The Impact of using Chat on the Students' Achievement in Nablus Schools from the Teachers' Perspectives

أثر استخدام الدردشة على تحصيل الطلبة في محافظة نابلس من وجهة نظر المعلمين

Ahmad Awad & Fawaz Aqel

أحمد عوض، وفواز عقل

Methods of Teaching Department, Faculty of Education, An- Najah National University

E-mail: ahmedm@najah.edu

Abstract

This study aimed at identifying the impact of the use of chatting on the students' achievement as seen by the English language teachers in Nablus schools and finding out whether there were statistically significant differences attributable to the variables of gender, experience, academic level, and computer skills. The subjects of the study were 60 male and female teachers of English from Nablus schools, where the researchers used a questionnaire of 30 items and distributed it among the subject of the study. The researchers used various statistical analyses such as the standard deviation , percentages T test and One-Way analysis of variance to analyze the results of the study. The results of the study showed that the impact of chat on students' achievement was very high, in some items and it was high in other items whereas it was very low in only two items. The results also showed that there was a statistically significant difference in favor of those who had computer skills. In the light of the results of the study, the researchers recommended increasing the students' awareness of the benefits and risks of using this service, integrating the different technological services in the school technology textbooks in addition to the urgent need to conduct a study on the use of chat as perceived by students.

ملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة الى التعرف على اثر استخدام الدردشة على تحصيل الطلبة كما يراها معلموا اللغة الانجليزية في مدارس نابلس من جهة و الى التعرف فيما إذا كان هنالك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية تعزى لمتغيرات الجنس، الخبرة، المستوى الأكاديمي، ولمهارات استخدام الكمبيوتر. تكون مجتمع الدراسة من ٦٠ معلما ومعلمة للغة الانجليزية من محافظة نابلس حيث قام الباحثان بتطبيق استبيانه مكونة من ٣٠ فقرة على أفراد العينة التي تشكلت من مجتمع الدراسة الكلي و قام الباحثان باستخدام الانحراف المعياري والنسب المئوية و اختبار ت وتحليل التباين الأحادي لتحليل نتائج الدراسة. أظهرت النتائج أن تأثير الدردشة على تحصيل الطلاب كان مرتفعا جدا في بعض فقرات الاستبيان وكانت مرتفعة في فقرات أخرى ولكنه كان منخفضا جدا في فقرتين فقط. كما وبينت نتائج الدراسة أن هناك فروقا ذات دلالة إحصائية لصالح الذين لديهم مهارات استخدام الكمبيوتر و في ضوء نتائج الدراسة يوصي الباحثان بما يلي زيادة وعي الطلاب حول فوائد و مخاطر استخدام هذه الخدمة وضرورة أن يتضمن مقرر التكنولوجيا في المدارس جزءا خاصا عن الاتصال عن طريق البريد الالكتروني والدردشة هدا بالإضافة الى ضرورة إجراء دراسة حول استخدام الطلاب خدمة الدردشة.

Introduction and Theoretical background

The 21st century student is exposed to a tremendous flow of information which is difficult for him/her to cope with. Today student has many available resources which her/she can tap to learn language and other discipline. These resources include the tape recorder, language lab, video tape, internet, and E-mail-chat. If the student does not change his/her learning styles of all disciplines and language learning in particular, then he may find himself left without the necessary skills. Therefore, it is necessary for the 21st century student to make active use of technology to improve his language performance. (Aqel,. et al 2006 p.599).

Recent studies in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) suggest that on-line chatting can assist learners to gain competence in some aspects of oral interaction (Lee, J. 2002; Patterson, 2001). Chat sessions also provide SLA researchers with insights into language learners interlanguage development by providing instantly available data for analysis (Mynard and. Mynard 2002.)

The term chatting, in the computing context, refers to the use of synchronous or real-time text-based communication tools such as freely available chat lines or Little Italy commercial chatting softwares. MUDs, MOOs and MUSHes, such as the site at the University of Milan, (http://kame.usr.dsi.unimi.it:4444/) also allow for chatting.

Text-based computer-mediated communication (CMC) has been labelled chatting, as if people were actually talking via the computer. A number of researchers in the field have uncovered similarities between text-based interactions via computer and face-to-face interactions (Richard. and Balbar 2002; Sotillo 2000 , Katz,. 2002 and Burnett et al 2003).

Learners do not actually have to use their mouths to chat; they therefore do not integrate the various physical aspects of talking with other aspects of oral interaction. Non-verbal components of communication such as facial expression, context, and pragmatics of oral interaction are also important issues. Based on this , language teachers can focus on areas to get the utmost benefits from chatting activities.

If chatting is skillfully controlled and directed to include a discourse or anthropological perspective, linguistic structures, as they are used in communicative situations, and is embedded in the whole social and historical context of culture.; it becomes a system of signs used to give meaning ,therefore, it includes gestures, facial expressions, body movements, verbal and non-verbal sounds, and proxemics, in addition to cultural artifacts. (Teresa 2003 Mynard and. Mynard 2002.)

