

**EXPLORING THE ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES IN UNDERGRADUATE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES AT FIVE BANGLADESHI PRIVATE
UNIVERSITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC**

By

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A thesis submitted to Brac Institute of Languages in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts in TESOL

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It is hereby declared that

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3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
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Abstract

This research explores the adaptive strategies employed by ELT teachers in Bangladesh's private universities during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the shift from physical classrooms to online instruction became critical for continuing education. Integration of ICT tools at the tertiary level classrooms has been a phenomenon for many years. Therefore, the lockdown highlighted the need to investigate which strategies helped overcome the situational challenges of online English language classrooms and would also help in future disruptive situations in Bangladesh. Thus, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five undergraduate ELT teachers from five private universities, and then their responses were analyzed. The findings revealed the teachers' "adaptive strategies" for successfully conducting their undergraduate courses. The teachers effectively adapted to online teaching and embraced technological tools, adopted the roles of 'motivators' and 'mentors', and integrated ICT tools, social networking platforms, and other LMSs. These strategies contributed to the enhancement of teaching materials, pedagogy, and methods, ensuring the successful delivery of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses.

Keywords: ELT teachers, COVID-19, Bangladesh, online learning, adaptive strategies, ICT tools, English for Academic Purposes, tertiary education, LMS, pedagogy

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List of Acronyms

ELT- English Language Teaching

EAP- English for Academic Purpose

UGC- University Grant Commission

HEI- Higher Education Institution

ICT- Information and Communications Technology

SPHE:2018-2030- Strategic Planning for Higher Education: 2018-2030

MoE- Ministry of Education

HEQEP- Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project

MOOC- Massive Open Online Courses

Bdren- Bangladesh Research and Education Network

BIGD- Brac Institute of Governance Development

ERT- Emergency Remote Teaching

LMS- Learning Management System

UNESCO- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CALL- Computer-assisted language learning

BOU- Bangladesh Open University

AVC- Audio-Visual Cell

AVEC- Audio-Visual education centre

CALL- Computer-Assisted Language Learning

TAM- Technological Acceptance Model

SLT- Situational Learning Theory

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Tertiary education in Bangladesh, regulated by the University Grant Commission (UGC), is classified into three categories: public, private, and international. The demand for private universities in Bangladesh grew in 1992 with the increasing number of seats required that the public universities could not provide (Hamid et al., 2013; Islam, 2011a). Students enroll in private universities from different mediums of instruction: English, Bangla, and Arabic. The medium of instruction in public universities is known to be both Bangla and English. However, English is the medium of instruction in private universities, and students also write their exams in this language (Chowdhury & Akter, 2017; Hamid et al., 2013; Islam, 2013). Therefore, higher education institutions (HEIs) offer English courses for students to learn general or specific language skills, and this was implemented when English became compulsory in primary schools in 1992 (Hamid et al., 2013). Teaching and learning approaches and methods have evolved with time and aligned with the era's needs. Notably, globalization and technological advancement have made an impact on the education sector around the world. As a result, English (a global language) used as a medium of instruction in private universities in Bangladesh has played a significant role in shaping its curriculum (Islam, 2013b; Rahman, 2022a). Also, teachers in HEIs have been using some basic and essential ICT tools in their lesson delivery (Chowdhury et al., 2018). Thus, considering the importance of English and the integration of ICT tools in private institutions, Higher Institutions have mandated learning specific English and ICT skills to produce more graduates of global standards.

ICT in higher education: Strategic plans and policies by the Government of Bangladesh

UGC is involved in making higher education policies and planning, but the previous plans were abandoned many times due to the country's political condition and the change of

governments. However, “Strategic Planning for Higher Education: 2018-2030 SPHE” was developed and finalized in July 2018 with the help of the Ministry of Education (MoE) and World Bank to develop global higher institutes with ‘quality learning and research.’ Moreover, this also included a major project, the “Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project” (HEQEP), which was developed with the help of the World Bank for the quality improvement of higher institutes (University Grants Commission & Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project., 2018, p. ii). Notably, one of the six major areas of this strategic planning included the use of ‘ICT in higher education.’ This plan mentioned various mediums that could help to integrate ICT (Information and Communications Technology) into higher education. MOOC, a Massive Open and Online Course, was introduced to be launched for distance learning in universities (University Grants Commission & Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project., 2018, p. vi). Moreover, ‘Moodle,’ a software for e-learning, was also stated to be implemented in universities for academic purposes for creating a ‘virtual learning environment’ and a ‘digital content repository’ (University Grants Commission & Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project., 2018, p. xix). In addition, the adoption of ICT facilities was proposed for pedagogical development and enabling ICT program application in teaching and learning. This plan also emphasized training teachers on “different aspects of pedagogy, based on the advanced application of ICT” (University Grants Commission & Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project., 2018, p.xix). As part of the strategy for developing higher institutes, the ICT vision established goals for guaranteeing access to a broadband internet connection with good speed by 2021. During that time, BdRen (Bangladesh Research and Education Network) gave high-performance networks on public and private campuses.

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on school education in Bangladesh

After the coronavirus outbreak, reportedly from March 17th, 2020, all institutions from primary to tertiary level in Bangladesh were shut down. Most private schools began classes online by April (Khan et al., 2021a). However, the government, along with the aid of the World Bank, initiated remote learning for public schools or students in rural areas. Hence, during this pandemic, students and teachers depended on the internet, smartphones, or other electronic media. At the same time, some received their educational facilities through television or recorded offline lessons facilitated by the government (Rahman & Ahmed, 2021). A survey conducted on a vast number of rural and urban students and their parents by Brac Institute of Governance Development (BIGD) in June 2020 firstly reported that the closure of schools shortened the students' study time. Secondly, in rural areas, 25% of children with access to the television were unaware of the programs it was providing. Finally, internet use for learning in many rural areas was reported to be almost non-existent among the students surveyed (Asadullah et al., 2020). The availability and affordability of technology to conduct remote learning demonstrated the rural-urban divide and that low-income or lower-middle class could not enroll in online classes (Laden, 2021, para. 13). According to *The Future of 37 Million Children in Bangladesh Is at Risk with Their Education Severely Affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic* (2021) after 18 months of the shutdown of schools in Bangladesh when the schools were allowed to resume, it was investigated that there was a digital divide between the rural-urban and wealthy and poor students.

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic in Higher education

The sudden shutdown of universities and implementation of emergency online teaching in HEIs was immensely challenging. Many academics, like Hodges et al. (2020), advocated calling this mode of teaching adopted in this emergency crisis emergency remote

teaching (ERT) rather than online teaching. After the countrywide shutdown in Bangladesh in March, UGC permitted private universities to begin online classes in mid-April, while public universities flexibly started classes in mid-June (Jasim, 2020; Khan et al., 2021a). Earlier, the government initiated the plan ‘Digital Education’ (planned in the HEQEP project in 2009) for distance learning through television, radio, mobile, and internet use. This previously planned strategy gave a direction to overcome the pandemic crises and was finally executed as ‘emergency learning’ (Rahman et al., 2020). HEIs, with the help of the government and World Bank and BdRen projects, an initiative of HEQEP, helped carry out online classes (Rahman & Ahmed, 2021; Siddique, 2021). UGC also aided HEIs by introducing basic learning management systems (LMS), opening institution accounts, using classroom management tactics, and conducting assessments for effective virtual classrooms (Rahman et al., 2020). However, the latter hurdles were unforeseen and faced by teachers and students. Internet connectivity issues, accessibility of devices for online classes, motivation to carry on with the online class, and online assessments were noteworthy issues discussed in reports and research as pandemic challenges (Bashir et al., 2021; Dutta, 2020; Erarslan, 2021; Simbajon, 2021). However, time and experience using ICT tools in online classrooms eventually made it easy for teachers and students.

Use of LMSs in online teaching during the pandemic

The coronavirus outbreak, which led to social distancing and isolation, halted physical classes. The basic requirements for the successful implementation of online teaching are uninterrupted internet access and digital devices to connect with online classes (Bashir et al., 2021, p.12). Bangladesh, like many developing countries, faced internet connectivity, speed and access issues during online teaching and learning. This was the primary challenge in higher education (Bashir et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2021a; Rouf et al., 2021; Siddique, 2021). Thus, synchronous and asynchronous modes of online teaching were adopted widely in this

disruptive situation (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021; Rauf et al., 2021). Digital learning became an essential part of online teaching and needed digital pedagogy. However, adopting the online mode of teaching was not easy as teachers needed prior training and knowledge of using technological media effectively (Khan et al., 2021b; Rahman, 2020b). Various LMSs were introduced in HEIs as a strategy to cope with online teaching. Google Meet, Zoom, and Facebook are investigated to be popular LMSs and applications for online teaching, interaction, and video conferencing between teachers and students in HEIs (Khan et al., 2021b). Research studies based on Malaysia, China, Pakistan, Indonesia, Turkey, Bangladesh, and other countries on their emergency online teaching during the pandemic mentioned that they used LMSs like Zoom Teams, Google Classroom Microsoft, Schoology, Edmodo, Blackboard, Moodle, OBS, Loom, ED puzzle, WhatsApp, WeChat and more (Afrin, 2020; Bina, 2023; Erarslan, 2021; Fitria, 2021; Mazlan et al., 2021; Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021; Rauf et al., 2021; Rouf et al., 2021).

