodal approach to error analysis provides a more complete perspective on the interlanguage development of ELLs compared with unimodal methods. Authentic errors produced by ELLs during vocational-focused language production offer valuable opportunities for targeted pedagogical intervention. While some duplicated posts appeared in Blackboard, the Flip videos were largely genuine. As the power theme in ELL2 suggests, empowered and motivated ELLs are less likely to plagiarise. Repeatedly, the study underscored the significance of empowerment, illustrating that cultivating ELL autonomy demonstrably enhances motivation and academic outcomes. Furthermore, the theme offers a vital counterpoint to the escalating issue of plagiarism in higher education, a problem intensified by artificial intelligence (Cotton et al., 2024). Our core argument is that individually tailored tasks foster heightened personal engagement, positively influence motivation, and yield more authentic linguistic results. So, this research has touched on some root causes of student plagiarism, rather than merely its outward manifestations (Lee & Liu, 2022; Lindström & Lubińska, 2022; Rigg et al., 1988).

ELLs' Reflections and the Impact on Learning (RQ4)

Analysis of interview data, centred on the themes of power, online role, and learning online, indicates a substantial effect of VLEs on ELLs' self-perception, peer interactions, and academic achievement. ELL2's transformative experience, marked by empowerment in English language acquisition via Flip, exemplifies enhanced learner agency, consistent with constructivist learning theory (Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison, 2011). ELL-produced and shared work significantly enhances personalised and meaningful learning. In contrast, the inherent intricacies of online roles, and specifically the distress suffered by ELL1 as a result of his work's unauthorised use, emphasise a critical element of social presence requiring considered pedagogical guidance. Though certain ELLs benefited from collaborative learning, the negative ramifications of perceived plagiarism on feelings of individual ownership necessitate explicit conversations emphasising academic honesty and the significance of independent contributions. Analysis of ELL feedback regarding online learning reveals that independent reflection and informal English language use within VLEs significantly enhance cognitive engagement and autonomous learning (Garrison, 1997). The overarching strategic approach demonstrably enhanced learning through varied engagement opportunities.

Modifying the Investigation

This second iteration of action research generated empirical data that informed the revision of pedagogical strategies in KAU's English department. Moreover, this research offers an essential

direction for the DeLDE's comprehensive e-learning strategies (Mintzberg, 1994). For instance, this iteration provides some evidence of what teachers may be trained to do on the VLE.

Initially, our paramount concern is to cultivate originality and prevent plagiarism. While Flip videos promoted authentic expression, the high frequency of duplicated content within Blackboard submissions necessitates improvement. Pedagogical changes that follow need to include explicit conversations with ELLs about academic integrity and the intended role of online forums, underscoring the value of originality over duplication. Alternative submission frameworks may be examined, alongside a requirement for ELLs to interact actively with and specifically reference their peers' contributions.

Subsequently, the newly identified construct of perceived power exhibits substantial predictive validity. Analyses indicate that programs promoting ELL independence and self-belief produce substantial outcomes. The updated curriculum allows for greater ELL personalisation of assignments. This approach should greatly increase ELLs' intrinsic motivation and learning ownership (Garrison, 1997; Xiaolei & Teng, 2024). Learner ownership may be useful in aiding ELLs at the English Department demonstrate authenticity when working with generative technology on the VLE (Yusuf et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the detailed error analysis has pinpointed specific linguistic issues. Anonymised ELLs' work, comprising posts and video transcripts, may now serve as illustrative classroom examples for targeted error correction. This methodology improves the relevance and cognitive effect of feedback for Generation Z ELLs, thus exceeding generalised assessment outcomes by offering dynamic feedback directly related to their productive contributions (Fischer & Yang, 2022; Shukla et al., 2024).

We recognise the importance of improving pedagogical practices and fostering a stronger sense of community. While a basic level of social presence was established, fostering truly positive and productive peer learning requires ongoing commitment. Explicit teacher guidance is necessary to cultivate respectful peer interaction and implement effective strategies for meaningful peer feedback. This approach promotes collaboration, unlike the passive imitation of ideas. Maintaining a strong teaching presence is crucial when designing progressively challenging, scaffolded tasks that foster ELLs' relational and abstract thinking skills as defined by SOLO Taxonomy.

This research offers key strategic insights into integrating VLEs within DeLDE. Empirical evidence from this study supports the effectiveness of a blended learning model combining Blackboard (for structured activities) and Flip (for multimedia), leading to enhanced ELLs learning. This research offers the English department and DeLDE's programs a practical case study, demonstrating how to design authentic learning activities using various platforms to boost cognitive and social interaction, and how to train ELT in giving helpful online feedback.

This evidence strongly supports the continued adoption of constructivist learning principles. Empowering ELLs to create posts and videos, reflect on their learning, and interact with peers significantly improves their educational experience, making learning more dynamic, active, and meaningful. To create a more engaging and holistic pedagogical approach, the English Department's curriculum should emphasise project-based learning, collaborative activities, and multimodal production, rather than solely focusing on receptive or controlled practice.

This second action research cycle directly follows the first (Alsowayegh & Garba, 2021). While the last cycle emphasised the need for online communication, this cycle provides data on the quality, challenges, and perceived benefits of organised online activities. This improves understanding of ongoing teacher development and strengthens the base for future research, thus ensuring continuous improvement in online teaching, especially when adopting the CoI framework at KAU.

