

EFL Students' Perceptions and Attitudes towards New Digital Media: Teaching Perspectives(A case study: Faculties of Education&Arts-The Red Sea University)

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Abstract

The profession of English language teaching is experiencing ongoing developments on both methodological and technological sides. EFL teachers need to cope with these developments as they are essential for effective language teaching where the focus shifted from teaching and how teachers teach to learning and how learners learn. This doesn't mean to discard what teachers do but rather to highlight the importance of learners' characteristics as well as how a foreign language can be learnt from the learners' perspective. That focus shifting entails considering learners and learning styles, strategies, perceptions and attitudes with regard to English learning and the use of the new digital media that becomes a reality and common in today's digital age. There are many ways teachers can know about their respective students' language learning and technology use and how the latter can be integrated into EFL teaching and learning. This research paper investigates how that integration perceived by students and what that means for foreign language teachers at the university level from teaching perspective. In addition, what other factors come into play and essential for making use of these perceptions.

مستخلص

مهنة تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية تشهد تطورات مستمرة على كلا الجانبين المنهجي والتكنولوجي ان ويحتاج معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للتعامل مع هذه التطورات لأنها ضرورية للتدريس الفعال للغة حيث تحول التركيز من التدريس وكيفية التدريس للتعلم وكيفية تعلم المتعلمين. ولا ان ان ذلك لا يعني تجاهل ما يقوم به المعلمون، بل إبراز أهمية خصائص المتعلمين، فضلا عن كيفية تعلم لغة أجنبية من منظور المتعلمين التحول للتركيز على المتعلمين وأساليب التعلم والاستراتيجيات والتصورات والمواقف فيما يتعلق

بالتعلم باللغة الإنجليزية واستخدام وسائل الإعلام الرقمية الجديدة التي تصبح حقيقة واقعة في العصر الرقمي اليوم. هنالك كثير من الطرق التي يمكن للمعلمين أن يتعرفوا عليها عن تعلم اللغة للطلاب واستخدام التكنولوجيا وكيفية الاستفادة منها. تبحث هذه الورقة البحثية كيف أن هذا التكامل الذي ينظر إليه الطلاب وما يعنيه ذلك وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، ما هي العوامل الأخرى التي تلعب دورا أساسيا للاستفادة من هذه التصورات.

Key terms: Technology, Digital media, English language teaching, foreign language learning, learner autonomy, learning styles and strategies.

Abbreviations: ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies). ELT (English Language Teaching). EFL (English as Foreign Language). L2 (a second language).

Introduction

This paper is mainly concerned with investigating EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards digital media use and integration on language learning at the university level, and how that is an important consideration from foreign language teaching perspectives that faculty need to be aware of. The researcher thinks when technology use and integration somehow considered in language teaching these students' perceptions are essential because of the multiple effective ways, options, and opportunities technology avails for both teachers and students. Such effective ways are primly learner-centered oriented where these perceptions play central role in

terms of guiding and directing their respective teachers performance. Therefore, the uses, advantages, and possibilities of technology in EFL learning and teaching are not intended to be discussed as per se but rather how as an effective tools they perceived by language learners.

The new digital media have multiple features that can be useful when pedagogically utilized by teachers for their own and their students learning. What is to be discussed in this paper is not intended as a recipe or a guide for EFL teachers to use technology in language teaching and learning. Rater, it is a general framework that alone is useless without the teacher's own willingness to develop, openness for change, as well as a sense of

reflection and creativity. Without such qualities an EFL teacher cannot be expected to be an effective one with regard to making use of his/her students' perceptions. A key concern rises here relates to the fact of whether technology is available for students and their teachers at their respective university or not and students as well as their teachers of varying degrees of availability and access to these technology on their own. In either cases, the researcher thinks always there are some ways to help students make use of these new digital media taking into account that though Sudan is a developing country access to Internet and computers as well as smart phones and other portable devices are common amongst higher education staff and students as a great deal of the surveyed participants' responses in the study indicate so.