Role transfer of teachers

With the adoption of emergency remote teaching during the pandemic, teachers needed to develop their roles according to the needs of the time. Firstly, it is essential to note that teachers were not techno-savvy and faced difficulties due to a lack of online education knowledge, primary preparation, or support from IT teams (Bao, 2021, as cited in Rouf et al., 2021). Therefore, adjusting to the new teaching mode and learning technological skills was the first hurdle. Moreover, the deadly disease spread worldwide, creating a crisis that completely stopped face-to-face communication. Thus, teachers' bonding with students became crucial as physical contact was impossible, which was another problem teachers encountered (Bina, 2023; Khan et al., 2021b). It was a tough time for teachers to keep up with the students' learning and emotional conditions. Keeping students engaged in online classes and motivated throughout the pandemic was challenging. It was also crucial for the

teachers to look at the family dynamics, health issues, or any economic hardships the students were going through and be empathetic and considerate towards them (Castañeda & Jaime, 2021). In addition, teachers were also worried about adapting new strategies to make online classes more effective for students (Rauf et al., 2021; Simbajon, 2021). Also, the sudden shift from traditional learning to online learning required the ‘capacity building of the teacher’ (Rauf et al., 2021, p. 537). In many cases, English instructors had to play the “technical support specialist’ role” demonstrating different technical aspects (Al-Samiri, 2021, p. 151). Thus, the typical role of teachers changed at different stages, as they had to worry about keeping students encouraged during online classes throughout the pandemic (Siddique, 2021).

1.2 Rationale

Emergency remote teaching and its impact have been widely discussed since the COVID-19 epidemic forced an extreme change to the education system worldwide. Most of the research done at the beginning of the pandemic, especially at the tertiary level, discussed the primary concerns like internet connectivity, students’ performance, and problems and mentioned teachers’ struggles. For instance, Khan et al. (2020) and Rahman (2020) discuss the early status of the pandemic and the challenges higher level teachers faced. Moreover, Rauf et al. (2021) investigate the challenges and way forward in ELT practices in ESP classrooms. Rasli et al. (2022) present how to deal with present and future pandemic situations. However, after going through several such studies relevant to COVID-19’s impact, it was noted that these studies opined for further in-depth analysis after the lockdown was lifted and physical classes resumed. Hence, it was found that less research on the perspective of teachers and their actual experiences and strategies for English Language Teaching was dealt with, especially in Bangladesh’s private universities. Additionally, as past research was based on students’ and teachers’ experiences, there needed to be more analysis and

comparison of teachers' authentic experiences and strategies used at the tertiary level (Castaneda & Jaime, 2021; Fitria, 2021; Wu, 2021). Also, after the pandemic ended and teachers resumed the old teaching method, little research dealt with teachers' professional growth in using digital literacy (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021). Hence, this research will help provide a more profound understanding of the implications of ICT in online language teaching during the pandemic.

1.3 Significance and Future Scope

This research will provide an overview of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and explore the strategies and creative solutions used by private university English Language teachers in Bangladesh. Online learning beyond the classroom has potential and challenges that should be considered, so immense studies are encouraged to address this issue (Simbajon, 2021, p. 22). As the coronavirus crisis has created a new window of opportunity, it has pushed us towards the experience of 'digital learning,' it will help educators and policymakers realize that the available learning facilities exhibit the need to embrace digitalization and reimagine what is essential for future generations in the country's education system (Aktar et al., 2022; Laden, 2021; Rasli et al., 2022, p. 2). As previous research directed at the challenges and failings of online teaching, this research will present pedagogical strategies for English language teaching in higher education for future circumstances. The research findings will contribute to demonstrating and documenting the educational technology and ICT applications that can be effectively used in English language classrooms at higher levels and emergencies in the future through the first-hand experiences of ELT teachers. Thus, the English teachers' insights and experiences will provide pedagogical recommendations. This study explores the challenges and narrates how they were overcome and, finally, what perceptions English teachers had during the lockdown and

after the situation ended. Finally, this research holds importance for understanding future online teaching readiness in any disruptive situation, providing a way for online teaching.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What factors impact the pedagogical adaptation of language teachers during the pandemic?
2. What key strategies did English language teachers have to adapt in undergraduate English language courses during the pandemic?
3. What support did teachers get to immerse in the new teaching mode during the pandemic?

1.5 General Objective

This research aims to explore the adaptive strategies of ELT teachers in private university language (EAP) courses with available technological support and motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.6 Specific Objectives

This research aims

- to investigate the factors that forced English language teachers to adapt to new challenges
- to explore the adaptive strategies of undergraduate English language teachers during the pandemic
- to investigate the support and motivation of English language teachers to adapt to new teaching mode

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction: Digitalization of universities of Bangladesh during the pandemic

“Digital Bangladesh” is a buzzword familiar to all in Bangladesh, as the current government’s goal was to digitalize education by 2021. One of the critical components of “Digital Bangladesh” is “data literacy,” which also involves the accessibility of digital devices and computers (Laden, 2021, para. 2). Mazumder and Alharasheh (2020), explain the vision of “Digital Bangladesh” was to build proficiencies that are needed to compete in the globalized 21st era using less expensive delivery tools and digital learning environments (p.8). During the COVID-19 shutdown, the idea of “Digital Education,” planned in 2009, worked in parallel to initiate distance / online learning. The period of pandemic compelled us to formulate ways to ensure the functionality of educational institutions, and it was only possible through digital technology (Chowdhury, 2020).

The implementation of ICT tools in tertiary-level education after digitization in 2009 has had an impact, but not completely. Rahman & Rahman’ (2015) research on students in Dhaka Metropolitan City from 31 universities evaluated that students and teachers practiced the use of ICT technology more when they had more knowledge and thus had a positive attitude. Use of ICT facilities, like MS Word, PowerPoint, university email, website, and e-learning, were associated with internet connectivity, occupation, gender, university type, and ownership of personal computers. According to the findings, teachers had more knowledge and practice than students. Moreover, private university students had more knowledge of these ICT tools than most public university students. Thus, the availability of the internet and personal computers also influenced the student’s ability to gain knowledge and practice. Thus, differences in use and knowledge of ICT tools still prevailed as this was still a common scenario during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Laden (2021) argues that the COVID-19 pandemic displayed our country's digital divide and disparity in education. Access to digital technology and knowledge of using relevant materials in online classes have been the most significant obstacles to introducing e-based education in higher education. This was a common occurrence at most public universities in Bangladesh (Laden, 2021, para. 12). This was also one of the primary reasons why only a few private universities could start offering online classes (Afrin, 2020). In the research titled, 'Towards a Blended Learning Framework for Post-Pandemic Bangladesh' the data collected from students and teachers as participants reported that poor internet connectivity was one of the significant challenges faced in learning and teaching in the primary level in this pandemic (Khan et al., 2022c). This also suggests that the higher level students faced similar situations like poor internet connectivity during online classes. Among the world's student population, it is noteworthy that tertiary-level students faced the most disruptions in online education during the COVID-19 pandemic (Dutta & Smita, 2020). Accessibility to the internet and technological resources were issues that had to be dealt with throughout the pandemic. Network issues undeniably dropped students' motivation (Afrin, 2020).

In this pandemic, online teaching and learning had both positive and negative aspects. It provided time flexibility and safety but hampered student performance, making teachers' jobs much more difficult (Rahman, 2020). Online classes have advantages such as flexibility in schedule and help in overcoming situations like traffic, rain, storms, paying rents and others (Jahan et al., 2022, p.161; Siddique 2021, p. 210). On the other hand, expecting all Bangladeshi students to have internet access and smartphones and gadgets was not feasible. Many institutions used WhatsApp, Emo, or Facebook to make do with poor internet coverage during the pandemic (Idrak, 2021). Jahan et al.'s (2022) research on private universities on the crisis faced during the pandemic discussed that teachers could not use useful tools other

than Google Form, Google Docs, and Jamboard because of poor internet speed and also because many students having no gadgets with bigger screens attended classes through mobile phones. In the case of public universities, Khan et al., (2021d) reported that a majority of teachers and students faced poor internet connectivity. According to the findings, teachers had technological skills for conducting online classes but bearing the cost of internet and devices was a drawback for both teachers and students (p. 8). Also, Afrin (2020) states that many students have been interrupted during online classes due to their home environment. Due to the shutdown of schools, universities, and offices, families had to stay together at home the whole time. Students at home had adjusted to sharing space, gadgets, and devices with their siblings for online classes or had other family issues (Mazlan, 2021). These were the common problems faced by the tertiary level students in Bangladesh.

“Forced online teaching” had to be implemented during the pandemic emergency, for which the teachers, students, or other stakeholders were not ready (Afrin, 2020, p. 84). Dutta and Smita (2020) and Mazlan (2021) mention that the shift to online teaching and inadequate skills in conducting online teaching and learning were the major hurdles in online teaching during the pandemic. Teachers in the private universities with no previous training gained knowledge of online pedagogy and teaching content through virtual training and familiarizing themselves with technological tools. As a result, teachers self-created short videos as authentic materials, used class recordings, PowerPoint slides, soft copies of textbooks and YouTube videos as teaching materials. Teachers integrated technology while delivering instruction via different modes of teaching and digital platforms, and managed classes through Zoom, Google Meet, Facebook, and WhatsApp (Jahan et al., 2022, p. 153). Similarly, in the public universities, the majority of the teachers had no training and only had necessary skills to conduct online skills. Teachers mainly depended on, online materials,

PowerPoint slides, recorded video or audio lectures so that students could refer to them if they are unable to attend classes (Jahan et al., 2022, pp.156-157)

Education on an online platform needs adequate time and preparation, which the teachers could not provide. At the tertiary level, synchronous and asynchronous learning systems were adopted worldwide during the pandemic, as reported by UNESCO (Rahman, 2020). LMSs, communication tools, and e-learning with video conferences were significantly functional for online instruction in the higher levels of Bangladesh (Afrin, 2020). Khan et al. (2021a) state that on the one hand, students who received recorded lectures were reluctant to attend classes, and on the other hand, students were also not keen to follow the rules of switching on their cameras or microphones during class. Thus, making an interactive class was a challenge for the teachers. Sometimes, students even commented that online classes became ‘teacher-centered’. So, when teachers tried to adopt strategies to make classes enjoyable by asking questions and providing online materials, the classes became too lengthy and consumed more time.