Statement of the Problem

A revolution in the use of computer applications in general emerged during the past decade. Computer , in the Arab world , is still in the offing; still it takes various forms ranging from the use of computer to the use of the internet, e-mail service and chatting in order to provide educational content to the learner in a way that is interesting, enjoyable, flexible and diverse. To the researchers, the studies on this subject is

limited and few, prompting them to study the impact of using chatting on the students' achievement in the English language.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

1. Find out the effect of chatting on students' achievement from the perspectives of the English teachers in Nablus schools.
2. Find out if there is a significant difference at (a=.05) due to gender, academic level, experience and computer skills.

Research Questions

1. What is impact of chatting on students' achievement from the perspective of the English teachers in Nablus school?
2. Is there a significant difference at (α=0.05) in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from the teachers' perspective due to gender?
3. Is there a significant difference at (α=0.05) in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from teachers' perspective due to academic level?
4. Is there a significant difference at (α=0.05) in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from teachers' perspective due to experience?
5. Is there a significant difference at (α=0.05) in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from teachers' perspectives due to computer skills?

Definition of Terms

Chatting is a good way to practice informal English. Messages in a chat room are usually short sentences. Sometimes they are not even sentences, but just a few words that are not really correct grammatically but may be typical of the way we speak in a quick conversation with friends. (Teresa, 2003).

According to this study, the concept of chatting means: a system that combines users from around the world to communicate in writing and sound. It is possible for users to see each other through a special camera linked to their computers. The researchers believe that this service is ranked second in use after e-mails in learning a language.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to:

1. The secondary school teachers of English in Nablus schools

2. The study was conducted during the second semester of the scholastic year 2008-2009 .

3. Only sixty male and female teachers who teach English to 11th and 12th secondary classes. were asked to answer the questionnaire for the purpose of collecting the necessary data.

Review of Literature

There has been a considerable amount of literature published on digital or electronic reference service in its various forms; most of this has dealt primarily with e-mail service (Ogata Hiroaki,et al 2002). A recent article discussed a two-year study of e-mail reference questions received at an academic library in which 450 e-mail questions were analyzed by the authors into categories (Mynard, J. (2002). Chat reference services have also begun to emerge recently in the literature. The articles that focus on this technology in libraries generally fall into one or more of the following types:

1. Survey articles that examine either what libraries are doing or what chat technologies are available (Marta, 2002 and Felix 2003) ,

2. Implementation articles that describe projects done at a specific library/consortia (Diamond, & Pease, 2001; Saunders 2001), and

3. Forecast articles that discuss the possibilities that chat technology will offer for the future of reference services (Merchant 2003 and Carr-Chelman et al 2000).

We can observe emerging patterns of cooperative digital reference service ventures that cross between the second and third categories above; these projects--which vary greatly along the implementation-planning spectrum--include: the Metropolitan Cooperative Library System's 24/7 service, the Collaborative Digital Reference Services initiative, and even newer projects like the Association of Southeastern Libraries' Virtual Reference Project (Saunders 2001; ASERL 2001) observed: "One of the key issues associated with the cooperative approach is whether the questions posed by remote users are general enough that they can be answered by a reference librarian from another library, or if they require the expertise of local librarians".

Beyond the categories listed above, there seems to be little represented in the literature at this time, probably due to the relative newness of this technology to libraries. After completing an updated reference services survey of ARL libraries, Tenopir and Ennis (2001) noted "A few of these libraries report that they now offer online chat versions of reference-many report they are thinking about it and planning to offer it soon." One recent article includes some quantitative data of chat reference service at the U.S. Department of Energy Library; the statistics presented there appear to have been generated by the software that is used at the library. The author of that study also gave some general impressions of the types of questions received over a period of time (Patterson 2001). It is difficult to find any research that provides an in-depth analysis of chat reference service for a period of time, which is the objective of this study.

Chat reference services may be physically located in librarians' offices, remote facilities such as branch libraries, or even homes. Stemper and Butler (2001) observed: "Interactive modes of digital reference (e.g., chat, videoconferencing) present staffing requirements that more closely resemble staffing models of the traditional reference desk." The Reference Desk itself is also a logical location that libraries

contemplating chat reference may consider, and that is where the library in this study houses it.

Auburn University Libraries implemented their chat reference service, Info Chat, in September 2000. One month prior to that, the four subject Reference Desks were consolidated into one centralized reference services desk in the main library, and the software was installed at one of four computer terminals at that centralized service point. While there are two small branch libraries on campus, the main library performs a high percentage of overall reference service at the university. Because of that, two to four people--including librarians, staff, and some graduate students--staff the main Reference Desk. These people respond to the chat reference service queries.

During the Fall 2000 semester, the newly implemented Info Chat service was publicized through a variety of avenues. These included, but were not limited to: departmental liaisons announcing the service to their constituents, instruction librarians demonstrating the service in classes, an article in the student newspaper, inclusion on the Libraries' "What's New" listserv, and appearance in the faculty newsletter. During that Fall 2000 semester, the service was limited to afternoon and evening availability, usually operating from 1:00-9:00 p.m. on Monday-Thursday and 1:00-5:00 p.m. on Friday; this was a total of approximately 36 hours per week. While reference librarians were adjusting to the changing needs of a newly centralized reference desk and desired a limited timeframe for this new service, it was agreeable that the limited hours would include the hours that were perceived to be the peak hours of the new service--thus offering the most service possible during those limited hours.

