



The Impact of E-Learning on Enhancing EFL Teachers' Performance in the Teaching- Learning Process

(A Case Study of University of Gezira Students)

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ABSTRACT

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The study aims at investigating the possibilities of using e-learning programs in EFL learners' higher institutions and motivating them to learn through modern methods. In addition, the study aims to enhance the EFL teaching- learning process. The researcher used a questionnaire for data collection. It was distributed to twenty (20) EFL learners for data collection at the Faculty of Education - Elhasahisa, University of Gezira, Sudan. Then the collected data was statistically analyzed through the (SPSS) program. The results indicate that, using e-learning requires users to gain special skills of interacting through technology as this allows teachers to have more learner-centered classroom environment. Moreover, e-learning motivates the learners to learn through authentic learning sources. Furthermore, EFL learners' collaboration through multimedia is enjoyable and permits data saving, sharing and updating. E-learning develops EFL learners' critical thinking skills and also enables distant learners to interact. Practicing e-learning improves EFL learners' language skills and enables them to perform cross cultural communication. However, the use of e-learning programs, in Sudanese Universities still needs more efforts from instructors as well as students. The study recommends that e-learning should be applied in EFL classes and learners should be trained on using e-learning.

KEY WORDS

e-learning programs, motivate students, distant learners.

أثر التعليم الإلكتروني في تمكين اداء المعلمين في عملية التدريس والتعلم**المستخلص**

تهدف الدراسة إلى إمكانية تقصي دور التعليم الإلكتروني في عملية التدريس والتعلم لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مؤسسات التعليم العالي و تحفيزهم من خلال التعليم الإلكتروني وتسهيل عملية التدريس والتعليم من خلال استخدام برامج الكمبيوتر التعليمية الحديثة. استخدمت الباحثة المنهج التحليلي الوصفي كما استخدمت الدراسة الاستبانة كأداة لجمع البيانات من عينة مكونة من عشرين (20) طالباً وطالبة بكلية التربية الحاصحيا جامعة الجزيرة -السودان. بعد جمع البيانات وتحليلها إحصائياً باستخدام برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية (SPSS) توصلت الدراسة للآتي: استخدام التقنيات الحديثة في التدريس والتعلم يتطلب معرفة المدرسين والطلاب لأساليب للتواصل عبر الأجهزة الحديثة، إذ إن التعليم الإلكتروني يفتح آفاقاً جديدة للمعلمين والطلاب لجعل التعلم مركزاً على الطلاب في التواصل، يتمكن الطلاب من الحصول على المواد التعليمية من مصادر أصلية. كما يتمكن الطلاب من حفظ وإعادة استعمال المواد الدراسية. إن الدروس المبرمجة في الأجهزة الإلكترونية ممتعة ومحفزة للطلاب للعمل الجماعي والتواصل الثقافي، كما أن الدروس المبرمجة تطوّر مهارات التفكير النقدي لدي الطلاب، كما أنّها تمكن الدارسين عن بعد من التفاعل العلمي، وقد توصلت الدراسة أيضاً إلى أن التعليم الإلكتروني في الجامعات السودانية يحتاج لمجهودات أكثر للتدريب على التدريس والتعلم عبر التقنيات الحديثة. أوصت الدراسة باستخدام التعليم الإلكتروني في صفوف تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية وتدريب الدارسين على استخدامه.

كلمات مفتاحية: برنامج التعليم الإلكتروني، يحفز الطلاب، دارسين عن بعد

1.1 Introduction

E-learning is an essential means that should be used for supplementing the learners inside the class. It includes different activities and resources that used by the students and monitored by the teacher. It could enhance the students' language proficiency and independent learning. E-Learning is used as an important educational tool. According to (Alamin and Elgabar, 2014) Universities in Sudan are not exempted from recognizing this technological reality. Although the need to implement E-learning is important, there is also a need to recognize the fact that the process of implementing E-learning in an institutional setting and inserting into the educational context of a university is somewhat a complicated endeavor. It requires not only a strong technical infrastructure to support the delivery of the E-learning courses, but also more importantly, the complete acceptance of its major would-be users as well, e.g., Faculty members and students.