Throughout the pandemic, teachers adopted different techniques according to students’ needs, but it was tough to satisfy the students (Khan et al., 2021a). Khan et al., (2021d) discuss that a large percentage of teachers had no strategies to make classes interactive. Monitoring students, initiating group discussions, and providing feedback were challenging in online classes which hampered students’ participation and engagement. Jahan et al., (2022) mention that they had to invest a significant amount of time ensuring students presence unlike offline mode of teaching (p. 155) Moreover, social isolation due to the pandemic impacted students’ physical and mental health (Afrin, 2020; Dutta & Smita, 2020). This also caused students to lose enthusiasm for online classes and studies (Dutta & Smita, 2020). Lack of interaction between students and teachers and among peers are investigated as one of the causes of disruption in motivation and learning. In addition, research shows that

students suffered financial problems, which led them to drop semesters and disruption of motivation among students (Afrin, 2020; Khan et al., 2021d; Mazlan, 2021).

2.2 Challenges faced by teachers in higher institutions during the pandemic worldwide

During the pandemic, face-to-face curriculum and delivery in higher education needed changes and new strategies for the effective functioning of digitalization and online delivery (Rasli et al., 2022). Digitalization transformation was made possible by overcoming many challenges after the sudden imposition of mandatory online education. Teachers and students faced difficulties adapting to the new educational setting during this emergency. Online classes were easily held in any subject in prestigious universities in Europe and America since the pre-pandemic time (Hwang, 2018, as cited in Verde & Valero, 2021). However, it is noteworthy that more research is available on the challenges faced by educational institutions in developing countries than in developed countries.

Erarslan (2021), in his research based on different literature from 2020–2021, states the challenges faced during this time. His research was based on documents from Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Bahrain, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, and Germany. The first obstacle to using online platforms in education, Erarslan (2021) mentions, is the lack of a stable internet connection. Similarly, Al Samiri (2021), exploring the challenges faced by Saudi University students, notes that “digital readiness” and “internet” issues were the primary disruptions students met at all levels of education. It became a humongous challenge to adjust to the “new normal,” which was to adopt an online platform for teaching and learning (p. 148).

Moreover, Castañeda and Jaime (2021) elaborate on how teachers’ tasks transformed to implement online teaching and learning during the pandemic restrictions in a public university in Columbia. After the shutdown of educational institutions, tertiary-level institutions could begin offering online classes by approaching the students with their

recorded official email accounts. Simbajan (2021) mentions that teachers in the Philippines with little online training in online teaching mediums quickly learned its features. A synchronous and asynchronous learning approach and learning management systems were included in the curriculum to make the courses more accessible. Thus, an approach similar to the ‘blended approach’ was integrated into traditional classrooms (Al-Samiri, 2021; Moorhouse & Khonke, 2021; Rauf et al., 2021). Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, We Chat, and others came as help and were adopted by teachers in Columbia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Saudi Arabia, along with other learning tools like Zoom, Google Meet, and others. The social media platforms were easily accessible and user-friendly for both students and teachers, which needed no technological skill to learn to communicate with the students (Castañeda & Jaime, 2021; Fitria, 2020; Khan et al., 2021b; Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021; Rahman, 2020).

Although teachers have tried their best to manage online classes and integrate technological learning tools and apps into their teaching methods, many educationists state that teachers have faced challenges integrating engaging activities like universities in Malaysia (Erarslan, 2021). Students and teachers faced problems initially while using technology because they needed to learn more about technology and its uses. As teachers and students had yet to gain knowledge of online classes’ technological and technical aspects, it negatively impacted the effectiveness of implementing this emergency online teaching (Erarslan, 2021). Verde and Valero (2021) state that the lack of ICT training in the universities of Spain was the main shortcoming of online teaching during the pandemic. Training and prior knowledge was required for conducting online classes effectively.

Similarly, Moorhouse & Khonke (2021) elaborate on the lack of prior knowledge and training in using technological tools and time management issues from the teachers’ side were also the challenges faced in China. Although social media came to the rescue and made

the teachers' lives easier, they lacked pedagogical models, principles, and competency (p. 372). Also, assessing students online was another difficult task for teachers. Deciding how to evaluate students' performance took much time. Teachers even had to keep anti-cheating software to check the originality of students' submitted work in the universities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Al-Samiri, 2021).

Furthermore, education on an online platform has concerned teachers regarding monitoring learners. Huma et al. (2021) express that it was a big task to keep the learners engaged and motivated during online instruction. Interaction between students and teachers became essential for transferring motivation in universities (Mazlan, 2021). According to Al-Samiri (2021), university students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also felt disconnected from their peers. At the tertiary level, students' learning motivation was disturbed during COVID-19 for many reasons. Primarily, internet connectivity issues impacted students' learning drive (Al-Samiri, 2021). Castañeda & Jaime (2021) state that accessibility to internet connectivity left many students of Columbia in a problematic situation, as they had to move to places where they could get an internet connection. Also, some applications and social media platforms like the LMSs Blackboard, WhatsApp, Zoom, and Facebook showed concerns about privacy issues, disturbing teachers and students (Al-Samiri, 2021; Rouf et al., 2021). Also, students and teachers had to learn to use tools that caused demotivation and a lack of interest in online learning in universities in Malaysia (Mazlan, 2021).

Developing countries like India also faced similar challenges due to the unavailability of gadgets, the internet, interrupted lectures, technical errors, and glitches in online classes (Kumar et al., 2023). Saha et al. (2021) discuss that the LMS-blended learning technique and digital infrastructure needed to be established earlier for e-learning by the Government and institutions, as this would not create any panic during the pandemic (p., 3). Moreover, Mahajan et al. (2023) research on a wide range of Indian universities comments on the

challenges students and teachers faced during the pandemic. A similar condition was observed in India, like in many developing countries. Access to devices and the internet was limited to remote parts of the country. Thus, there was a lack of equitable opportunities for students in rural areas due to the limited accessibility of digital resources, which also caused demotivation among students. In addition, Mahajan et al. (2023) state that the lack of training for online education was challenging for teachers. Students were reluctant to participate and usually put their cameras off. In this situation, it was tough for teachers to adapt to the online strategies. To summarize, the primary challenges faced in developing countries were poor internet connections, especially in rural areas, lack of training of teachers, and students' mental health issues (Abulikemu, 2023, p. 22)

2. 3 Online teaching in English Language classrooms of higher institutions worldwide

The Coronavirus epidemic brought about a drastic change in the traditional teaching method. As imposing an online instruction approach for teaching was the only way out, students could not interact with teachers as they did in a conventional classroom. Technology has made significant progress in education, as has English language teaching, and online teaching of English has persisted for forty years. (Erarslan, 2021). Slaouti (2013) explores how technology 'fits' into language learning paradigms (79). She emphasizes that the internet and broader communication development in language teaching were used for setting authentic tasks and activities. Moreover, she mentions using different applications and technology like Facebook, Google Docs, YouTube, and videos for language learning. Technological advancements brought into ELT classrooms, like using videos and audio as learning tools and integrating the internet into classroom instruction, have been considered effective since its implementation (Stempleski, 2002; Warschauer & Whittaker, 2002).

According to Erarslan (2021), the only positive aspect of this situation was that "technological and digital resources" were integrated into language teaching (p. 350).

Language teaching methods and approaches got a new direction, adapting to the situations' needs at the higher education level. Undeniably, using technology as teaching tools, techniques, and strategies to replace the traditional form in emergencies was difficult. The sudden shift from teaching with tangible materials to online platforms was complex (Simbajan, 2021). Therefore, adopting new strategies to teach language online in this critical time was the first distressing step for most teachers, as it included an ICT transition process in educational technology (Huma et al., 2021; Rasli et al., 2022).

According to many educationists, online education is more prevalent in higher education (Verde & Valero, 2021; Wu, 2021). In the higher level of education, online teaching as a platform, although it is reported to create difficulties during the process, has also proved advantageous in many ways. Rasli et al. (2022) discuss the importance of “e-learning infrastructure and cognitive competence for students and teachers in online learning” (p. 5). Moreover, Rasli et al. (2022) and Klimova et al. (2022) point out that online learning during the pandemic initiated self-directed learning, a part of conventional learning worldwide. Bylieva (2021) advocates the importance of e-learning and increased self-regulation learning during the pandemic relevant in online classrooms. The adoption of this strategy made online teaching learner-centered. Klimova et al. (2022), discussing their research on European students, concluded that they successfully conducted self-regulatory learning during the pandemic. However, they needed motivation and guidance from teachers for successful academic performance, which was a similar case among Vietnamese students (Hung, 2022; Klimova et al., 2022). Thus, a necessary change was brought into the traditional form of teaching during this pandemic: repetition and memorization of skills and knowledge to critical thinking, creativity, curiosity, collaboration, entrepreneurship, growth mindset, and global competence (Zhao & Whatterston, 2021, as cited in Rasli et al., 2022, p. 7).