Students' perceptions and attitudes towards new digital media from teaching perspective are an important area that need to be considered by EFL teachers. That importance

stems from the fact that these days, up to date methodology of foreign language teaching shift the focus from teachers and how they teach to learners and how they learn. Therefore, as long as technology use comes into the equation, these students' perceptions and attitudes are integral part of learner-centered approaches of language teaching. Just knowing about these perceptions whether through what the literature says or teachers running need analysis for their respective students is not enough. But, how to translate that knowledge about students' perceptions and technological skills into action is key to successful and effective teaching which in turn expected to lead a better learning.

Whether respective universities and colleges avail the new digital media to both staff and students on a formal basis or informally available as often that is the cases these days, always there is a way to help learners make use of new media. "Many researchers argue that major innovations or inventions,

especially the Internet, adopted by society, have an effect on the structure of the human brain (Carr, 2011; Cardinali et. al; 2009; Doidge, 2007; Kurtweil, 2004 cited in White and Gerlad 2013, p.1) which may or may not be a change for the better''. They argue that ''Certainly, there is little doubt that the Internet, through its networked and mobile functions, has changed the way that people find information and the way that they communicate. If the structure of the human brain is changing due to new technologies such as the Internet, and locating information and communicating are changing, then changes to the way that students learn, and probably what they learn, would appear to follow''.

Digital media according business dictionary.com means Digitized content (text, graphics audio, and video) that can be transmitted over Internet or computer networks. There are another terms that sometimes used interchangeably with digital media such (ICTs) Information and Communication

technologies, technology, educational technologies, and (IT) information technology, and multimedia. (ICTs) is an umbrella term that combined both traditional and analogue technologies such as radio, TV, newspapers and so on as well as digital media topped by the Internet and its services, networks, devices, and applications. Some of these traditional tools are digitized as well. Then there are digital versions of all most all of them.

This research paper mainly concerned with the content of these digital media that basically Internet based ones. That is because foreign language teaching and learning requires interaction and variety that such technologies made possible than ever before whether one that among teachers and students, students to students, students to content and computer. The researcher thinks an important consideration that arises here relates to the key questions about whether current generation of digital age are influenced by these media on their living and social life

or not? And how that impacts the way they learn and what they learn as well?

As the literature shows and approves that there is a strong relation between digital media and effective language learning. In terms of English language learning in particular, (Craig and Patten ٢٠٠٧, p.٧) note that digital resources have been shown to support learners in developing verbal interaction skills, increasing their vocabulary, and improving their reading comprehension. Furthermore, access to the Internet and social media develops students' intercultural skills and promotes global awareness. In addition, (Warschauer and Healey ١٩٩٨, as cited in Brown, ٢٠٠١, p. ١٤٥) contend that integrating digital technologies in the English language classroom allows for individualization in large classes; facilitates multimodal practice; encourages collaboration; and increases the 'fun' factor for learners''.

Brown confirms that "Today's language educators need support to

understand how their learners are changing and the ways technology can be used to aid their teaching and learning strategies. The movement toward different modes of language learning, from presence-based to autonomous as well as blended and fully online modes, requires different skill sets such as e-moderation and new ways of designing and developing language learning tasks in the digital age.[]Theoretical studies that include practical case studies and high quality empirical studies incorporating critical perspectives are necessary to move the field further''. There are so many perspectives and areas that new digital media can be utilized in the process of English language teaching and learning that EFL teachers need to have some familiarity with depending on context. These areas include the following:

- Task-based and other communicative learning and teaching approaches utilizing technology.[]
- Language learner creativity using digital media.

- Blended language learning.
 - Designing courses for online and distance language learning.
 - Computer and mobile assisted language learning.
 - Autonomous language learning, both in and outside of formal educational contexts.
 - The use of web 2.0 and social media technologies as well as virtual language learning environments.
 - Language educator professional development with digital technologies.
 - Teaching language skills and systems with these technologies.
- The abovementioned mixed areas that combine both ELT and digital

media provide a wide range of opportunities for both language teachers and learners in and outside traditional classes. (Thomas 2010, p. 8) indicates that “New media are revolutionizing the learning and teaching of languages in a number of ways:

- The Internet provides access to authentic material and examples of foreign and other languages.
- Smartphones, Skype and E-mail enable learners to have direct contact with others all around the world
- Social media promote immediate connectivity and comment on what is happening in the world.