1. 2 Problem of the Study

EFL learners lack motivation in traditional methods of teaching and learning. There are some challenges faced EFL learners to apply E-learning. The high cost of E-learning and the training programs of the teachers on how to apply E-learning. These challenges limit the practical application of E-learning in high institutions.

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study aims to:

1-To find out whether E-learning motivates students and enhances the teaching- learning process or not.

1.4 The Question of the Study

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does E-learning motivate students and enhance the teaching - learning process?

1.5 Hypothesis of the Study

The followings is the hypothesis of the study which will be tested on the basis of the results

1.E-learning motivates students and enhance the teaching - learning process.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study explains the possibilities of adaptation of E-learning in EFL teaching and learning. The study advises the teachers to gain knowledge on how to integrate E-learning in their teaching process.

2. Literature Review

E-learning has been developed for online EFL courses where students can engage in self-study activities. Moreover, it can also be incorporated into a traditional classroom setting to assist EFL instruction and learning (Xu, 2007). It supports the learning systems in educational institutions by providing learners with modern methods of interacting and take the benefits from E-learning by adopting this technology trend.

According to (Cobb,1994), an active collaborative construction of knowledge can transfer from one person to another. Hence, multimedia technology (such as computers, networks, Youtube, E-mail, and interactive multimedia) aids the teaching technique of integrating real-life target language situations into the language classroom. In this particular environment, learners gradually develop their language skills by being exposed to genuine target language environments. According to (Dawley, 2007), E-learning can encourage learners to seek information, evaluate it, share it collaboratively and ultimately transform it into their own knowledge.

However, the blending of technological and pedagogical advancements has elevated the importance of research on electronic learner dialogue, text conferencing, information sharing, and other forms of collaboration. (Bonk and Cunningham,1998) .Distance learners demand and expect a high level of service when it comes to registration, delivery of course material and exams, quick turn-around times for grading exam and assignments and answering questions. Here, the need of good quality service has been sought for the learners in various aspects of open and distance learning.

Teachers with higher aspiration and achievement will make use of modern means to improve their information and quality of teaching, and incorporate modern ideas to become innovative (Vig and Singh, 2004).Using internet in the teaching-learning process

is advantageous since it provides wider communication, fast and easy access, new and up to date information, and it saves time, effort and money.

Additionally, it can enhance students' motivation and achievement, facilitate vocabulary learning and also support reading and writing development, give students an opportunity to work together through oral language or written conversations. It further facilitates students' exploration of the target culture and global understanding, increase students' awareness of learning structure through more sophisticated error feedback programs as well as help teachers keep track of students' processing.

2-1 Constructive Role play in E-learning

Constructive role plays refer to speaking activities with pre described conversations in e-learning, which students can modify and vary when taking computer lab classes. According to (Brown and Yule,1995), constructive role play can help students become more interested and involved in classroom learning by addressing problems, and exploring alternatives and creative solutions in terms of not only material learning, but also in terms of integrating the knowledge learned in action.

According to (Naidu and Linser, 2000), constructive role plays increase motivation. They encourage students to engage in L2 speaking freely and creatively, as well as explore options through the creative use of language (Xiao, 2003). Incorporation of constructive role play activities into the L2 classroom adds variety, a change of pace and opportunities for a lot of language production, and also a lot of fun.

Horton, (2006) believes that: E-learning allows the building up of "learning experiences of information and computer technology. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), helps to solve difficulties and challenges for teachers who aim at developing learners' interests in learning, conducting interactive classes and achieving their lessons aims. CALL is administered not only as a teaching method but also as an effective tool to help teachers in language teaching, and to promote learners' interactive learning as it can be employed in many ways, and both in and out of the class room (Shi, 2006).. In the presence of the internet and computers, new sources and tools of education appear.

2.2 E-Learning Ease of Use

(The European Commission, 2001, p.3) defines E-learning as “the use of new multimedia technologies and the internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services as well as remote exchanges and collaboration”. One issue of concern is how students are able to apply the E-learning site. Young people today are being computer literate, that literacy may not extend beyond using e-mail and surfing the net. According to (Hwang, 2010) many students are considered to be less interested in interacting with technology.