Moreover, Verde & Valero (2021) state that the advent of online guided classrooms managing the pandemic situation brought a “new era in higher education” (p. 10). Technology-mediated teaching was essential in providing new strategies to English language teachers during emergency online teaching. Erarslan (2021), in his empirical studies of a wide range of documents analysis on English Language teaching during the pandemic across the world, found that listening and writing skills developed less, mostly in online language classrooms. However, writing skills developed with blended or synchronous online teaching and were found effective. Speaking skills of university students developed more in language classrooms with proper tasks planning like in ESP classrooms (Erarslan, 2021, p. 356-357). Most researchers mention the prevalence of a blended approach in teaching at higher levels before the pandemic but not entirely into online teaching. However, a blended approach in teaching has been proven to improve the four skills in language teaching (Al-Samiri, 2021; Rasli et al., 2022; Verde & Valero, 2021).

English language teachers were familiar with technological tools used as supplementary to face-to-face teaching, like in the universities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Al-Samiri, 2021). Although elaborate assessments of teaching English language skills during emergency online teaching are not presented in research works, only a few discuss these aspects. Al-Samiri (2021) mentions that previously implemented digital communications and learning tools helped during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, he discusses his research findings based on Saudi university students that online teaching during the pandemic increased students’ listening, speaking, and online searching skills and aided in incidental learning (p. 154). Moreover, he states that language teachers implemented new skills, adopted technological strategies for effective teaching, and used online resources.

Coping strategies for using technology in teaching were designed in higher-level language classrooms. However, even with the strategic planning came many difficulties. Rauf

et al. (2021) report that in the universities of Pakistan, teacher training was required to aid in incorporating more activities in language classrooms. Moreover, Simbajan (2021) mentions that university teachers in the Philippines faced difficulties changing the pedagogical orientations for online teaching and managing it within the short time limit. English language teachers were also under pressure as their individualized, specialized strategies did not work well with learners in the online setting (Simbajan, 2021, p. 16).

Furthermore, Al-Samiri marks the challenging aspect of online teaching. As per his research findings, there was a lack of motivation in university students of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to low language proficiency. Students also faced social media addiction and Zoom fatigue due to long screen time (Al-Samiri, 2021, p. 152). In addition, students went through a financial crisis, and many were stressed about continuing their education. So, students suffering from financial problems also had low self-esteem and less focus on their courses (Erarslan, 2021). Teachers also felt demotivated at times as learners were not keen to keep the video camera on during classes, which acted as a barrier to teaching (Rauf et al., 2021; Al-Samiri, 2021). In traditional lecture-based classrooms, students' mood, involvement, and engagement can be observed and measured better than in online teaching. Also, teachers felt their workload magnified, with stress and pressure to manage time, even when they had adequate skills (Simbajan, 2021, pp. 18, 30).

“Technology is essential in the English teaching and learning process” (Williams 2016, as cited in Fitria, 2021, p. 139). Fitria (2021) believes online learning systems should be implemented for higher education in this digital era. Also, he states that an online learning system would be a progressive English teaching medium for the students and will engage them to learn English more (p.142). As for language teachers, online classes become more accessible with better internet and materials that can make language classes more “creative and innovative.” For example, during the pandemic, students of the Philippines found

problem-solving methods by communicating on Facebook and Messenger and having real-time conversations (Simbajon, 2021). Also, Erarslan (2021) mentions that social media blended teaching improved the active English skills of students (p. 357). Therefore, online classes find a chance to get away from traditional classrooms (Fitria, 2021). Likewise, Simbajon (2021) states that the aftermath of COVID-19 would change from a traditional to a modern teaching and learning approach.

2.4 Online teaching in English Language classrooms of higher institutions in Bangladesh

English language courses in private universities are offered to students in the first year, emphasized majorly as the medium of instruction is English. Private universities are English-only environments where students are forced to follow strict rules, and remedial English courses are offered to weaker students (Sultana, 2014, p. 14). It is important to note that most students come to higher education from Bangla-medium education. Moreover, Bangladesh has different education systems and lacks uniformity nationwide, which makes it difficult at higher levels to maintain a standard in classrooms (Prodhan, 2016).

Also, English proficiency plays a role in employment in private companies. According to Ehsan (2021), Bangladesh needs to produce skilled graduates as expatriates work in Bangladesh. He believes that public universities involve traditional teaching methodology, which is outdated and involves rote learning. Thus, he marks it imperative to revisit the tertiary education system that should include activities such as critical thinking and group discussion. The tertiary education system needs to involve skills necessary for modern jobs in the era of globalization (Ehsan, 2021, p. 47). Bina (2023) states that private institutions are adopting new technology for modern education, which will help in the future, for they are trained in online learning, and private sectors will select them.

Higher education in Bangladesh involving private and public universities has approached emergency remote online teaching differently. Institutions in Bangladesh did not begin their classes immediately after the lockdown. With permission from UGC and MoE, some private universities started to take measures according to the accessibility and affordability of resources for online delivery (Afrin, 2020; Khan et al., 2021b). Public universities took much time to implement online learning and lost much of their valuable time (Aktar et al., 2022; Bina, 2023). However, Bina (2023) states that private universities heralded a new era in the country's education sector by adopting online teaching (p.456).

Rasli et al. (2022) discuss expert opinions on online education during the pandemic, among which one of the professors is also from Bangladesh, from the English department. All five professor participants opined that emergency online teaching brought digital transformation and helped build strategies for online delivery and its future use. Emergency online teaching had one positive aspect: students and teachers got the opportunity to develop technological knowledge. Hossen et al. (2022) state Bangladesh's education sector has taken a new shape on virtual platforms. It has taken the initiative to continue education on this platform as online education has become a new phenomenon in Bangladesh. However, language classrooms also faced challenges like miscommunication in online classes, a decrease in students' motivation, wifi and internet problems, and health issues. Bashir et al. (2021) discuss the barriers to online instruction, language pedagogy, and materials use. 'Pedagogy and materials' used in face-to-face language classrooms is inappropriate for online classrooms. Emergency online teaching was implemented, but the pedagogy for language classrooms was not planned, especially in public universities (Aktar et al., 2022). Moreover, choosing relevant books and resources to be used as materials in language classrooms was to be considered (Bashir et al., 2021, p. 12). Jahan et al., (2021) from their research data found that "short videos were created as authentic materials for teaching English language skills,

applied linguistics and ELT courses Moreover, audio records with grammar practice-based activities, audio clips were created by language teachers for the students to be used in language classrooms of private universities (p.156).

Furthermore, according to Paul (2022), approaching the emergency online teaching was problematic from the perspective of ELT. Paul (2022) states that many language educators at the tertiary level in public universities do not know how to use the internet and are not techno-savvy (pp. 97-98). Firstly, the unavailability and accessibility of essential resources to conduct online instruction for students and teachers created a significant challenge. Students and teachers from remote areas suffered primarily due to gadgets and internet constraints. This caused financial as well as mental pressure mainly on students (Sultana et al., 2022). Kabir et al., (2022) addressing the challenges of online assessment described that students in the rural areas faced more problems due to lack of uninterrupted internet service in rural or suburban areas of Bangladesh. Maintaining fairness in online assessment, assisting students with submitting assessments online, providing time and mode flexibility, creating extra work, was time consuming and caused burnout. But it was dealt with by the teachers to support students in all ways (Kabir et al., 2022) Online assessments as a whole was a new and stressful factor for students.

In addition, a lack of training and orientation to technology created aversion and negative attitudes among teachers and students. Also, teachers needed to have pedagogical knowledge and online proficiency for online classrooms. Bashir et al. (2021) mention the digital divide, where private universities supported their students, and public university students faced various unresolved problems throughout the pandemic. Bina's (2023) research on private university students and teachers in Bangladesh shows that private universities started online classes to help students do presentations and assignments from the pandemic's beginning. It was thus not as challenging for the private universities as it was for the public

universities. The use of demonstrative teaching methods in online classrooms with the use of Google Classroom and Facebook made it much easier for private university teachers (Bina, 2023, p. 466)

Studies conducted on public university students of Bangladesh from language classrooms by Bashir et al. (2021) and Khanum & Alam (2021) identify that students wanted images and videos to be used in their online classrooms. In this way, students found it helpful to understand language better. Moreover, Khanum & Alam (2021) found that speaking, reading, and writing skills developed less in online classes. From the research findings, it was derived that the public university students were much more concerned about the topic than developing their language skills. In addition, the findings showed the students wanted bilingual classes, as only using English in the online classrooms was ineffective for understanding the contents.

Aktar et al. (2022) narrate the early experiences of four teachers from both private and public universities in Bangladesh' English departments as they transitioned to virtual teaching. Although the teachers had more than a decade of experience, they were novices in teaching on virtual platforms. For the two public university teachers, the initial challenge was getting students to participate on an online platform. However, the four teachers' accounts describe that they started by creating groups on Facebook Messenger, setting up Zoom accounts, using Google classrooms, providing pre-recorded video, preparing PowerPoint slides, along with self-created and online materials. Moodle , Microsoft Teams and other Applications applied charges and needed demonstration from the universities. The first-phase of online teaching was difficult as students had to adjust to the new learning method. Several reasons contributed to these difficulties, including internet constraints, internet cost expenses the students had to bear and issues such as 'technophobia', 'slow Wifi Speed' and lack of 'space' both teachers and students faced (Aktar et al., 2022, p. 238).