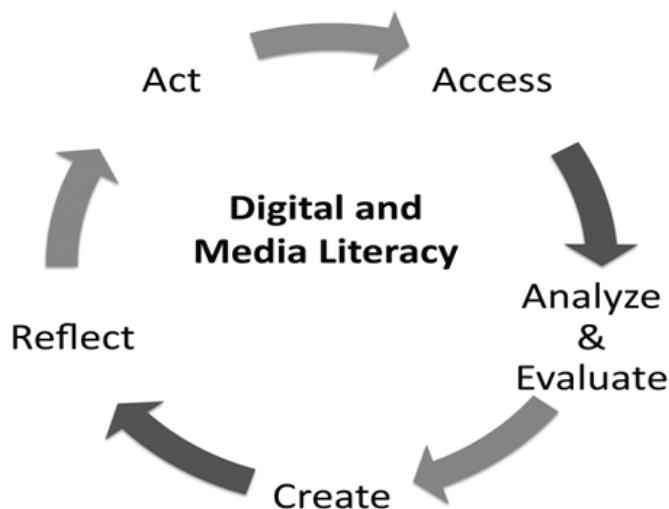


Figure (2.2.1): Essential competencies of Digital and Media Literacy

Thomas further adds that “The task for language teachers is to find innovative ways to use the new opportunities to make language learning and teaching more effective and more interesting and to maintain the qualities and values of more conventional teaching”. Doing this raises issues and challenges:

- Keeping up with technological development as the rate of change is so fast that choosing the right is hard- and software is a constant preoccupation, leaving aside budgetary implications.□
- Learning to use the new media as classroom tools needs new skills which are often more quickly acquired by the students□
- Understanding the ways in which students learn with new media is a process differently structured and less linear than previous approaches.□
- Developing pedagogic methodologies which incorporate the new media, not just as gimmicks, but as integral and efficient features of curricula and syllabi.□
- Articulating the use of new media

with books and other more traditional forms of input.

These challenges depends on and influenced by many other factors relate to digital media availability, students and teachers readiness as well as their digital literacies as figure (2.2.1) cited by Aspin institute (2010) shows. Therefore, whether technology used formally or informally EFL teachers need to help their respective students how to acquire, develop, and maintain these competencies particularly those relate to higher order thinking skills. These days technology becomes so common whether the Internet or other devices and services associated with especially for university level faculty and students. Therefore, its consideration in language teaching is a key concern as (Tomel, L. A 2003, p.26) indicates that “The potential applications of technology in the foreign languages classroom are limited only by the imagination of the teacher. The classroom teacher draws from many diverse sources to instruct, reinforce, and enhance the teaching of a language. As with any

new teaching device, the teacher must be familiar with the products before using them. Teachers must preview all materials, and develop their own set of competencies and skills necessary to correctly operate the equipment. In-service training before use is encouraged. Technology has proven to be a valuable asset for effectively teaching a foreign language to students in the 21st century”.

On the same token, (Moyle & Wijngaards 2012, p. ix). Add that “Technologies have grown tremendously and have permeated all areas of our lives. The educational sector however, is somewhat lagging behind other sectors, and seems to limit technology use. Yet many researchers are convinced of the vital role that technologies can play in learning and teaching. The purposes, theories and ways in which learning with technologies can be conceptualized and operationalized is generating an increasing body of literature, but there is still a lot to be examined. With the arrival of Web 2.0 and the Semantic Web for instance,

not enough is known about the ways in which these online technologies interact, and may interact, with students’ formal and informal learning. Anytime, anywhere delivery of content and the opportunities for pedagogical interaction seem to be powerful options with mobile devices.” Therefore, the researcher thinks teachers’ own creativity, reflections on their practices as well as the resultant understandings are the effective forces that can drive their efforts to integrate and use technology. Students’ perceptions and practices with relation to language learning and technology use are key areas that EFL teachers need to be aware of because they are central concerns for their teaching to be effective.