The E-Learning Moodle is an interactive tool that could be used to address this issue, as it could activate and increase EFL students’ language skills as they are exposed to the language outside the classroom and work independently on improving their language skills. (Waterhouse,2003) defines it as a medium of computer technology that could be utilized to develop the application of learning and teaching. Moreover, using a narrower concept. (Rosenberg, 2001) argues that E-learning permits data saving, sharing and updating. It is important to note that all definitions agree to the fact that E-learning involves using computer technology to facilitate and enhance learning. E-Learning in this paper refers to the E-Learning Moodle that is used by institutions to enhance teaching and learning and motivating learners for independent learning.

2.3 Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

Using technology has become more accessible, and more widely used in educational settings. In addition, computer-mediated interactions between users in different locations have also rapidly increased. As a result, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) is used as a tool to enhance education. Based on Liu, et al,(2002).

CMC involves the use of three communicative modes: Interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. Interpretive mode involves students in one-way reading, listening or viewing and informative as well as interpretive questions to assess comprehension. Teachers or facilitators provide students with feedback on performance. Thus, the creator of communication among students is absent and there is no opportunity for them to negotiate meaning with each other.

On the other hand, interpersonal mode is a two-way oral or written communication. Students negotiate and clarify meanings with each other and it is often spontaneous in

nature. Presentational mode is a formal and one-way communication mode for presenters to deliver their research, ideas or opinions to an audience of listeners or readers. It often involves the opportunity for presenters to prepare or rehearse.

2.4 The Personal Characteristics of Teachers

The personal characteristics of teachers may also be an important influence on the extent to which they take up an innovation, such as the implementation of ICT. This may result in the need for different approaches to ICT implementation for different teachers. (Ertmer et al,1999) identified three levels of teachers' computer use, varying in their relationship to the existing curricula.

2.5 The Application of E-learning in Sudan

The application of E-learning in Sudan became more important to solve many problems such as bad weather conditions, spread of diseases and tribal disputes. It also helps in the case of the far distance between the production area and the highly populated areas. These problems and other factors enforce the adoption of the E-learning source.

3. Material and Method

The participants of this study were the EFL learners at Faculty of Education , Elhasahisa, University of Gezira, Sudan. A questionnaire was used for collecting data . It was distributed to the sample for data collection. Then the data collected was statistically analyzed through (SPSS) program.

4. Data Analyses and Discussions:

Statement (1) E-learning obligates teachers to integrating technology.

Table (1) Teachers and students gain special skills

	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	15	4	1	20
percent	75.0	20.0	5.0	100.0

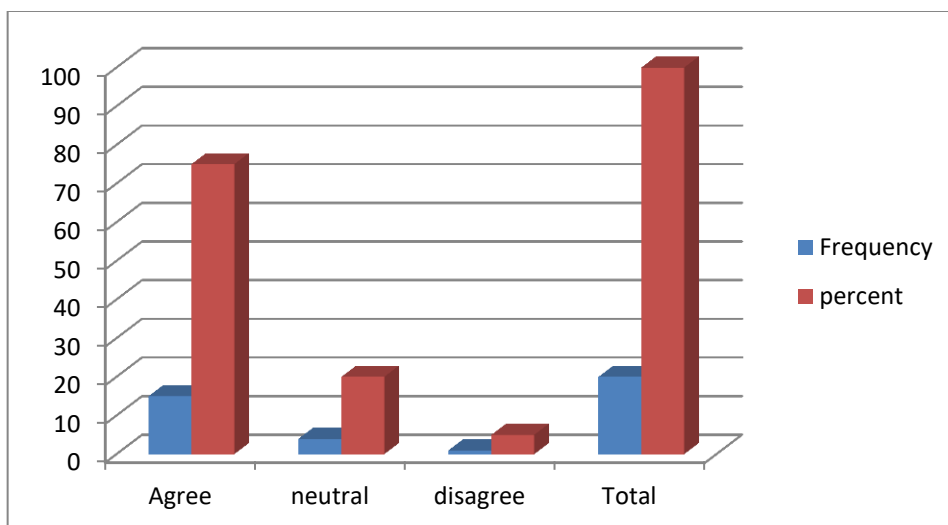


Fig (1) Teachers and students gain special skills

According to the statistical analysis of table and fig (1) most respondents (75%) agree with the statement whereas (20%) neutral and (5%) disagree.