A study by Khan et al. (2021a), conducted in the first year of the pandemic examined the students' and teachers' perceptions in private universities regarding online language teaching. The research findings showed teachers used PowerPoint slides and PDF texts as teaching materials to make course packs, and some also used a flipped classroom approach to make online classes interactive. The findings identified that students did not find online classes as effective as face-to-face classes. The students mainly depended on recorded classes and PowerPoint presentations provided by the teachers. Sultana et al., (2022) research findings revealed that teachers were worried about the "effectiveness of their classes", as students' interaction in online classes were limited. Students often switched off their cameras and didn't respond willingly. Fear of pay cuts and job loss are the reasons that affect the well-being of teachers of higher education levels (Sultana et al., 2022).

Researchers Aktar et al. (2022), Bashir et al. (2021), Haque (2022), and Paul (2022) suggest ways to cope with online teaching if a situation like the COVID-19 pandemic arises. According to them, teachers should be trained and gain technological knowledge to implement in the language classroom. Universities should arrange seminars and workshops to understand the technical aspects. Also, the inclusion of blended learning and technology-based ELT classrooms is suggested for future ELT classrooms.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The research findings are based on the theoretical frameworks-Krashen's hypotheses of Affective Filter (Krashen,1985), Situational Learning Theory (SLT), and TAM-Technological Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), and other literature. The research finds the relevance of these theories to be used to analyze and discuss the data collected from the qualitative research.

Krashen's (1982) monitor model is an essential theoretical concept for determining second language acquisition. Krashen's five hypotheses are the acquisition learning

hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the monitoring hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. The affective filter hypothesis has been used in this research to determine the extent of teachers' support in enhancing students' performance. The affective factors include "learners' motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety." (Liu, 2023, p.2). Du (2009, p.164), explaining the use of the affective filter in language teaching, states that students with interest and motivation from teachers naturally develop a positive attitude. Moreover, students grow self-confidence if teachers encourage students, keep patience, provide the best classroom environment, and provide positive feedback. As a result, this can lower their anxiety, which is important for language acquisition. Thus, understanding learners' "emotional factors" can be affected by teachers' teaching methods or behavior in a language classroom (Lin, 2008).

In this research, the teachers as participants are asked to explicate the challenges faced in online teaching during the pandemic. Dealing with students was difficult due to the sudden implementation of online teaching and then retaining students' attention became a challenge for teachers. Therefore, this aspect of the research data will be seen in light of Krashen's affective filter model.

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger first presented situational learning theory (SLT) in 1991. SLT explains that learning as a process should be situated in the "practices of communities," contrasting the concept of learning as an individual practice (Matusov et al., 1991, p. 918). Thus, this process requires social interaction and collaboration in authentic contexts and usually occurs unintentionally. Lave and Wenger call this process "legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, as cited in Beşar, 2018, p.51). In addition, Stein (1998) explains that knowledge can be acquired when learning and practicing occurs outside classrooms in the context of real-world challenges (para, 2).

Oliver & Herrington (2000), discussing the importance of web-based instructional design models to enhance learning outcomes, describes situational-based learning elements. These elements emphasized presenting authentic contexts and activities to students, interaction with experts, understanding and expressing perspectives, then learning through collaboration and cooperation, reflecting on the learning process and articulating one's ideas, accomplishing tasks with the support of teachers as facilitators, and finally authentic evaluation (Oliver & Herrington 1999 as cited in Oliver & Herrington, 2000). These elements explain the learning process and development when individuals can participate in a community of practice while using technology.

Online teaching facilitates collaboration by incorporating a community of students learning skills with the use of technological tools. Thus, the aspects of situational learning theory will be used to examine the research data of the strategies used by undergraduate language teachers.

TAM has been used in various educational research works to determine the use of technology and its acceptance for educational purposes. For example, the TAM model has been used in studies to determine the use and acceptance of technologies and applications like Twitter (Luo et al., 2019), e-learning systems- like Adobe Connect, Skype, Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Meet, and others (Kusumadewi et al., 2021) and LMSs (Aldosemani, 2023).

Davis (1989) invented the original TAM model (**see Figure**), where perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use were hypothesized as the two main determinants of user acceptance.

Perceived usefulness- is “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her performance.” (Davis,1989, p.320). This variable refers to individuals' beliefs that using an application will improve their job performance.

Perceived ease of use- is defined as the “degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort.” (Davis,1989, p. 320). This variable refers to individuals’ beliefs that an application is easy or hard to use.

Davis et al. (1989) further added that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are the variables that form attitudes that further affect behavior intention. Davis proposes that “people form intentions to perform behaviors toward which they have positive affect” (Davis et al., 1989, p.986). The TAM model helps determine beliefs, attitudes, and behavior that external factors affect.

In this research, the TAM model by Davis (1989) is used to determine the views of undergraduate English language teachers regarding the use of technological tools used as strategies to continue online teaching during the pandemic.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Method

The research aims to find the coping strategies used by ELT undergraduate teachers during the COVID-19 period in Bangladesh. Thus, the information collected as the research data would aid in eliciting the methods and techniques adopted during online teaching and the various creative strategies used by the teachers. This study used a qualitative approach, known for conducting small-scale research (Drever, 2003, as cited in Ruslin et al., 2022). This research demands an account of the experiences of the teacher participants, so a phenomenological approach to this research seemed relevant while designing the research method. A phenomenological approach helps the researcher inquire and identify the “essence of human experiences as described by participants” (Creswell, 2009, p.245). Moreover, the research method, semi-structured interview, was chosen as it is more flexible than other qualitative research methodologies (Adams, 2015). Furthermore, analysis of the respondents’ interviews will provide in-depth knowledge of the individual good morning “lived experiences,” which will help to describe the ‘coping strategy phenomenon’ and, simultaneously, the researcher will make the interpretations (Creswell, 2007, pp. 57-58).

3.2 Participants

Five teachers from five reputable private universities were approached for this qualitative research. The teacher participants come from five different private universities. All five teachers had been ELT teachers before the pandemic, and had the experience of taking online language classes during COVID-19, as well as after the pandemic ended. Among the teacher participants, two are males, and three are females. The selection of participants and their numbers depended on the research questions, which provided a framework for conducting the study. Creswell suggested an estimated range of 5 to 25 interviews for a phenomenological study, and my study includes the narratives of five

teachers. Given that phenomenological research demands extensive and in-depth interaction with participants, including five participants fulfills the criteria for this research design. The teacher participants teach first-year students undergraduate English language (EAP-English for Academic Purpose) courses. Four of the five teachers knew about online platforms and LMSs like MOODLE, and only one received basic professional training. For conducting the research method, teachers were first approached, and a description of the purpose and context of the interview was discussed. The research participants were then requested for appointments to schedule the interviews as it would take a considerable time. Participants were also allowed to interview face-to-face or through other mediums for their convenience. The teacher participants were assured that their profiles would be kept confidential.

Teacher Name	Gender	Interview Mode
Teacher 1	Male	Face-to-Face
Teacher 2	Male	Online (Video-Call)
Teacher 3	Female	Face-to-Face
Teacher 4	Female	Online (Video-Call)
Teacher 5	Female	Online (Video-Call)

3.3 Instrumentation

A semi-structured interview with ELT teachers at the undergraduate level was conducted following the qualitative approach. Each participant faced the same set of questions in the interview. The questions were open-ended yet focused, leading to the main context of the research. From the phenomenological approach, participants were asked probing questions about the experiences and the various contexts and situations they encountered (Moustakas, 1994, as cited in Creswell, 2009, p. 126-127). The researcher designed eight semi-structured questions (**see Appendix**) that included the central question

with several sub-questions aligned with the research context (Creswell, 2009). These questions were developed based on the major themes of the research questions and objectives. Sub-questions were drafted under each research objective to ensure comprehensive coverage. The final open-ended questions were formulated to elicit detailed responses from the interviewees. The interviews were conducted face-to-face through Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, and mobile phone calls and also audiotaped with a separate device in another device and brief notes were also taken manually.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Research ethical issues should be considered when conducting research. As Wiles (2013) discusses the three core issues- informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and risk, as a researcher, I have considered the research ethics in every way possible (p. 3). Firstly, I clarified the aim and objective of the research to the research participants and then received consent for participation. Voluntary consent was taken from the participants, giving them the freedom to choose to participate or decline (Arifin, 2018, p. 30). Moreover, the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants have been ensured, and even intentionally or accidentally, the collected data or the individual's personal or institutional information was not presented or disclosed in the research (Wiles, 2013, pp. 41-42). Furthermore, assessing risks for causing any potential harm to the participants while and after conducting the research has been given importance. Wiles (2013) describes that participants should know the harm, risks, and benefits the researcher may receive while participating. This also connects with Mirza et al. (202) discussion of the importance of the code of conduct with the participants, stating that they should be treated equally and respectfully (p. 442). Thus, the participant's physical, emotional, or other risk factors were handled mindfully throughout the research, treating them with honesty and maintaining trust.

Therefore, the research was conducted maintaining the ethics of qualitative research. The participants were approached formally with the best code of conduct and interviewed in a safe and secure environment through their personal preference of medium. The anonymity of the participants and confidentiality of recorded data were maintained throughout the research and will be in the future.