CONCLUSION

This action research study explored how intentionally fostering social, cognitive, and teaching presence affected the skills and perceptions of first-year ELLs in KAU's online courses. This second research cycle used Norton's (2009) ITDEM cycle and the CoI framework to rigorously analyse ELLs work and reflections, revealing valuable insights for improved teaching methods.

Our research clearly shows that well-structured online learning, with diverse forms of presence, significantly improves engagement and academic success for English learners online. A substantial number of ELLs reported positive experiences with VLEs, citing improvements in communication and user-friendliness. Employing the SOLO Taxonomy to analyse ELLs' work revealed a spectrum of cognitive complexity, with Flip video submissions demonstrating higher quality and authenticity than some Blackboard posts. Notably, the comprehensive L2 error analysis provided precise diagnostic insights into common linguistic challenges, thus highlighting areas needing targeted remediation. Furthermore, ELLs reflections offered qualitative data demonstrating the significant effect of online activities on learners' self-efficacy (power), the intricacies of peer interaction, and the advantages of consistent English practice opportunities.

This study offers a significant contribution to online EFL pedagogy through empirical evidence gathered from a large-scale higher education context. This enhances the theoretical underpinnings of the CoI framework and illustrates its practical utility in efficacious online instructional design. The inconsistencies between various VLE tools pose significant challenges for instructional designers and educators striving to enhance production quality and authenticity. The implications of this research are of significant importance to KAU, specifically its DeLDE's programs and English Department, providing compelling evidence for the continued adoption of constructivist teaching methodologies focused on active ELLs participation and meaningful engagement.

Limitation

Despite its valuable findings, this action research's scope is constrained by its focus on a single institution and a specific cohort of male ELLs. Future research needs to concentrate on implementing interventions based on these findings, evaluating their impact across various ELLs populations, and conducting a longitudinal analysis of ELLs' autonomy and advanced cognitive skills within VLE. By continually refining our approach, we can better prepare ELLs for success in today's dynamic online learning environment.

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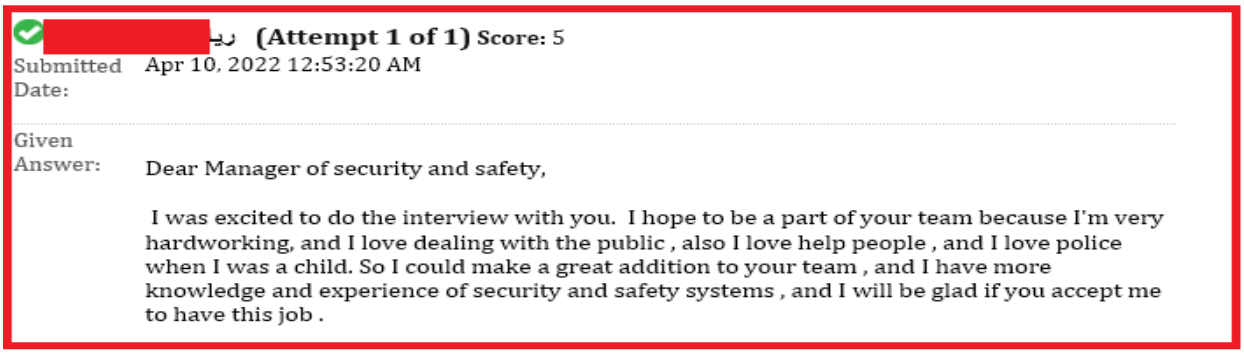
Appendices

Appendix 1. Sample ELLs' post with name removed.


[redacted] (Attempt 1 of 1) Score: 5
Submitted Date: Apr 10, 2022 12:53:20 AM

Given Answer:

Dear Manager of security and safety,

I was excited to do the interview with you. I hope to be a part of your team because I'm very hardworking, and I love dealing with the public , also I love help people , and I love police when I was a child. So I could make a great addition to your team , and I have more knowledge and experience of security and safety systems , and I will be glad if you accept me to have this job .

Appendix 2. Sample semi-structured interview questions

- How did you make the flip?
- Where did you get ideas from?
- How did you feel about others watching you?
- What will you do differently?
- What advice do you have for others?

Appendix 3. Sample NVivo coding of interview data

Name: Nodes\\Power of FG
<Files\\AR Student interviews 25052022> - § 3 references coded [1.53% Coverage]
Reference 1 - 0.47% Coverage
¶9: Before, I'm not have power. It gave me power.
Reference 2 - 0.80% Coverage
¶9: Before I'm not power now I making video and speaking. I'm talking anything.
Reference 3 - 0.25% Coverage
¶12: You can push the board.

Appendix 4. Sample Flip videos errors analysed in Excel

		Error
	Addition	I am live in neighborhood in Jeddah.
7	Form	I have not
	Form	Sorry for take more time
	Form	I don't making decisions.
	Form	My mum wants me to study in medical. (word form)
	Form	I am going to take (talk) about my job.
	Form	I never be a cashier because I hate be alone.
	Form	I make a good doctor (I'd make)
3	L1	I can't become a teacher math
	L1	Job I never do a math teacher because not good with numbers.
	L1	Job I can do maybe actor.
3	Ommision	am from
	Ommision	Studying in KAU.
	Ommision	I love solve it (problem).
5	Pron.	I don't like bold.
	Pron.	I will be a p-lot (pilot) mixes the sound /i/ in eye.
	Pron.	I love (live) Jeddah.
	Pron.	I never be a secreteriate (secretary).
	Pron.	Reading- not speaking - I am good - stocato pronounciation.
1	Structure	I like to be a police officer because safety