Statement (2) E-learning learner-centered classroom environment.

Table (2) E-learning opens new horizons

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	19	1	0	20
percent	95.0	5.0	0.0	100.0

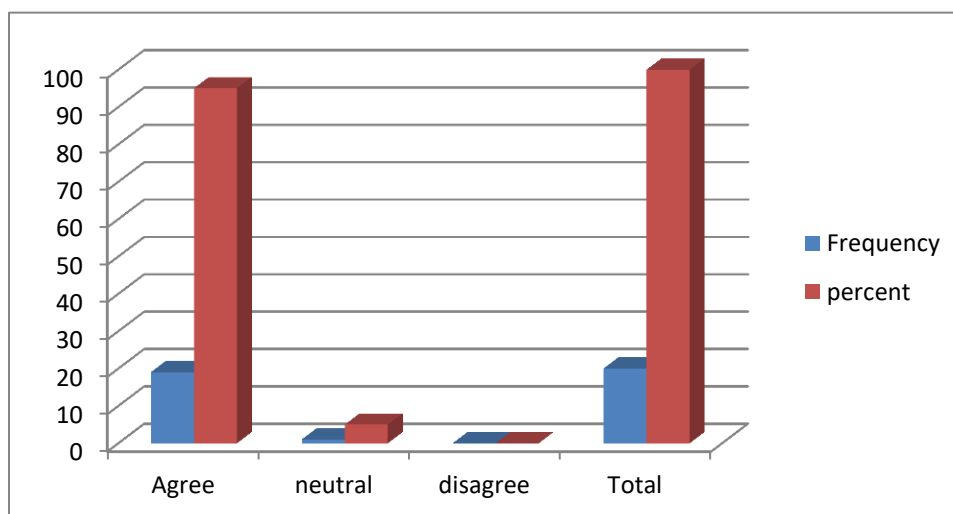


Fig (2) E-learning opens new horizons

According to the statistical analysis of table and fig (2) most respondents (95%) agree with the statement and (5%) disagree with the statement.

Statement (3) E- learning motivates students and increase their desire for learning.

Table (3) E- learning motivates students

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	17	3	0	20
percent	85.0	15.0	0.0	100.0

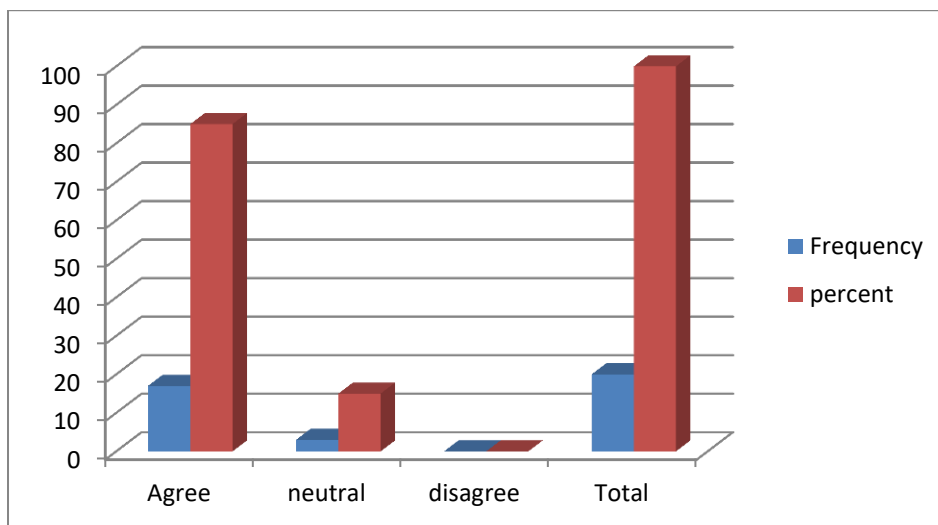


Fig (3) E- learning motivates students

As seen in the above table and figure most respondents (85%) agree that, E- learning motivates students and increase their desire for learning whereas, (15%) are neutral. Therefore, this statement is justified

Statement (4) EFL learners find out authentic sources through E—learning.