3.5 Procedure

Firstly, the researcher described the objective of the interview to the teacher participants. Then, the participants were explained the research context, related questions, and interview duration. Next, interviews were carried out through different mediums as per the participants' preference. Qualitative interviews involve "one-two-one interactions" and can be conducted through various mediums like "face-to-face, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and other social media platforms" (Ruslin et al., 2022). The interviews lasted from 40 minutes to one hour. Finally, the discussions held during the interview were recorded in a device after seeking consent from the teacher participants and handwritten notes were taken (Wiles, 2013). The questions consisted of supporting questions in the beginning, leading to the core questions at the end (Creswell, 2007). The questions were all open-ended. The research purpose and questions were emailed beforehand, as interviews were face-to-face and virtually. The interview helped the researcher analyze the participants' narrations, perceptions, and beliefs through the discussions. Moreover, the interview questions, although not aligned with the typical format of the TAM model, fulfilled the criteria with the appropriate content.

3.6 Data Analysis

The final step of any research is the most important one, and it includes the analytical steps of data collection. In the research findings, the interview participants are named T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5 to maintain the anonymity of the participants. First, a verbatim transcription

was prepared manually to account for the teachers' narration and successful analysis. The second step involved the organization of responses. The responses were labeled and put under sections aligned with the research questions and objectives of the study. Finally, the results were summarized as suggested for the data analysis procedure by Drever 2003 & 2006 (as cited in Ruslin et al., 2022). Data segments were summarized and labeled with descriptive themes in the first cycle of organizing data. The researcher then moved from descriptive codes towards answering the research questions. This process helps in identifying concepts relevant to theoretical concepts (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). The experiences the teacher participants shared about the factors leading to adaptation of new challenges, the coping strategies adopted with support and motivation during online teaching were examined and described under relevant theoretical concepts, frameworks, and literature in the final discussion. The TAM model helped to provide insights into teachers' attitudes and behaviors towards acceptance and actual usage of online teaching that were impacted by the variables 'perceived usefulness' and 'perceived ease of use'. Finally, the researcher reflected on the analyzed data.

Chapter 4: Findings

The researcher conducted a semi-structured interview, so eight open-ended probing questions were designed for individual interviews. The questions can be referred to in **Appendix**, presented at the end of the research paper. Thus, this chapter will present the findings from the data collected under themes with descriptive titles aligned with the research objectives. Here, the five teacher participants are addressed as T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5.

4.1 Factors Impacting Adaptation of New Challenges

This research aims to find the factors that led the teacher participants to adapt to online teaching. Probing questions were given to the participants, which helped collect and summarize the teachers' responses.

4.1.1 Social, Governmental, and Institutional Pressure

The COVID-19 epidemic stopped all social interactions and interrupted our daily activities. The spread of coronavirus, causing severe health issues and increasing deaths, forced the Government first to follow the sanitizing rules, social distancing was implemented, and finally, a lockdown was declared in March in Bangladesh. T1 said, "As soon as we got to know about the spread of the COVID-19 disease, a lockdown was declared, and we went into isolation. T1 added, "The pandemic was unprecedented and different from Bangladesh's political situation." The teacher participants expressed that the pandemic situation created panic.

The teacher participants responded that online teaching was imposed and decided by UGC, and the respective institutions and employees of the universities had to oblige. "In the global pandemic, online teaching became a norm or a practice enforced by both government and non-government-run universities." (T1). Thus, it can be seen that adopting online teaching methods was the only way to continue undergraduate classes during the pandemic. T2 and T5 both expressed that the shutdown of the physical classrooms had made it urgent to

begin the online courses. Three participants commented that they could begin online classes a few days after the lockdown was declared. In contrast, one stated that they halted their classes for that semester and began online classes from the next semester. The fifth respondent (T5) mentioned they had to take a one-semester break to plan and prepare for online teaching.

T2 added in his reply, “Online teaching strategies and models were known in the Western world, so my university prescribed and mandated it.” T3 mentioned that one semester was dropped in her university due to the pandemic lockdown, so adopting an online teaching platform was suggested as “best for the situation.”

4.1.2 Prior knowledge of use of ICT tools and pedagogy to teach online

Technology plays a significant role in all educational institutions. UGC had previously established the use of ICT and policies at the university level before the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, during the pandemic, the developed countries’ adoption of technological applications influenced developing countries to accept the digital change and turn face-to-face teaching to online teaching during the pandemic. With regard to having prior knowledge of using technology or training received, the interviewees expressed that they had known some uses of ICT tools and received basic computer training that all teachers mainly received on joining a university. T3 stated, “...it was only during the pandemic that we got the opportunity to experience using Google Applications and other LMSs. We did not receive any training before the pandemic.” T1 expressed that online teaching was a “new phenomenon and transforming impersonal teaching and learning strategy and pedagogy to online form was the first challenge.”

The teacher participants mentioned using ICT tools previously to prepare specific language tasks for physical classrooms. Projectors, PowerPoint, YouTube, and online sources are the essential ICT tools teachers used for creating language skills-related tasks before the pandemic. T5 mentioned, “..online platform was used before the pandemic for specific

classroom tasks and for making and submitting assignments by students and for making announcements by teachers.

We were at home and had to do everything ourselves in the beginning. It was the end of the semester, and we managed through Facebook Live. Then, choosing a platform for teaching online was the first challenge we faced. During the semester break, we decided to go with Google Meet and Google Classroom like others (although we had the MOODLE LMS). As language courses need proper speaking and listening tasks, we had to know how the software works and how to manage it without glitches so students could attend adequately. All these initially seemed a humongous challenge (T5).

Moodle, the learning management system, was the first technological teaching tool that teachers knew. T1, T2, and T4 attended workshops on MOODLE before the pandemic but had yet to use it practically, whereas T3 and T4 were not aware of the functions of this LMS yet. The teachers had a rudimentary knowledge of MOODLE, “as training received for two to three hours was not enough” (T1). From the responses, it was clear that it was only during the pandemic that the teachers received formal training to use Applications like Zoom, Google, and other teaching Apps to conduct online classes.

...I received training on online course design in the USA. It is important to note that online and emergency remote teaching are not the same. The approach to emergency remote teaching is different from traditional online courses. With the pandemic catching us off guard, we were not prepared for emergency remote teaching, and none of us were experts in it. As a result, we had to attend numerous workshops and training sessions and engage in self-learning to adapt to the new mode of teaching (T2).

Training and workshops provided by the respective universities for conducting online classes made teachers competent and confident to lead the online classes. Along with the training and workshops, the teacher narrated in their interviews that they mainly had self-learned and explored the teaching Apps by themselves to enhance their teaching pedagogy. The teachers remarked that even after receiving no prior training, transforming teaching methods to an online platform seemed more challenging than resolving other issues related to online teaching and the pandemic. For instance, T4 expressed that she previously used multimedia in classrooms and received training about MOODLE's functions. "The authority had decided to provide materials to students on MOODLE before the pandemic, and thus we had the practice of it." (T4) T1 affirmed that he developed technological skills through "trial and error. "I browsed online sources, and my university provided video tutorials to create course contents and take online classes effectively" (T1). Therefore, all the teacher participants agreed that the training, workshops, and experiences of online teaching eventually helped meet the primary challenges within a semester.

4.1.3 Challenges of online teaching: load-shedding, poor internet connectivity, and issues with switching on cameras

During the pandemic, teachers faced several challenges while conducting classes online. Firstly, Bangladesh, like other developing countries, has internet and load-shedding issues. Rural areas in Bangladesh have internet speed issues along with power cuts. The teacher respondents reported that the students returned to their hometowns in Bangladesh during the lockdown. So, the teacher participants T1-T5 pointed out that one or more students had internet connectivity concerns, which interrupted class activities. Such problems were also frequently faced by the students living in Dhaka city. Students had to spend on internet data to avoid interruptions due to poor internet connectivity (T3). For example, T3 narrated that she conducted speaking classes, and engaging students with speaking tasks online

became very problematic. T3 said, “Students and teachers living in rural areas faced more load shedding and connectivity issues.” Hence, students excused themselves for leaving and joining classes online as there were regular interruptions due to this reason (T4 & T5). As a result, teachers ensured that students would not be distracted during class time. T1, T2, and T3 said they would provide materials and details of the lessons before class time. All the respondents also added that they provided extra time at the end of the class in case students lost connection during the class or could contact them later through Facebook groups, WhatsApp, or text messages.

One additional challenge teachers mainly discussed was that the students were reluctant to keep the video camera on during online classes. Students gave various excuses when asked to keep the cameras on, like limited internet data, poor internet connectivity, families and backgrounds around the student. T1 and T2 said they were initially lenient on allowing the students to keep the camera on or off. After a semester, the teachers made it mandatory to keep the cameras on during online classes. The respective universities they worked in asked them to make it mandatory and record the classes to monitor students. T2 said, “We asked students to keep their video cameras on, and we told them that we allotted marks for this in-class participation.” T1 mentioned they increased marks in the class participation category from 5 to 10 during the online classes. T3, T4, and T5 said that they insisted students keep their video cameras on, but students gave various reasons, and one or the other students would not do so. T5 said, “...students in my class never wanted to keep their video camera on. They would say they have people around and they have no spare room. I would, at times, feel as if they were understanding. So, I would call out names randomly and ask questions. However, I would not force them to do so.”