In January 2001, the hours of Info Chat were expanded to include any time in which there were two or more reference personnel at the Reference Desk; this is essentially all but the first and last hours that the main library is open to the public (approximately 77 hours per week). Because the software for this service is installed at the Reference Desk-- where telephone, walk-in, and chat reference questions are all initiated--

the department found that at least two people were necessary to manage all of the service queries.

Since its inception, Info Chat has been open to the general public, requiring no authentication to prove university affiliation of any kind; requests about users' affiliation to the university are not made. The chat software used is Human Click(TM); it is a text-based chat system (Human Click 2000). When the library initially offered its chat reference service, it was a free version of the software. In April 2001, that changed to a fee version that allowed automatic archiving, searchable transcripts, and canned message options. Because these features were not available for the complete duration of this study, manual archiving was continued throughout the time period of the study for consistent analysis and comparison of the data (Stevens, V 2002-2003)

To illustrate the users' perspective of the Info Chat service, a sample is shown below of the web entry page where patrons can initiate a chat session; the alternative "leave us a message" icon that patrons see when no personnel are available is also shown in that image. Below that is a sample of the Human Click(TM) interface that patrons see during the course of an Info Chat session.

Chat parodies, with there incoherence, their abbreviated use of language, their tendency to stray quickly from the point, is something that rings true for many people. However, it is argued in, for example, Burnett et al (2003) that some of the specific features of this kind of CHAT 'may encourage certain kinds of learning'. The features of CHAT that Burnett et al claim may have educational potentials which are listed below:

The playful potential of the medium, the reduction of all participants to an on-screen print persona ,the potential for several threads to develop allowing participants to discuss simultaneously topics at a variety of levels and the need for brevity. We would, however, comment that these points, which are certainly characteristic of CHAT also occur in asynchronous CMC, as recognized by Schwier and Balbar (2002) who nevertheless point out that CHAT provides a sense of 'urgency and

immediacy' that is particularly energizing and is powerful in its ability to encourage the development of relationships and a sense of community. In comparison with traditional computer communication, it is the immediacy of CHAT that would seem to be its characteristic feature. The advantages it brings are:

1. Social – students feel a powerful connection with their fellows even though they may be operating in quite different time zones and contexts

2. Practical – it is possible to sort out small problems and misunderstandings much more quickly than can be done in asynchronous computer-mediated communication.

CHAT is still very much in its infancy and it has been used mainly for social purposes by the young. However, there is a slowly growing literature reporting on teachers' experiences with CHAT for educational purposes and this section reports on some of these. Inevitably the teachers' experience is linked to very specific contexts, though this provides insights that may be generalized for other disciplines.(Stevens, 2002 and Straw, 2000).

Language teaching is an area where there has already been considerable interest in CHAT. Mark Freiermuth (2002) found it (perhaps surprisingly) useful in his work with students of English as a foreign language. Although he set up his lessons in a way that might seem rather artificial – students in a normal classroom 'talking' to each other through the medium of CHAT - he found that it had the following advantages:

1. The teacher can monitor all the groups in a way that is not possible when students are discussing normally in small groups.

2. The teacher can monitor and guide when appropriate in a relatively inconspicuous way;

3. As a source which can be kept of all the conversations it is easy for the teacher to do follow-up work focusing on the language that was produced by the students.

4. It is easier for all students to contribute to the conversation as they can go back over other's contributions if they do not understand them on first reading.

5. The ability to see the conversation helps to keep students engaged, focused and contributing.

Freiermuth (2002) also found problems, the main ones being either technical or students' lack of computing skills. His conclusions, however, are firmly positive: 'Should this method of instruction replace spoken collaborative activities in the classroom? Of course not. However, Internet chat does provide language teachers with creative opportunities for promoting collaborative learning tasks and environments.' (Freiermuth 2002: 40)

Kuhlemeier and Hemker (2005) assure the positive effects of computer skills on the students' e-mail and chatting services. They found out that students in pre-university education, third-graders and non-minority students appeared to have better Internet skills and a more advantageous home computer use than students in pre-vocational education, first-graders and minority students, respectively. The Internet skills of girls were hardly less developed than those of boys. Home access to e-mail and the extent to which students use the home computer for surfing, e-mailing, chatting and text processing were found to be substantially related to Internet and computer skills

Similar positive conclusions for language learning were reached by Kitade (2000) and by Felix (2002). As they both provide a very effective discussion of the uses of the web in language teaching, including the potential of CHAT, Felix concludes that "online learning can be a tool which, in the hands of creative educational designers, dedicated online moderators and enthusiastic students, has the potential to enhance our learning experience beyond and in addition to the expectations of even the best classroom environment." (Felix: 2002: 12)

Hudson and Bruckman (2002) provide some interesting data for French language teaching. They illustrate how the medium allows teachers to take a much less dominant role in discussions, suggesting that

student inhibitions are lowered by the fact that the discussions are not face-to-face. As such they conclude that 'these conversational environments have strong potential to positively influence foreign language learning'. (Hudson and Bruckman 2002: 131).