Table (4) EFL learners find authentic sources

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	15	4	1	20
percent	75.0	20.0	5.0	100.0

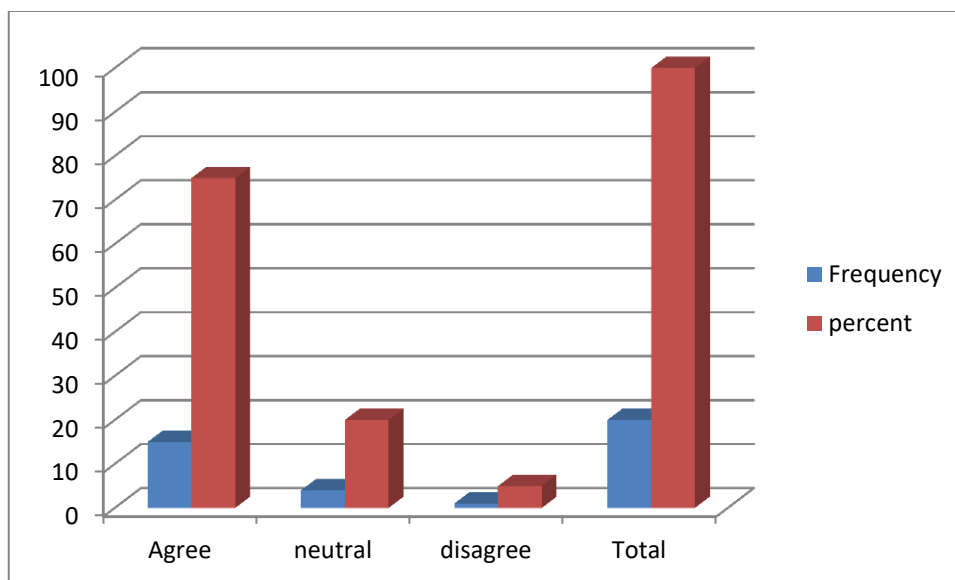


Fig (4) EFL learners find authentic sources

The data in the above table and figure shows that most respondents (75%) agree that, EFL learners find authentic sources through E-learning. In addition, (20%) of the sample are neutral and (5%) disagree with the statement.

Statement (5) Learners collaboration through multimedia is enjoyable.

Table (5) Learners collaboration through multimedia is enjoyable

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	17	1	2	20
percent	85.0	5.0	10.0	100.0

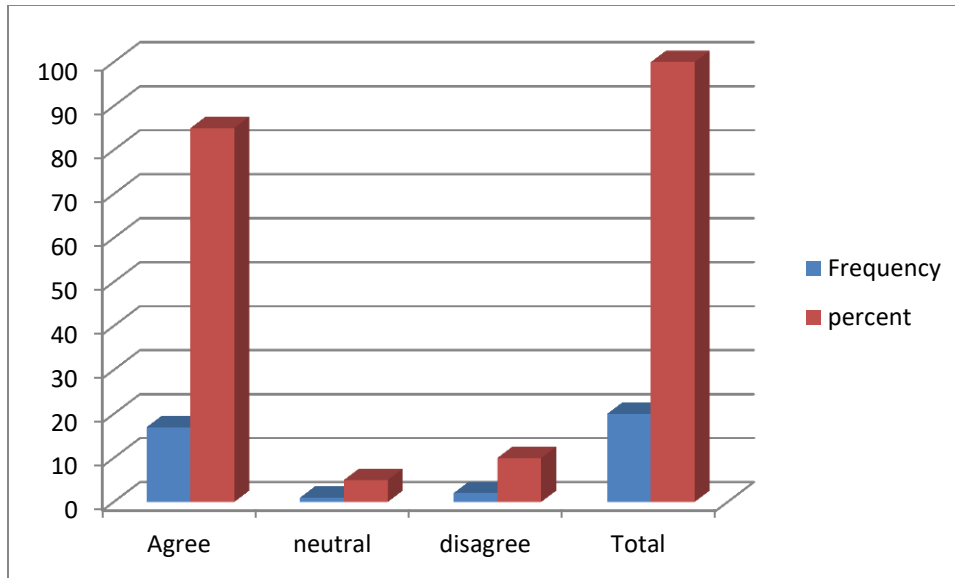


Figure (5) Learners collaboration through multimedia is enjoyable

The data in table and figure (5) shows that most respondents (85%) agree that, EFL learners collaboration through multimedia is enjoyable whereas (5%) of the sample are neutral and (10%) disagree with the statement.