There are so many elements involved when it comes to discussing the significance of effective learning. (Rogers & Freiburg 1994, p. 78) point out that “One element is the quality of personal involvement. The whole person, both in feeling and in cognitive aspects, is part of the learning event. Self-initiated

involvement is another element. Even when the impetus or stimulus comes from the outside, the sense of discovery or reaching out, of grasping and comprehending comes from within''. The researcher believes that such comprehension that comes from within though cannot be seen directly by EFL teachers but there are some signals that teachers can make use of and utilize for further developments. That can be through tests, polls or questionnaires as well as close personal observation and analysis. EFL teachers' familiarity with their learners' styles and learning strategies is a fundamental concern. (Ellis 1985, p. 38) described a learning style as "The more or less consistent way in which a person perceives, conceptualizes, organizes and recalls information." He further adds that students' learning styles will be influenced by their genetic make-up, their previous learning experiences, their culture and the society they live in. Therefore, teachers need to be sensitive towards these perspective in their classes.

Along students' perceptions and attitudes whether about foreign language learning or how digital media can be utilized in that which can be obtained by different means such needs analysis polls and questionnaires, there are some key characteristics that teachers need to be aware of in their respective classes. (Rogers 1994) summarize them in the following points:

- Learners are different –with different wants and different needs.
- Learners need to feel that what they learn is meaningful to them.
- The whole person is part of the learning event.
- Learners need to be actively involved in the learning process.
- Learners need to initiate and not just respond.
- A learner-centered approach or learner-centered activities are essential in FLT.

They add that to achieve this we must take account of different learning styles and different learning strategies. These styles and strategies are essential for effective language teaching and learning. The researcher

thinks without awareness and understanding of them EFL teaching would a matter of hit and miss. The use technology in language teaching and learning can help teachers vary their teaching styles to accommodate as much of these learning styles as well as help their students about effective foreign language learning strategies. (McCarthy in Ellis 1995) indicates four learning styles which are:

- Innovative learners
- Analytic learners
- Common sense learners
- Dynamic learners

Learning strategies on the other hand are “Specific behaviours or thought processes that students use to enhance their own learning”. A strategy is useful if the following conditions are present: (a) the strategy relates well to the L_r task at hand, (b) the strategy fits the particular student’s learning style preferences to one degree or another, and (c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies.” (Oxford 2003, p.42). Effective language

teachers need not to only know about and understand learning strategies but good language learners as well. (Stern 1983) indicates key four strategies that help good language learners. They are as follow:

- Active planning strategy.
- Academic or explicit learning strategy.
- Social learning strategy. And,
- Affective strategy

A more recent categorization of these learning strategies by (Oxford 1990) shows another six key strategies as follow:

- Cognitive strategies.
- Metacognitive strategies.
- Memory-related strategies.
- Compensatory strategies.
- Affective strategies.
- Social strategies.

An important consideration in this regard relates to the fact of whether learning strategies are just a kind of knowledge or an understanding that exist in the teachers’ mind only or they can be taught to students to be aware of and use in their learning? This in turn leads to the key question; Can Learning Strategies be taught? From

practical point of view teachers need to teach these strategies explicitly in addition to technological dimension when digital media are somehow considered in their respective classes. (Ellis & Sinclair 1991) suggest three ways that support teaching learning strategies to students:

- Small-scale interventions. For example: helping readers guess the meaning of words.
- Strategy-based teaching: The CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach).
- Learning to learn courses.

Helping and enabling students at higher education level to be independent and self-regulated learners is a key goal that EFL teachers need to consider seriously. These are fundamental factors that encourage learner autonomy. (Holec, 1981, Little, 1991, and Benson 2001 in Cotterall 2008) provide three varying definitions of learner's autonomy in the following sequence; learner autonomy is "the ability to take charge of one's own learning", "a capacity for detachment, critical

reflection, decision-making, and independent action". Not culturally-determined. And also as that "the content of learning should be freely determined by learners".

Cotterall argues that there is nevertheless broad agreement that autonomous learners understand the purpose of their learning programme, explicitly accept responsibility for their learning, share in the setting of learning goals, take initiatives in planning and executing learning activities, and regularly review their learning and evaluate its effectiveness. (Lee 1998, p. 12) confirms that "There is a consensus that the practice of learner autonomy requires insight, a positive attitude, a capacity for reflection, and a readiness to be proactive in self-management and in interaction with others. He also suggested some ways of encouraging learners' autonomy that can be summarized in the following points:

- Raising awareness of purpose: Learners can make better decisions about their learning if they are aware

of the purpose of different tasks and exercises in the course book.