On the other part of the spectrum, the key problems referred to time and again in the literature relate to technology as such, especially the need for reliable technology. A CHAT session will easily be spoiled if the software does not work or if any of the participants has connectivity problems. This can discourage participants from further experiments. However, growing familiarity with the medium outside the classroom is making this kind of problem less likely.

Some people also have problems with the abbreviated, highly colloquial kind of language used in CHAT sessions but this is not a universal concern. As a language teacher Freiermuth expressed concern about the quality of students' language and warned teachers to try to curb excessive use of abbreviations. (Freiermuth 2002:40)

Freirmuth's concerns about the abbreviated features of language used in CHAT sessions are not shared by Merchant (2001). He argues quite convincingly that new and fast forms of written communication are being developed and that those who are comfortable with using these forms will be at an advantage. He writes: 'Derrida, in his deconstruction of Plato's Phaedrus, uncovers a telling ambiguity in the myth of Thamus and Theuth, arguing that Plato sees the invention of writing, like the discovery of a new drug, as both 'poison' and 'medicine'. If we extend the analogy to the new forms of communication . we might ask whether these new electronic forms are really dangerously addictive and corrupting, or whether they are innovations which open new vistas of possibility.' (Merchant 2000: 305)

Whether the linguistic characteristics of CHAT are regarded as problematic or not, there are some features of the medium that may pose problems for the teacher. These are summed up in an article by Cathy Burnett (2003). They are:

1. Contributions are likely to be very short, often just two or three lines, which can lead to a superficiality and lack of cohesion.

2. The lack of paralinguistic clues which can make it easy to misunderstand someone's tone or intention (this can also occur of course in asynchronous communication but is perhaps less of an issue in that contributors have more time to think about their message and how others may interpret it).

3. The fact that several participants can be composing and posting at the same time can lead to a multi-stranded conversation with a lack of focus and quick 'topic decay'; all of these problems can be overcome, but they certainly need to be kept in mind when planning CHAT tasks or organizing educational CHAT sessions.

   Chat can promote different types of interactions:

1. Student-to-student (to generate richer exchanges of experiences, viewpoints, ways of life, cultural traditions and customs, and peer correction),

2. Student-to-teacher (to allow for individual or group help and guidance, and to foster peer or self-correction).

3. Student-to-expert (to open up contact with the outside world, encourage discussion of real-world situations with professionals and to broaden horizons through qualified knowledge and know-how).

4. Student-to-online-resource (to encourage timely analysis and discussion of materials available online). Almeida d'Eça, T. (2002: 30-31)

Procedures of the Study

Population of Study

The subjects of the study were 60 teachers of English to 11th + 12th secondary classes at Nablus schools, 34 were females and 26 were males.

The subjects of the study were distributed according to four independent variables:

Table (1): Distribution of subjects according to the variables.

variable		Frequencies	Percentages
Gender	Male	26	43.3
	Female	34	56.7
Academic level	Diploma	6	10
	BA	44	73.3
	MA	10	16.7
Experiences	1-5 years	4	6.7
	6 - 10	17	28.3
	11 and over	39	65
Computer skills	yes	42	70
	No	18	30
Total		**60**	**100%**

Instruments of the Study

A 30- item questionnaire on the effect of chatting on students' achievement was used.

The questionnaire was developed specifically for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was checked by three experts in the field of education and three school teachers to find out the degree of its suitability to the study. The referees suggested minor changes. Which were taken into consideration in the final draft.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by using the Cornbach Alpha formula. The reliability was (0.85) which is acceptable for the purpose of the study.

Statistical Analysis

The data collected by the researchers were analyzed by using different techniques to answer the questions of the study.

These techniques included means standard deviation, percentages, independent T-Test and One-Way ANOVA , and the Post Hoc Test. Cornbach Alpha formula was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire.

To analyze the findings, the researchers used the following ranks for analysis

80% and more   very high degree

70 – 79.9%   high

60 – 69.9% moderate

50 – 59.9%   low

Less than 50%   very low

Results and Discussion

To answer the first question: **What is effect of chatting on students' achievement from teachers of English perspectives in Nablus school?** The researchers used the means and percentages for each item.

Table (2): Means, standard deviation, percentages and ranks for the questionnaire items.

Items	Means	Standard deviation	Percent(%)	Level
q30	4.05	0.71	0.81	Very high
q6	4.05	0.74	0.81	Very high
q5	4.05	0.62	0.81	Very high
q29	4.00	0.82	0.80	Very high
q13	3.96	0.71	0.79	high
Q14	3.96	0.66	0.79	High
Q19	3.94	0.61	0.78	High
Q28	3.90	0.70	0.78	High

... Continue Table (1)