Statement (6) E-learning develops EFL learners' critical thinking skills.

Table (6) Developing critical thinking skills

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	20	0	0	20
percent	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0

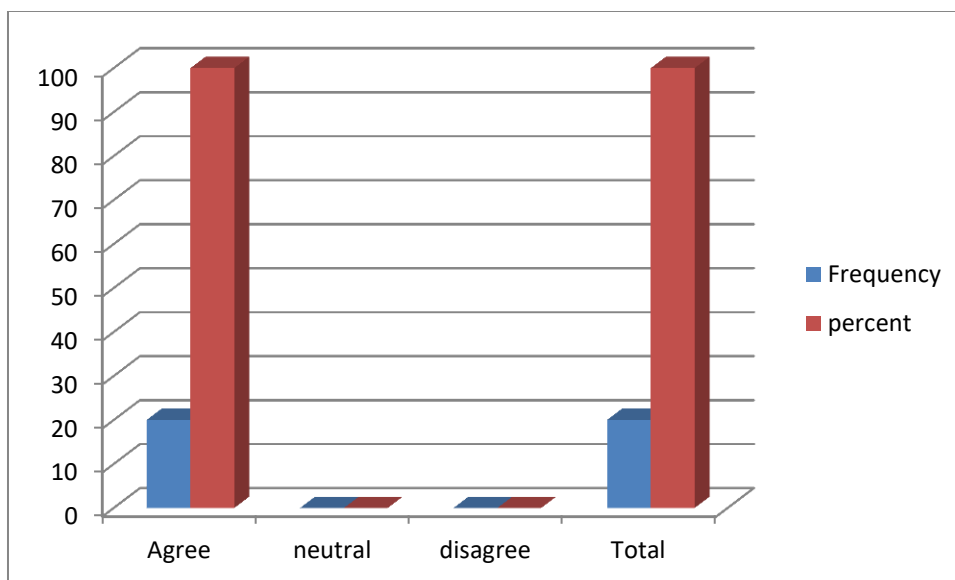


Fig (6) Developing critical thinking skills

The above table shows that all participants agree that, E-learning develops EFL learners’ critical thinking skills.

Statement (7) Computerized learning enables distant learners to interact.

Table (7) Enabling distant learners to interact.

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	18	2	0	20
percent	90.0	10.0	0.0	100.0