- Taking opportunities outside the classroom: As well as understanding the purpose of classroom tasks, learners can also be encouraged to use resources for language practice that exist outside the classroom.
- Raising awareness of individual learning styles and preferences: Course books are beginning to include discussion points to raise students awareness of their own learning styles e.g. on different ways review the days lesson, to organize course material, to keep vocabulary note books and so on.
- Encouraging reflection: Learners can be encouraged to reflect on their own progress. Some learners enjoy keeping learner diaries. Learners can also be encouraged to reflect on individual classes. E.g. "In todays class I learned ...", "I am confused about...".
- Useful expressions for the classroom can be taught right from beginner level to allow students to have some control of the teaching / learning process such as "how do

you spell ?", " Can you repeat please? ...".

- Involving students in the teaching / learning decisions: By allowing students to take some of the decisions about how the classes will be run, they will also have a greater sense of responsibility. E.g. What class rules might be discussed and what type of rules drawn up? Such as homework, attendance, the use of first language and so on.

Methodology

The abovementioned sections that touched on digital media and learning, its potential and relations to learners' styles, strategies and autonomy are intended to be as an essential framework that EFL teachers need to make use of their respective students perceptions, attitudes, skills, and practical experiences with the new digital media. The research study used questionnaire as a tool for data collection. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) used for data analysis. That was based on Likert five points scale. It contains (24) statements that directly relate to students' perception and attitudes

towards both technology and EFL learning from personal point of view.

The Study Participants

The population sample of this study were (70) EFL students chosen randomly amongst students in English department of faculty of education at Khartoum university. They were (35) males and (35) females from third year students who already studied five semesters and fourth year students who already studied seven semesters.

The Study Questions

The study of EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards new digital media in the context of this paper was based on tow key questions. These questions are to explore and relate students learning through the available new media to language teaching which on the other hand need to make use of technology as well. They are:

- Why are students' perceptions and attitudes important from EFL teaching perspectives?
- What help and enable EFL teachers utilize their respective students'

perceptions and attitudes in their everyday practices?

The Study Hypothesis

There are tow hypotheses behind this research paper which examines EFL students' perceptions and attitudes with relation to the use of digital media for their learning at the university level. It also aims to relate that to language teaching which experiencing shifting the focus from teaching and how teachers teach to learning and how learners learn. Of course, these perceptions and attitudes are key to focus on students' characteristics. They are:

- EFL students at Sudanese national universities are less aware about the effective role of digital media in language learning.
- EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards digital media are positive.

Findings

This sections reviews 24 items, their distribution frequencies, percentages, along means and standard deviations relate to students' attitudes and perceptions to technology use, English teaching

and learning through technology use. Their responses were based on Likert five points scale. The findings are grouped into three categories: cumulative disagree, neutral, and agree. Cumulative disagree to represent the cumulative data percentage of the respondents' selection of "Strongly disagree and Disagree", neutral or uncertain remains as it is, and cumulative agree to represent the cumulative

data percentage of the participants' option for "Strongly agree and Agree" as shown throughout the given tables below. In the context of this study disagree points indicate students lack or negative attitudes towards the respective point, neutral could be considered as negative ones that closely relate to disagree, and agree points indicate students' ability, skills, and positive attitudes towards the given items.

Students' Attitudes towards Technology use

Table NO (1)

S. NO	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I feel confident when learning new computer skills.				
2	I feel confident when use the Internet.				
3	I like to use digital media in learning English.				
4	Using digital media in learning English is interesting.				

Tables (1 & 2) above review items (14-) in this part which posed to find out the respondents' attitudes and perceptions of learning new computer and Internet skills and whether they like to use that in

learning English along their interest. In general sense they are related to students' attitudes towards their use and experiences with technology along their frequencies, percentages. means and standard deviations.