Items	Means	Standard deviation	Percent(%)	Level
Q12	3.86	0.94	0.77	High
Q7	3.83	0.87	0.76	High
Q4	3.78	0.88	0.75	High
Q25	3.77	0.66	0.75	High
Q18	3.77	0.73	0.75	High
Q8	3.76	0.67	0.75	High
Q9	3.75	0.90	0.75	High
Q23	3.70	1.04	0.74	High
Q3	3.68	0.96	0.73	High
Q27	3.64	0.70	0.72	High
Q2	3.58	1.19	0.71	High
Q21	3.57	0.96	0.71	High
Q1	3.56	1.15	0.71	High
Q17	3.55	1.00	0.71	High
Q24	3.54	0.70	0.70	High
Q11	2.98	1.06	0.59	Low
Q20	2.98	1.00	0.60	Moderate
Q10	2.75	0.94	0.55	Low
Q16	2.33	1.00	0.46	Very low
Q26	2.24	0.90	0.44	Very low
Q22	2.08	0.80	0.41	Very low
Q15	1.77	0.84	0.35	Very low
Total score	**3.31**	**0.58**	**0.66**	**moderate**

Table II shows the impact of chatting on the students' achievement from the teachers' perspectives which was as follow :

− It is very high on the following items: (5,6,15,29 and 30), the percentage of response on these item are greater than 80%. This result agrees with Freiermuth 2002 who found that chatting is useful for teaching English as a foreign language because it provides language teachers with creative opportunities for promoting collaborative learning tasks and environments. However, the finding

of the present study differs from Freiermuth 2002 in the sense that chatting in this study is found to be useful for fun.

– The level is high on these items (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and item 28) where the percentages of response on these items are between 71-79% . This finding agrees with Hudson and Bachmann 2002 who assure that chatting affects positively learning foreign languages. This result also agrees with Burnett et al 2003 who showed that chatting can help in achieving better learning. It also matches with Tenopir and Ennis 2001, Patterson 2001 Stevens, 2002 and Straw, 2000 who said that chatting is still a recent service in the area of teaching and learning. Additionally, this finding agrees with Schwier and Balbar 2002 who point out that chatting provides a sense of 'urgency and immediacy' that is particularly energizing and is powerful in its ability to encourage the development of relationships and a sense of community.

– The level is moderate on item (20) where the percentage of response on this item is 60-66%, and it is low on items (10 and 11) where percentage of response is 55% and 59%. respectively. To the researchers' knowledge, these findings are restricted to this study and so, they need further research either to prove them or depute them .

To answer the second question : **Is there a significant difference at** (α=0.05) **in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from teachers' perspectives due to gender?**

Independent sample t-test was used as in Table 2

Table (3): Result of independent sample t-test for the difference in the effect of chatting on the students' achievement due to gender variables.

Male		Female		T value	Sig*
M	Sd	M	Sd		
3.34	0.61	3..29	0.57	0.29	0.76

* significant differences at (α=0.05) (1.96).

The results of Table III show that the computed t-test value on the total score was 0.29 and this value is lower than critical t-test value 1.96. This means that there is no significant differences at (α=0.05) between males and females.

To answer the third question: **Is there a significant difference at (α=0.05) in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from teachers' perspective due to academic level?**

One- way ANOVA was used, where Table 3 shows means , and Table IV shows the results of one way ANOVA.

Table (4): Means of the positive effect of chatting on students' achievement from the teachers' perspective due to the academic level variable.

Academic level	Means	SD
DIPLOMA	2.56	0.65
BA	3.35	0.54
MA	3.57	0.38
Total scores	**3.31**	**0.58**

Table (5): Results of one-way ANOVA for the difference in the effect of chatting on students' achievement due to academic level variable.

Source of variance	Sum of square	DF	Mean square	F	Sig*
Between groups within groups total	4.096 16.321 20.416	2 57 59	2.04 0.28	7.15	0.002

*   critical (f) value at (α=0.05), equal (3.23)

The result of Table V shows that there is a significant differences at (α=0.05) on the total score due to academic level variable, to determine between whom the differences where found , LSD post-hoc test was conducted as in table VI.

Table (6): Post-hoc test for the differences of Chatting effect on students' achievement due to the academic level variable.

Academic level	DIPLOMA	BA	MA
DIPLOMA		*-0.79	*-1
BA			-0.29
MA			

* Significant at (α=0.05).

The result of Table VI shows the following:

There are significant differences at (α=0.05) for the effect of chatting on students' achievement between :

* Diploma and BA in favor of BA. *Diploma and MA in favor of MA.

To answer the fourth question: **Is there a significant difference at (α=0.05) in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from teachers' perspective due to experience?**

One- way ANOVA was used, where Table 7 shows means, and Table 8 shows the results of one way ANOVA.

Table (7): Means of the positive effect of chatting on students' achievement from the teachers' perspective due to experience variable.

Experience	Means	SD
1 — 5	3.55	0.29
6 — 10	3.30	0.73
11 and over	3.22	0.54
Total score	**3.31**	**0.58**

Table (8): Result of one- way ANOVA for the difference in the effect of chatting on students' achievement due to experience variable.

Source of variance	Sum of square	DF	Mean square	F	Sig*
Between groups	0.25	2	0.12	0.36	0.69
Within groups	20.16	57	0.53		
total	20.41	59			

* critical (f) value at (α=0.05), equal (3.23)

The result of Table VIII shows that there no significant differences at (α=0.05) on total due to experience variable , the computed f for the total score is lower than the critical F.