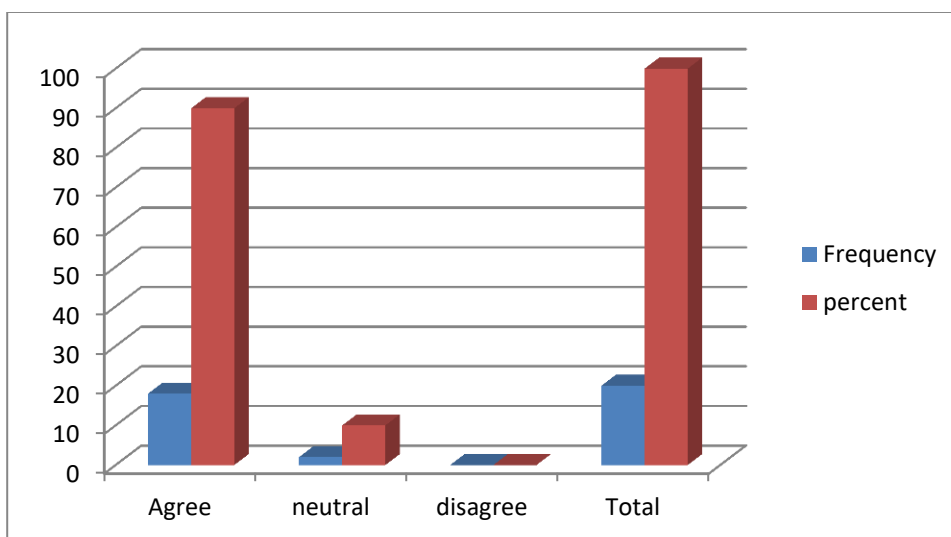


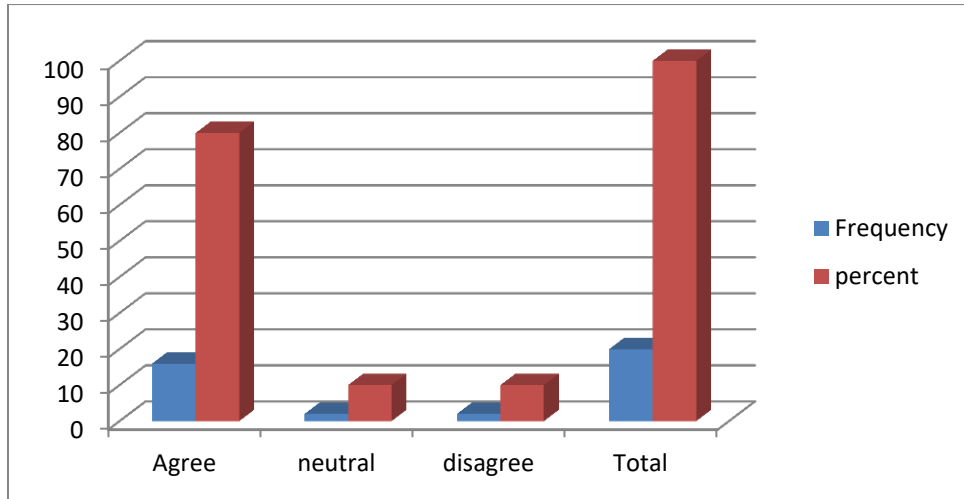
Fig (7) Enabling distant learners to interact.

The data in table and figure (7) shows that most respondents (90%) agree with the statement and (10%) of the sample are neutral.

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	16	2	2	20
percent	80.0	10.0	10.0	100.0

Statement (8) Practicing E-learning in EFL settings improves learners' language skills.

Table (8) Improving learners' language skills



Fig(8) Improving learners' language skills

According to the statistical analysis of table and figure (8) most respondents (80%) agree that, practicing E-learning in EFL settings improves learners' language skills . In addition, (10%) of the sample are neutral and (10%) disagree with the statement.

Statement (9) EFL learners can perform cross cultural communication.

Table (9) Performing cross cultural communication

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	18	1	1	20
percent	90.0	5.0	5.0	100.0

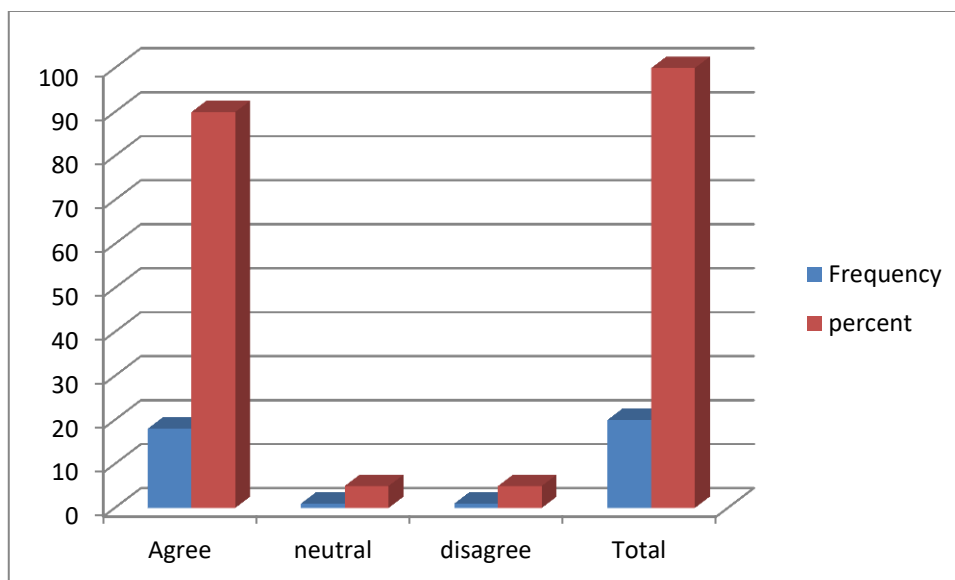


Fig (9) Performing cross cultural communication

The above table and figure show that most respondents (75%) agree that, EFL learners can perform cross cultural communication through e-learning. In addition whereas (20%) of the sample are neutral and (5%) disagree with the statement.