Table NO (2)

S. NO	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
1	2 (2.9%)	5 (7.1%)	5 (7.1%)	22 (31.4%)	36 (51.4%)	4.43	0.91
2	11 (15.7%)	1 (1.4%)	14 (20%)	18 (25.7%)	26 (37.1%)	3.67	1.40
3	2 (2.9%)	5 (7.1%)	5 (7.1%)	22 (31.4%)	36 (51.4%)	3.69	1.36
4	3 (4.3%)	6 (8.6%)	9 (12.9%)	28 (40%)	24 (34.3%)	3.91	1.10

The first item concerned with students' confidence when learn new computer skills. (10%) of the surveyed respondents report lack of that confidence, (7.1%) were neutral, and the great majority of (82.9%) do feel confident when learn new computer skills. Students' confidence to Internet use is also essential aspect as (17.4%) of the surveyed students lack that confidence, (20%) were uncertain, and the other (62.9%) were confident users of Internet.

Whether students like using technology in English learning or not is a critical attitude. (10%) of the participants do not like, (7.1%) were

neutral, and the majority of (82.9%) liked technology use in language learning. As for if using ICTs in learning English is interesting, (12.9%) of the surveyed students do not think it is interesting, (12.9%) were neutral, and the majority of (74.2%) think technology use for English learning is interesting. These students' attitudes of majority who think it is interesting and those like it as well as their confidence to use computers and Internet are important consideration EFL teachers need to take into account when plan and consider to use technology in their language classes.

Table NO (3)

5	It is convenient using digital media to get information.
6	It is difficult to use digital media in learning English.
7	Using digital media for learning English is boring.
8	It is a waste of time using digital medias to search information.
9	It is beneficial to use digital for learning English.

Table NO (4)

S. NO	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
5	1 (1.4%)	3 (4.3%)	12 (17.1%)	26 (37.1%)	28 (40%)	4.10	0.93
6	16 (22.9%)	25 (35.7%)	27 (38.6%)	2 (2.9%)	- -	2.21	0.83
7	15 (21.4%)	26 (37.1%)	25 (35.7%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)	2.27	0.90
8	19 (27.1%)	22 (31.4%)	26 (37.1%)	2 (2.9%)	1 (1.4%)	2.20	0.93
9	3 (4.3%)	9 (12.9%)	20 (28.6%)	17 (24.3%)	21 (30%)	3.63	1.17

Tables (4.1.4 & 4.1.5) present items (5- 9) along their frequencies, distributions, and percentages, means and standard deviation. They relate to students' attitudes towards technology use. Students' attitudes regarding the convenience of using

technology to get information is an important perspective.

(5.7%) of the surveyed sample do not think it is convenient, (17.1%) were neutral, and majority of (77.2%) think it is convenient to use technology for getting information.

When surveyed students asked if it is difficult to use technology in learning English, (58.6%) disagreed with that, (38.6%) were uncertain, and the other (2.8%) agreed such difficulty.

As for students' attitudes with regard to if using ICTs for learning English is boring, (58.6%) do think it is boring, (35.7%) were uncertain, and the other (5.7%) agreed that it is boring. Those agreed may be they don't have adequate access or not at all to these technologies. Students

were asked if it is a waste of time using ICTs to search information, (58.6%) of the respondents disagreed with that, (37.1%) were uncertain, and the other (4.3%) agreed that it is a waste of time. Whether it is beneficial to use technologies for learning English or not, (17.1%) of the participants disagree with that, (28.6%) were neutral, and the other (54.3%) agreed that technology use for language learning is beneficial.

Students' perceptions of English and Teaching through Technology

Table NO (1)

10	Learning English is interesting and important as international language that help me in the future.
11	English is difficult, boring, and hard to understand.
12	I need teachers to teach me how to use online resources and communication tools.
13	To be a member of a Facebook/Whatsapp English related group is very useful to help learners develop their language proficiency.
14	Subscribing to an EFL/ESL Website is useful for language learners.