Moreover, it became difficult at times to initiate discussion and ensure students’ participation during online classes. T4 shared an event where a student was chatting on

Messenger while in class, which got shared through the student's mobile on the screen. T3 stated, "Many students kept their cameras off. I would not know what they were actually doing: sleeping, chatting over social media, or just not present there." This kind of situation disrupted the classroom environment. The interviewees said they always tried to keep students motivated by listening to their problems, and thus, they had to acknowledge this problem if it was genuine. T3 and T5 said they always tried to keep activities at the end of the class, where all the students had to participate. In this way, they monitored students' participation and attentiveness. T5 felt the students were monitored well if they were seen virtually on the screen.

4.2 Adaptive strategies used in online English Language courses

The objective of the research was to explore the coping strategies teachers used to adapt to new pedagogies during emergency online teaching. Thus, questions were posed to the teacher participants to explore how teachers tackled the emergency and took undergraduate language classes online.

4.2.1 Choosing Video-conferencing software

Teachers were asked how they adapted to online teaching using technological tools and media, LMSs, and apps. Teachers' pedagogical adoption of online teaching depended on video conferencing software, like Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams, and then transferring language course materials from the traditional to digital form. T1 first mentioned that transforming classroom instruction to a digital platform was a drastic step taken during emergency online teaching. The respondents mentioned that undergraduate classes were initially taken on Facebook Live, and later, the universities chose Zoom and Google Meet for easy video conferencing. All the teacher participants said Zoom and Google Meet could be accessed and joined from any device, and meetings could be easily hosted.

After teachers were demonstrated the functions of these apps by the authorities, they began to take online classes. Later, according to the respective universities' demands, teachers created teaching materials and designed tasks suitable for online teaching platforms. Applications like Google Classroom, Google Meet, and Google Docs were adopted into online teaching classes. All the teacher participants similarly elaborated on how these Applications helped them in their online classes. Google Slides were used as whiteboards to explain any topic; even students would participate there. The Chat option in Google Meet and Zoom was used for any query by students as they sometimes had problems with their mouth or ear devices when speaking. T1 expressed, "We used Google Applications for online activities. We also took a subscription from one of the leading organizations, edX, for LMSs to create and upload courses." T2 mentioned the features in the video conferencing software like "chat option" or "break out rooms" helped with making classes interactive. T4 and T5 said that using Google applications in online classrooms enhanced their language teaching. T3 said she used Zoom and Google Meet per class timings and convenience.

4.2.2 Use of technological tools as part of language teaching and learning strategies

Teachers used technological tools as part of strategies to make learning more convenient, useful, and fun. T1 commented, "...language courses are structured, and the university instructs common teaching-learning strategies. Although we followed the same techniques, we were open to use other technological tools as supplementary aids. Some teachers tried to engage students in their own ways, considering the task's aim." T2 suggested some useful tools he used to make learning more accessible for students in the lockdown. Students were motivated to learn through the interesting learning tools he introduced in his language class. Zoom, Slack, Adobe, Spark, Canva, Kahoot and others were used to help students participate actively and learn language skills by exploring these online tools and materials. T3 and T5 did not particularly mention any learning tools they used other than the

ones that were prescribed by the university, Google Apps and Zoom. Only T2 mentioned that he developed online materials and trained other colleagues as he had the expertise in technology. “ ...I took the lead and started developing online materials while also training others to enhance their skills.” (T2).

T5 mentioned that reading and writing tasks were the same ones used before but had to be adapted to online form. All the teacher participants used a similar strategy for the writing activity: using Google Docs for real-time writing, editing, and feedback. T1 and T2 said students were made to do social annotation using hypotheses as part of a reading activity. T3 narrated:

Firstly, Google Applications was used to conduct the online classes, where more than two windows could be open. I could teach speaking and listening lessons together where students would not have to wait. A group of students could participate in speaking activities, whereas others would join listening activities as I would provide the audio clip in another window.

T2 responded, “... as part of the speaking activity, students used Vocaroo to submit assignments, and our faculty members made some podcasts for students’ practice. I tried to teach as many colleagues as I could so that I don’t have to take up all the pressure.” For speaking activities, T3 said activities like extempore were conducted in online classes. T4 responded that students’ viva was taken as part of a speaking assessment. T5 said that a class discussion was initiated as part of a speaking class where students had to keep their cameras on. T3, T4, and T5 added that audio clips were used for listening activities in online classes. However, T5 mentioned that conducting listening activities was difficult due to students’ lack of attention span and poor internet connectivity.

4.2.3 Use of Videos in online language classrooms

T3 said that the strategies for online teaching were built eventually with time, as the solution to different online challenges could be figured out. Firstly, all the teachers mentioned that they used videos in their language classes. T1 said, “We self-learned to create videos and edit them. Videos helped a lot in understanding the content of lessons. It helped more to retrieve information. Students can also retain more information after watching a video than after reading a text.” Videos were also shown in classrooms to make lessons enjoyable (T3). T2 stated,

I took on a new responsibility, a new challenge. The department head established a new unit dedicated to online media and technology..... Students were provided mini-videos on course content and self-learning materials. In the beginning, only three or four people could make online video materials. We started training, and gradually, 80% of the faculty members could make their own instructional video.”

Although videos were always part of their language lessons in traditional classrooms, in online teaching, it became a ritual (T4). T1, T2, T3 and T5 emphasized that use of videos was a convenient strategy to help learners in comprehending concepts and to hold students’ attention. T1 and T2 made their own contents and mini-videos as class materials, whereas T5 mentioned that Youtube videos were used to help initiate students’ elicitation in the classroom or were given as home tasks followed by other writing tasks.

4.2.4 Strategies to incorporate technology in situated learning

The teacher participants had previously incorporated group activities for authentic learning in face-to-face classrooms. Before the pandemic, students were mainly grouped for home assignments, PowerPoint presentations, or project works. However, in online classes, students, in addition to previous group tasks, worked with peers on Google Docs (T1-T5). All

the teacher participants also opined that using collaborative tools in online classes has helped develop students' higher-order skills more than in traditional classes, as it includes complex problem-solving activities.

T1 elaborated that in online classes, students learned language skills collaboratively. He exemplified this by saying that 'project works' or 'group tasks' in online teaching initiated student collaboration and interaction. For example, in one of the tasks given, students were grouped in Google Docs and provided with different themes to choose from. Next, they were asked to write a 'topic or title' related to the themes for the project. Following this activity, students shared links to collaborate with their group mates in Google Docs. Students were instructed to write research questions and refer to web sources to collect data. In this way, students learned collaboratively with peers and teachers in real time.

T2 said, "... students wrote a few assignments in groups, and a few presentations required teamwork. These allowed them to interact with each other outside the class. A slack group was also maintained for social interaction." T1 stated that initially, it was a challenge to make students sit in groups virtually. However, at the end of the pandemic, technical developers added features like 'break out rooms,' which created a separate zone for group mates and helped in collaborative discussion within the class timings.

T3 expressed that students experienced authentic learning while browsing online resources for reference for assignments and project works. They collaborated and saved all materials in Google Drive. So, like other teacher participants, T3 followed students' progress and provided feedback accordingly.

T4 said, " We got the Premium Version of Zoom to manage class activities." She shared that videos, newspaper articles, and web resources were shared to provide authentic learning experiences to students. The activities like sharing views and opinions, group and pair work in Zoom during class timing. in the online class timing. T5 expressed that student

interaction was possible mostly during online class time. Students used the Chat option in Google Meet to write and share their answers. Sometimes, students were asked to share Google Docs or Google Classrooms to show or submit their writing tasks in real time, where students and teachers both interacted discussing the feedback given by teachers. Moreover, in online classes, “Facebook groups” helped facilitate communication and social interaction for lesson-related matters (T3 & T5).

However, T5 expressed that she could only successfully initiate collaboration in online classes at convenient times, as most classes were lecture-based due to students' absence and lack of attention in online classes. Thus, the technological tools, Facebook, Collaboration tools like Google Meet, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Drive, Slack, and others helped students collaborate and perform authentic, meaningful tasks in online classes during the pandemic.

4.2.5 Strategy for feedback and online assessments

Students' progress in online classrooms could only be checked through students' active participation, assignments, and assessments. T3, T4, and T5 said they found new ways to assess students' performance and provided feedback. For any query or to receive feedback, students could easily reach teachers through different course groups on Facebook or WhatsApp, which students found very helpful in online teaching. Students were also given written feedback through emails, Google Docs, or written assignments (T1-T5). T1 and T2 mentioned that although it was difficult for students to get accustomed to the system of receiving feedback, the process later became more manageable. Moreover, in online classes, the teachers acted as ‘mentors’ rather than just teachers (T1).

Online assessments conducted during the pandemic can be evaluated in terms of trust, reliability, validity, and integrity.

Trust: Teachers encountered challenges in verifying students' honesty and ensuring academic integrity, especially due to increased plagiarism in online classes. T1 and T2 informed students about plagiarism checkers, which helped students become more careful.

Reliability: With difficulties in managing connectivity issues and verifying students' authenticity online assessments could not be 100% reliable. Initial assessment results were average, and students' reluctance to receive feedback impacted the reliability of assessments.

Validity: Students initially lacked interest and regularity, affecting the consistency of online assessments. With time and support, students adapted to the online system, which improved the validity of the assessments.

Integrity: Teachers provided informal feedback through virtual classes, Facebook groups, and WhatsApp. Despite the challenges, the use of plagiarism checkers and increased awareness helped maintain academic integrity.