To answer the fifth question: **Is there a significant difference at (α=0.05) in the effect of chatting on students' achievement from the teachers' perspective due to computer skills?**

Independent sample t-test for the difference in the effect of chatting on the students' achievement due to the computer skills variable. Where Table IX shows the result.

Table (9): Result of independent sample t-test for the difference in the effect of chatting on the students' achievement due to computer skills variable.

Male		female		T value	Sig*
M	Sd	M	Sd		
3.51	0.34	2.76	0.76	5.20	*0.000

* significant differences at (α=0.05) (1.96).

The result of Table IX shows that the computed t-test value on total score was 5.20 and this value is greater than the critical t-test value which is 1.96. This means that there is a significant difference at   (α=0.05) between those who have computer skills and those who don't have computer skills in favor of the first category (the mean was (3.51) versus (2.76).) This finding agrees with Freiermuth 2002 and Kuhlemeier and

Hemker 2007 who assure the positive effect of having computer skills on achieving better chatting in favor of those who have computer skills.

Conclusion

Whatever the opinions of teachers, the researchers believe that students using this service instead of calls free of charge, the Students can listen to a lecture at his home at any time at low cost from anywhere in the world at the same time. Additionally, chatting can be used in the sessions to discuss the results of scientific research and ideas with others and it is a great opportunity to learn in a funny way.

Interaction is an important part of key to developing proficiency in a second language, and chatting on the Internet is one way for students to find opportunities for interaction in the target language. Language teachers can use chat in the classroom or can introduce students to chat so that they can go on the Internet and chat individually.

As chat becomes more and more ubiquitous and better understood, these factors plus improved bandwidth, better interfaces, and heightened security will converge to make it a medium of choice for truly communicative and constructivist language teachers.

Recommendation

In the light of the findings of the study, the researchers would like to suggest the following recommendations.

1. Conducting other studies about the subject to find out how students use chatting.

2. Intensive care should be directed to the language used by learners to help them avoid the abbreviated, oversimplified, telegraph-type language that is coming more and more into use nowadays, especially among the younger generations, is obviously related to the new communication media such as email, instant-messaging, and cellular phones. The tendency - or is it rapidly becoming the norm? - is for 'minimum effort in minimum time': abbreviating everything so as to

write the shortest text possible in the shortest time possible. In this respect, the researchers, agree with Berge's1995-2001 and Lees' suggestions, 2002;

3. Conducting other studies to show the effect of chatting on improving the users' language

4. Increasing the parents' awareness towards the advantages and disadvantages of using chat service taking into account the necessity of watching their sons' and daughters' behaviors while using these services.

5. The school technology textbook should include a special part about Technological means including the different on-line services such as e-mail service and chat service among others.

6. The researchers believe that using chatting effectively by learners could increase their self expression both orally and in writing. Besides, it could enhance their self-confidence in using English

References

− Almeida d'Eça, T. (2002). "To chat or not to chat in the EFL classroom, that is the question!" Paper presented at the "Language - Communication - Culture" International Conference, University of Évora, Portugal, Available at
 http://www.malhatlantica.pt/teresadeca/papers/evora2002/chat-and-efl.htm

− Aqel, F. et al (2006) Learning Styles of An-Najah National University Students in Learning English as a Foreign Language. An-Najah Research journal .20.2.599-624

− ASERL (Association of Southeastern Research Libraries). (2001). *ASERL Virtual Reference Project.* [Online]. Available:
http://www.aserl.org/projects/vref/default.htm

− Berge, Z. (1995-2001). The Role of the Online Instructor/Facilitator. Retrieved June 19, 2003 from

http://www.emoderators.com/moderators/teach_online.html

− Breeding, M. (2001). Providing virtual reference service. *Information Today* 18(4):42-43.

− Broughton, K.(2001). Our experiment in online, real-time reference. *Computers in Libraries* 21(4):26-31.

− Burnett C, Paul, D, Jim McDonagh, Guy M, Julia M and Jeff W (2003) From Recreation to Reflection: Digital `Conversations in Educational Contexts, L1 - Educational Studies in Language and Literature, pp.149-163, Kluwer Academic Publishers

− Burnett, C (2003) Learning to Chat: tutor participation in synchronous online chat Teaching in Higher Education Vol 8 no 2 pp 247-261 http://www.babelchat.com/

− Carr-Chelman A., Dean D and Jeroem B (2000) Burrowing through the network wires: does distance detract from collaborative authentic learning? Journal of Distance Education Vol 15 no 1 pp 39-63 Spring

− Coffman, S.(2001). Distance education and where we are headed. Computers in Libraries 21(4):20-25.

− Davidson-Rivers V., Lin M and Erica T(2001) How do students participate in synchronous and asynchronous online discussion? Educational Computing Research Vol 25 (4) pp 351-366 http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/strat_direction/strat_init/isp/chat/

− Diamond, W. & Pease, B. (2001). Digital reference: a case study of question types in an academic library. *Reference Services Review* 29 (3):210-218.

− Eichler, L. & Halperin, M. (2000). Live Person: keeping reference alive and clicking. *EContent* 23(3):63-66.