Table NO (2)

S. NO	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
10	- -	1 (1.4%)	2 (2.9%)	26 (37.1%)	41 (58.6%)	4.53	0.63
11	26 (37.1%)	11 (15.7%)	10 (14.3%)	12 (17.1%)	11 (15.7%)	2.59	1.52
12	5 (7.1%)	11 (15.7%)	11 (15.7%)	26 (37.1%)	17 (24.3%)	3.56	1.22
13	3 (3.4%)	6 (8.6%)	6 (8.6%)	26 (37.1%)	29 (41.4%)	4.03	1.12
14	- -	7 (10 %)	11 (15.7%)	36 (51.4%)	16 (22.9%)	3.87	0.88

Tables (4.2.1 & 4.2.2) review items 10- 14 along with their frequencies distribution, percentages, means and standard deviations relate students' perceptions about English and teaching through technologies. Table (4.2.3) shows their means and standard deviations. The first one has to do with students perception towards English language as whether Learning English is interesting and important as international language that help them in the future. Only

(1.4%) of the respondents disagree with that, (2.9%) were uncertain, and the overwhelming majority of (95.7%) agreed with it. They were also asked if English is difficult, boring, and hard to understand their responses (52.9%) disagreed with that, (14.3%) were neutral, and the other (32.8%) agreed that it is difficult, boring, and hard to understand. Students' need for teachers to teach them how to use online

resources and communication tools is an important perspective towards language teaching and learning. (22.9%) of the respondents disagreed with that (15.7%) were neutral, and the other (61.4%) agreed their need for their respective teachers to teach how to use online resources and communication tools in language study and learning. Students were asked about their membership of Facebook and WhatsApp English related group and how that useful and helpful for them develop their

language proficiency. (12.9%) of the surveyed sample do not think these groups helpful, (8.6%) were uncertain, and the majority of (78.6%) agreed that such groups useful and helpful developing their language proficiency. Another closely related perspective is subscription to EFL/ ESL Websites and it is usefulness for language learners. (10%) of the participants disagreed with that, (15.7%) were uncertain, and majority of (74.3%) think such subscription is useful for them.

4.3 Students' Attitudes and Perceptions to Technology use and Learning

Table NO (3)

15	Digital media broaden my knowledge.
16	Digital media increase my motivation.
17	Digital media help build my confidence using English to communicate.
18	Digital media enhance my ability in writing and reading.
19	Reading and listening to online materials in English can help me develop my language proficiency, knowledge, and skills.

Table NO (4)

S. NO	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
15	1 (1.4%)	2 (2.9%)	14 (20%)	31 (44.3%)	22 (31.4%)	4.01	0.88
16	1 (1.4%)	3 (4.3%)	14 (20%)	24 (34.3%)	28 (40%)	4.07	0.95
17	2 (2.9%)	5 (7.1%)	5 (7.1%)	33 (47.1%)	25 (35.7%)	4.05	0.99
18	2 (2.9%)	7 (10%)	6 (8.6%)	34 (48.6%)	21 (30%)	3.93	1.03
19	2 (2.9%)	3 (4.3 %)	7 (10%)	30 (42.9%)	28 (40%)	4.13	0.96

Tables (4.3.1 & 4.3.2) present items (1519-) and their distribution, frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation with relation to students' perceptions and attitudes regarding technology and its influence on their skills, knowledge, and abilities. As for whether technology broaden their knowledge, (4.3%) of the surveyed students do not think so, (20%) were uncertain, and the majority of (75.7%) of them agreed that technology use in language learning broaden their knowledge. Motivation

is a critical element for students learning whether using technology or not. Therefore, students were also asked if technology increased their motivation. (5.7%) of the respondents disagreed with it, (20%) were uncertain, and the majority of (74.3%) agreed that technology increased their motivation.

Whether technology can help students build their confidence using English to communicate better is another fundamental perspective. (10%) of the respondents disagreed with that, (7.1%) were neutral, and

the majority of (82.6%) agreed that technology help them build such confidence to communicate well. Reading and writing are important two major language skills along and within students' communicative competence. Students responses with regard to if technology enhance their ability in writing and reading, (12.9%) disagreed with it, (8.6%) were neutral, and the majority of (78.6%) agreed that technology enhanced their reading

and writing abilities. Another essential perspective is whether reading and listening to online materials in English help students develop their language proficiency, knowledge, and skills. (7.1%) of them disagreed with that, (10%) were uncertain, and the majority of (82.9%) agreed that reading and listening to such online materials helped develop their language proficiency, knowledge, and skills.