Statement (10) Educational computer programs are not used effectively in Sudanese Universities.

Table (10) E- learning in Sudanese Universities

	Agree	neutral	disagree	Total
Frequency	19	1	0	20
percent	95.0	5.0	0.0	100.0

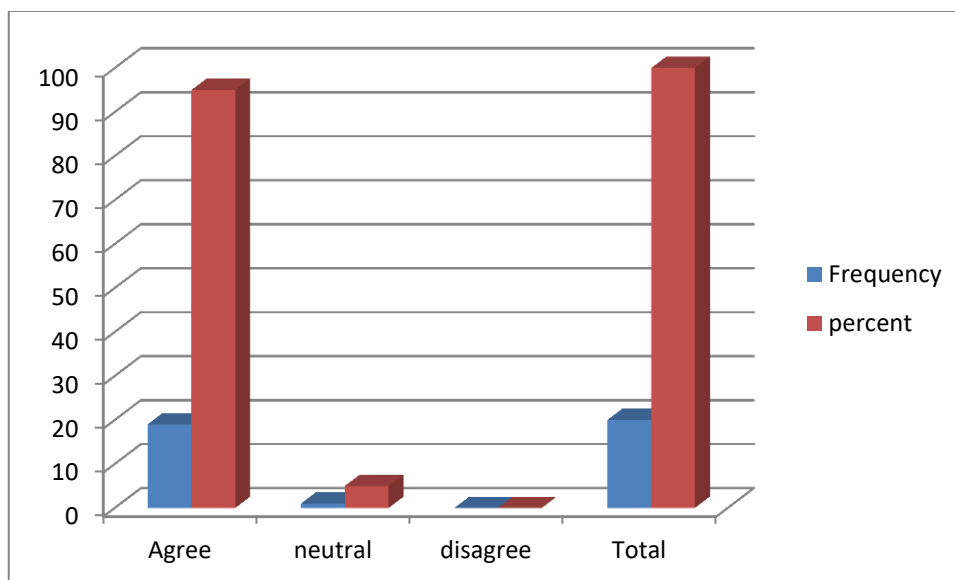


Fig (10) E- learning in Sudanese Universities

The data in the above table shows that most respondents (95%) agree that, educational computer programs are not used effectively in Sudanese Universities where only (5%) of the sample are neutral.

5.0 Findings, Recommendation and Conclusion

5.1 Findings

The collection data was statistically analyzed with the (SPSS) program. The results indicate that:

1. Through E- learning teachers and learners gained special skills of interacting .
2. E-learning opened new horizons for teachers to have more learner-centered classroom environment.
3. E-learning motivated students to learn through authentic learning sources.
4. EFL learners collaboration through multimedia is enjoyable and permits data saving, sharing and updating.
5. E-learning developed EFL learners' critical thinking skills and enables distant learners to interact.
6. Practicing E-learning in EFL learners classroom improved learners' language skills and enables them to perform cross cultural communication.

5.2 Recommendations

1. E- learning should be applied by EFL teachers and learners.
2. E FL learners should be trained on using E-learning.
3. Learners should be enabled to develop critical thinking skills through using E-learning
4. E-learning should be practiced in EFL classroom for improving learners' language skills.

5.3 Conclusion

The study aims at finding out whether E-learning motivates the learners and enhances the teaching- learning process or not. For the purpose of the study A questionnaire was distributed to twenty (20) EFL learners for data collection at Faculty of Education, Elhasahisa, University of Gezira, Sudan. Then the collected data was statistically analyzed with the (SPSS) program. The results show that

1. E -learning motivates students for independent learning.
2. E- learning obligates teachers and students to gain special skills of integrating technology in teaching and learning process.
3. E.learning opens new horizons for teachers to have a more learner-centered classroom environment.
4. E- learning programs are not used effectively in Sudanese Universities.

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