− Felix Uschi (2002) The web as a vehicle for constructivist approaches to language teaching ReCALL Vol 14 no 1 pp 2-15: http://www.freebielist.com/chat.htm

−   Francoeur, S. (2001). An analytical survey of chat reference services. *Reference Services Review* 29(3):189-203.

−   Freiermuth, M (2002) Internet Chat: Collaborating and Learning via E-Conversations TESOL Journal Vol 11, no 3, pp. 36-40 Autumn.

−   Gray, S.M. 2000. Virtual reference services: directions and agendas. *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 39(4):365-375.

−   Hudson James M. and Bruckman Amy S. IRC Francais: The Creation of an Internet-Based SLA Community Computer Assisted Language Learning Vol 15 no 2 pp 109-134 2002

−   Human Click(TM) Ltd. 2000. *Human Click(TM): A Service from Live Person(SM).* [Online]. Available: http://www.humanclick.com/ [September 21, 2001].

−   Information Institute of Syracuse. 2001. *DIG_REF listserv.* [Online]. Available: http://www.vrd.org/Dig_Ref/dig_ref.shtml [September 17, 2001]. Also: *The Virtual Reference Desk(SM).* [Online]. Available: http://www.vrd.org/ [September 17, 2001].

−   JoMynard and Joanne.Mynard Introducing EFL Students to Chat Rooms. The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. VIII, No. 2, February 2002

−   Katz, W.A. 2002. Questions and Searches. *Introduction to Reference Work, Volume I: Basic Information Sources.* 8th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, pp. 15-19.

−   Kitade Keiko L2 Learners' Discourse and SLA Theories in CMC: Collaborative Interaction in Internet Chat Computer Assisted Language Learning Vol 13 no 2 pp 143-166 2000

−   Kuhlemeier , H and Hemker B (2007) The impact of computer use at home on students' Internet skills Computers & Education Volume 49, Issue 2, September 2007, Pages 460-480

−   Lankes, D., Collins, J., & Kasowitz, A.S. (eds.) 2000. *Digital Reference Service in the New Millennium: Planning, Management, and Evaluation.* New York: Neal Schuman.

- Lee, J. (2002). "Nu Shortcuts in School R 2 Much 4 Teachers. New York Times online edition, September 19, 2002. Retrieved June 19, 2003 from: http://www.learningexperts.com/McQuillan/NYTimes%20092002%20RU%20Ready.pdf.

- Linder Ute and Rochon, R (2003) Using Chat to Support Collaborative Learning: Quality Assurance Strategies to Promote Success, Education Media International Vol 40 no 1-2 pp 75-89

- Marta, J.(2002). "Giving exams in an online chat room." Syllabus, January 1st., 2002. http://www.syllabus.com/article.asp?id=5932

- McKiernan, G. (2001) *A Registry of Real-Time Digital Reference Services.* [Online]. Available: http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/LiveRef.htm .

- Merchant G (2003) Teachers in cyberspace: an investigation of language use and language change in internet chat rooms Journal of Research in Reading Vol 24 no 3 pp 293-306 http://www.multicity.com/servlet/WebsiteServePage/webmasters/chat/index

- Munzer, S (2003). An Evaluation of Synchronous Co-operative Distance Learning in the Field: the Importance of Instructional Design Educational Media International Vol 40 no 1-2 pp 91-99 J

- Mynard, J. (2002). "Introducing EFL students to chat rooms." The Internet TESL Journal, Vol VIII, 2, Feb. 2002,

- Ogata H, Yuqin Liu, Youji Ochi and Yomeo Yano Neclle (2001). Network-based communicative language learning environment focusing on communicative gaps Computers and Education Vol 37 pp 225-240

- Patterson, R. (2001). Live virtual reference: more work and more opportunity. Reference Services Review 29(3):204-209.

- Pilkington, R.., Bennett, C., and Vaughan, S. (2000). An Evaluation of Computer Mediated Communication to Support Group Discussion in Continuing Education. Educational Technology and Society Special Issue on on-line Collaborative Learning Environments. 3 (3), 349-359. Available from:
  http://ifets.ieee.org/periodical/vol_3_2000/d10.html

- Saunders, L. (2001). Building the virtual reference desk. Information Today 18(3):25-27.

- Schwier, R and Balbar S (2002) The Interplay of Content and Continuity in Synchronous and Asynchronous Virtual Communication in a Graduate Seminar, Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology, Vol 28/2

- Stemper, J.. & Butler, J.. (2001). Developing a model to provide digital reference services. Reference Services Review 29(3):172-188.

- Stevens, V. (2002). A day in the life of an online language educator. TESL-EJ 6, 3. Retrieved June 18, 2003:
  http://www-writing.berkeley.edu/TESL-EJ/ej23/int.html

- Stevens, V. (2002-2003). Web heads in Action: Communities of practice online. Retrieved June 18, 2003:
  http://www.vancestevens.com/papers/evonline2002/webheads.htm

- Straw, J.. (2000.) A virtual understanding. Reference & User Services Quarterly 39(4):376-379.