Table NO (5)

20	Computers and internet can serve as effective tools for learning and studying English in and outside the classes.
21	Internet brings unlimited resources for English learners.
22	Foreign language learning is basically the learner's own responsibility with help from teachers.
23	The use of digital media will provide students with more practical and useful English knowledge.
24	Computers can be used to provide interactive, engaging, and communicative activities for students.

Tables (4.3.4 & 4.3.5) review items 20 -24 along their frequencies and percentages pertaining to students' perceptions and attitudes towards technology and foreign language learning. Table (4.3.6) presents their

means and standard deviations.

Students were asked whether Computers and Internet can serve as effective tools for learning and studying English in and outside the classes.

Table NO (6)

S. NO	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
20	3 (4.3%)	6 (8.6%)	5 (7.1%)	27 (41.4%)	27 (38.6%)	4.01	1.10
21	2 (2.9%)	3 (4.3%)	7 (10%)	25 (35.7%)	33 (847.1%)	4.20	0.99
22	4 (5.7%)	2 (2.9%)	13 (18.6%)	30 (42.9%)	21 (30%)	3.89	1.06
23	2 (2.9%)	3 (4.3%)	7 (10%)	32 (45.7%)	26 (37.1%)	4.10	0.95
24	1 (1.4%)	- -	9 (12.9%)	34 (48.6%)	26 (37.1%)	4.20	0.77

(12.9%) of the surveyed students disagreed with that, (7.1%) were neutral, and the majority of (77.1%) agreed that technology can serve as effective tool in and outside language classes. With regard to students' responses to the statement that Internet brings unlimited resources for English learners. (7.1%) of them disagreed with that, (10%) were uncertain, and the majority of (82.9%) agreed that Internet brought unlimited resources for language learners. Students' perception of foreign language learning and whether it is basically the learner's own

responsibility with help from teachers or else is a critical perspective. (8.6%) of the respondents disagreed with it, (18.6%) were neutral, and the majority of (72.9%) agreed with that. This in turn shows students awareness of to be self-directed and autonomous learners as that is a key goal of higher education students. Whether the use of technology will provide students with more practical and useful English knowledge, (7.1%) of the disagreed with that, (10%) were neutral, and the majority of (82.6%) agreed that technology provided them more practical language knowledge and

skills. Interaction, engagement, and communication are essential elements for foreign language teaching and learning. Students were asked if technology provides and support these elements, (1.4%) of the surveyed sample disagreed with that, (12.9%) were uncertain, and the majority of (85.7%) agreed that technology provides and supports interactive, engaging, and communicative learning activities and tasks.

Conclusion

From the perceptions and attitudes of EFL students towards digital media and language learning in this research paper, most of their responses were positive, whether regarding their own perceptions, skills and personal experiences with technology or language learning. A great majority of the participants report their confidence in using computer and Internet as key elements that all digital media contents are based on along other portable devices such as smart and Internet enabled phones. In addition, most of the students like to and interested using digital media

in language learning and think that these technologies are convenient for searching and getting information. Most of the respondents do not think it is difficult to use technology and it is not boring to use. Therefore, they do not consider its use as a waste of time. A considerable percentage of the respondents report their need for their teachers to help and enable them make use of online resources to support their classes. With regard to the of social media such as Facebook, WhattsApp and other English related website the majority are members of such sites groups that mainly English oriented. Along that a great percentage believe that use broaden their proficiency levels, knowledge and skills and technology helped them to build confidence using English to communicate whether in the written or spoken form. These findings along other ones given in the pervious section are encouraging for EFL teachers at the university level to consider using digital media in their classes though there negative percentages in this regard. These negative ones reflect

lack of formal use of digital media as well as some students' lack of access to them on personal side.

These finding actually are not only encouraging for language teachers but other concerned parties as well. Those partners include heads of English departments, administrators and policy makers. It is a shared responsibility among these partners where language teachers need to be

prepared for change that associates the use digital media which a long formal training and professional development strategies also requires willingness, openness, creativity and reflection. Administrators and policy makers need to recognize the value of technology integration to secure funds for training and availability of infrastructures and access to digital media at Sudanese national universities.

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