- Tenopir, C. & Ennis, L.A. (2001). Reference services in the new millennium. Online 25(4):40-45. http://www.1-language.com/chat/

- Teresa, A (2003) The Use of Chat in EFL/ESL. TESL-EJ Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language Vol 7.1 pp.1-10.

Appendix I

Dear Teachers,

The researchers are conducting a study entitled: **"The Effect of Chatting on the students' achievement from the teachers' perspectives in Nablus District."**

The following questionnaire is composed of two parts; the first part contains personal information while the second part is about the items of the questionnaire.

Go through the following questionnaire carefully and fill the items in the places where you feel they fit you.

Make sure that your answers will be used only for scientific research purposes kept confidential.

Thanks a lot for your collaboration

<div align="right">

Yours sincerely

The researchers

Dr Ahmed Awad @Dr Fawaz Aqel

</div>

****

APPENDIX II

Part I

Personal information

Please complete the following with the information that suits you

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Academic level: ☐ Diploma

   ☐ BA

   ☐ MA

Experience: ☐ 1-5 years

   ☐ 6-10

   ☐ 11 and over

Computer Skills: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Part II

Please complete the following questionnaire with information which you think it fits you, your position and beliefs

#	Core No. : Chatting	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I think students like chatting in general. بشكل عام الطلاب يحبون الدردشة .					
2	I think students' families have a positive attitude towards chatting. اعتقد أن عائلات الطلبة لديها اتجاهات ايجابية نحو الدردشة .					
3	Chatting affects t self-expression both orally and in writing تؤثر الدردشة على كفاءة التعبير الذاتي شفويا أو كتابيا					
4	I think chatting helps students communicate with each others. أعتقد أن الدردشة تزيد من تواصل الطلبة .					
5	Different situations and circumstances affect the students' time chosen for chatting. إن الظروف المختلفة تؤثر على اختيارهم لوقت الدردشة .					
6	I think chatting improves students' productive skills(speaking and writing) أعتقد أن الدردشة تحسن مهارات الإنتاج عند الطلبة (المحادثة والكتابة)					

#	Core No. : Chatting	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	Students use chatting to develop their experience and abilities. أعتقد أن الدردشة تطور مهارات الطلبة وخبرتهم و وقدراتهم .					
8	I think providing psychological and social atmospheres are important during chatting. أعتقد أن توفير العامل النفسي والاجتماعي مهم في أثناء الدردشة .					
9	Chatting enhances self-confidence الدردشة تعزز الثقة بالنفس.					
10	Students use chatting to do their homework through collaboration with each other. يستخدم الطلبة الدردشة لحل واجباتهم البينية من خلال التعاون مع بعضهم البعض					
11	Students prefer chatting at night. يفضل الطلبة الدردشة في الليل.					
12	I think students' chatting must supervised by their parents اعتقد أن الدردشة يجب ان تراقب من قبل الإناء					
13	I think students always respect the person whom they chat with. اعتقد أن الطلبة دائما يحترمون الشخص الذي يقومون بالدردشة معه .					

#	Core No. : Chatting	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14	Chatting can be used effectively in teaching and learning English. يمكن استخدام الدردشة بفعالية في تعلم وتعليم الانجليزية .					
15	I think Arab learners use chatting only for fun. أعتقد أن الطلبة العرب يستخدمون الدردشة فقط للمتعة .					
16	I think many students use chatting only with girls أعتقد أن الطلبة يستخدمون الدردشة فقط مع البنات .					
17	Students feel relax when chatting because I can express my hidden feelings. يشعر الطلبة بارتياح عند الدردشة لأنهم يستطيعون أن يعبروا عن مشكلاتهم .					
18	I think chatting improves students' receptive skills (reading and listening) أعتقد أن الدردشة تحسن مهارات التلقي عند الطلبة (القراءة والاستماع)					
19	Chatting helps students to develop their vocabulary أعتقد أن الدردشة تطور مفردات الطلبة .					
20	Chatting is a waste of time for students. الدردشة مضيعة للوقت بالنسبة للطلاب					

#	Core No. : Chatting	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21	While chatting, students choose good words ينتقي الطلبة كلمات جيدة أثناء الدردشة .					
22	I think spending much time on chatting causes problems with students' families. أعتقد أن قضاء وقت طويل في الدردشة يسبب المشكلات مع عائلات الطلبة					
23	In the Arab World chatting done by males is more accepted than by females. في العالم العربي الدردشة بين الرجال مقبولة أكثر من النساء .					
24	Chatting is a new trend in teaching. تعتبر الدردشة اتجاها جديدا في التعليم .					
26	Chatting and spending much time on the internet decrease the interpersonal relationship with students' families. الدردشة تقلل من العلاقات العائلية .					
27	Chatting is a very important tool of e-learning. تعتبر الدردشة أداة مهمة في التعليم .					
28	Chatting is a very important tool of oral communication skills(listening and speaking) تعتبر الدردشة أداة مهمة في مهارات الاتصال الشفوي (الاستماع و المحادثة)					

#	Core No. : Chatting	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29	Chatting represents the most impressive online revolution. تعتبر الدردشة من أهم الثورات الالكترونية المؤثرة					
30	Chatting is easy to access تعتبر الدردشة سهلة التنفيذ.					