4.2.6 Strategy to support students' well-being

Regarding keeping students motivated in online teaching, all teachers said they prioritized students' well-being throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. T1 commented, "...creating a conducive learning environment for students was difficult and challenging, but we somehow did it. We teachers became mentors to the students during this time." T3 and T4 added that keeping students' concentration in the online class and encouraging them to complete their language tasks was an uphill task. T5 exemplified that students sometimes logged in to classes but never responded upon calling out their names. According to the respondents, reaching out to students and acknowledging that it was a new experience for them needed patience and was time-consuming. They always had to be attentive to students' presence and participation in the classroom. "...Additionally, students fell ill or experienced

mental health issues. To make matters worse, some had their family members battling Covid, making it a stressful time for everyone involved” (T2).

T1 said, “We also held classes and taught students how to work on language assignments online, the functions of any Apps, and more.” Tutorials and Live classes were also taken to teach students how to share screens, use chat rooms and all other useful features (T4). Moreover, students were provided presentation slides beforehand to keep the students informed about the following class lessons (T5). T3 said, “I ensured that students had access to resources. I provided audiobooks and made groups on Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp so students could coordinate and do group activities. All the materials were stored in Google Drive and were open to all students.” So, all the teacher participants said they first gave the students time to get accustomed to the online learning environment in every possible way. For example, T1 said, “..we also encouraged collaborative learning by involving students to work in groups made online. This way, I engaged the students and kept motivating them to learn the language and the online skills (T1). T2 used Slack to maintain interaction between the students; T3, T4, and T5 said the students communicated with them through Facebook Messenger groups, emails, WhatsApp, and text messages in emergencies and discussed any queries regarding lessons and problems they faced. All the efforts of teacher participants was to reduce stress and anxiety among students and ensure they have good mental health.

T1 stated, “Our institution always reminded us to empathize with our students and consider their problems. Students were also given tuition fee waivers during this time.” Teachers said they devised ways to keep connecting with students throughout the semesters. T1 and T2 mentioned that they helped students with lessons and always gave feedback in a positive manner. They were empathetic towards their students, considering if they were experiencing any problems. “Empathy gives comfort to students, and we teachers were

always in all ears for sharing students' problems" (T4) The well-being of students was regarded more.

4.3 Teachers' perceptions of online teaching- investigating motivation and support

The objective of the research was also to investigate how the teacher participants could cope with the professional pressure and stress during the pandemic and what kind of support and motivation helped them to continue with online teaching. The teacher participants were asked to express their feelings and experiences during online teaching

4.3.1 Teachers' negative and positive feelings

The teachers shared that they had overcome several challenges at the beginning of the pandemic to be comfortable with online teaching. All the teachers remarked that at the beginning of the pandemic lockdown, teachers were distressed to begin online classes. Initially, they had negative feelings regarding the implementation of online teaching. They needed to prepare gadgets, teaching resources, and space to conduct online classes at home. Moreover, while staying home, teachers also had to tend to families' health and worry about finances. Building a good rapport with students as they were (Freshers/first-year students at the undergraduate level). T5 commented that the pandemic period was challenging due to working at home and a lack of training in online teaching. Maintaining a balanced work-life while maintaining the house and children was difficult, especially for female teachers (T3 and T4). "Sometimes I felt a lot of pressure. We attended meetings at 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. My family or I would be sick, but I still had to continue the online classes. It would be easier if time could be managed well." (T5). "Holding students' attention for one and a half hours was difficult Online classes are more stressful because speaking alone feels much pressure due to the lack of student participation" (T1). Students' inattentiveness, absence, and lack of response at times stressed teachers (T4, T5).

However, all teachers mentioned that they had overcome most challenges after a semester of starting online teaching. T4 said, “Video tutorials were self-explanatory, and we did not have to depend on training, as time was short.” T4 also expressed that although teachers had to deal with their own personal struggles, they had taken the challenges positively. T1 said, “Although we were novices in online teaching, with trial and error, we boosted our confidence.” T2 commented, “...being a teacher for a long time, you eventually learn to put the emotions aside and keep smiling for the students.” T3 stated, “...it was stressful for the world. Carrying on with the online class was challenging. However, I believe 70% was delivered well, and students enjoyed them,” Overcoming the challenges of online teaching boosted their confidence and brought positive feelings in teachers.

4.3.2 Teachers’ motivation and support

Some factors impacted teachers’ motivation during the pandemic. Teachers said they had mental satisfaction during the pandemic due to job security, timely payment, and support from the university authority.

T3 and T4 said that the university where she worked made online teaching easier by cooperating in providing technological support. T3 stated that the university authority supported the teachers in many ways. She received frequent training and workshops for operating LMSs and applications. She stated, “...it was a new situation; we mutually motivated each other. We were given loans to own a laptop, and the university provided internet data. In addition, our motivation was that we were given our salary on time.” The in-charge authority helped the faculty by calling the troubleshooting groups when needed.” (T1 &T4)

T1 said that the university where he worked was prominent, so the authority kept its commitment to providing salaries and other facilities during the pandemic. T1 and T2 mentioned that they felt privileged when they learned that their friends and family were

facing layoffs due to financial troubles at their universities. “No layoffs or pay deductions motivated teachers.” (T1). T2 said his university provided financial and job security and opportunities for personal growth during the pandemic.

We had to survive in that situation. We received support from the university and the department. Students from the courses expressed their satisfaction with the online teaching-learning approach during the course and faculty evaluation (T1). The good comments in the evaluation boosted the teacher’s confidence and Motivation (T1). All five interviewees also remarked that empathy towards students made their job easier. When students felt comforted that their problems were understood, they communicated well with the course teachers. T3 reflected that although students were reluctant to keep their video cameras on, attendance was perfect. However, students felt relaxed and followed the rules of online classes when teachers understood their problems, such as if they were having internet connectivity issues or health problems. After acting as mentors during the pandemic, the teachers created a comfortable space between the teacher and students, which helped in students’ participation (T1). “In this way, not only did we feel accomplished but also stress-free” (T1).

Teachers also received this pandemic as a learning phase of their teaching career and took it positively while considering all the challenges. T1, T2, and T4 said they took the pandemic as a learning opportunity. Teachers mentioned that they knew this experience would add to their teaching career and develop their knowledge of teaching pedagogy with technology. Teachers exemplified how this experience affected their teaching when face-to-face classes began. All the teacher participants said a blended approach was now being used in the physical classrooms. Teachers use LMSs and Google Apps to upload content and materials, take assignments, and make announcements. Also, students and teachers can now communicate easily online. T1 commented, “Now I feel confident creating

and conducting courses online. I believe a good percentage of course content should be conducted online to make students proficient in using technology. Online learning activities would also give the students real-life experiences needed in work life.” T2 discussed the growing global demand for Hybrid, Hyflex (Hybrid-Flexible), and online learning. Thus, this should also be taken into account in Bangladeshi private universities. T3 and T4 said Google Classrooms are still used to keep it a habit because we never know when we need it due to the country’s political situation. T5 said, “..we went to the old method but still use ICT tools in classrooms. I am into softcopies more than handouts. We have returned to the old approach, but ICT factors will remain.”

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion of the Study

This research has aimed to find the factors impacting adaptive strategies and explore the pedagogies adopted by undergraduate ELT teachers to accommodate the new mode of online teaching during the pandemic while learning about their perceptions and motivations involved in this process. The findings of the qualitative data are discussed in light of the theoretical frameworks applicable and the TAM model-related observations. The themes are sequentially labeled and discussed according to the research questions.

Factors Impacting the Pedagogical Adaptation

Bangladesh has suffered learning losses over the decades due to political strikes; still, no attempts were made to include ICT or online learning systems during emergencies. Online education was adopted before the pandemic in many developed and developing countries, like America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and others in the form of distance, blended, and hybrid learning, with LMSs and MOOCs becoming popular over time (Palvia et al., 2018). In Bangladesh it was first introduced in the early 1960s with the creation of Audio-Visual Cell (AVC) and Audio-Visual education centre (AVEC) in 1962 and later the Bangladesh Open University (BOU), in 1992 (Masum & Chowdhury, 2013). As per Islam (2021), BOU relied on printed materials and electronic media like television, radio, audio-cassettes, and face-to-face tutorial services, and there are still plans to set up computer and video conferencing. However, the integration of ICT and the complete transition to online teaching from mainstream education was never anticipated. Thus, the pandemic paved the way for experiencing and understanding the viability of e-learning.

In December 2019, COVID-19 disease spread worldwide from Wuhan, China which led the government to close all educational institutions in Bangladesh from 17th March 2020

until September 2021 for people's safety. Later, the government and UGC permitted schools and universities to begin online classes via social media or other online platforms, as decided by the respective institutions (Khan et al., 2021a; Rahman et al., 2021; Riaz, 2021; Siddique, 2021). Thus, social, governmental, and institutional factors affected the adaptation of online teaching. Teachers, particularly English Language Teaching (ELT) instructors, found themselves in a hierarchical structure, accepting government-imposed online teaching as the only alternative despite having no clear understanding of how to conduct classes online (McDonough et al., 2013).

The private university teacher respondents stated that they used technology-based tools like multimedia projectors, YouTube, PowerPoint, and websites to retrieve ebooks and e-journals before the pandemic, but these tools were incorporated in physical classrooms. MOODLE was introduced in many public and private universities but its use was minimal before the pandemic (Mahmuda, 2016). UGC and MoE had strategically planned to implement Moodle and ICT facilities in universities to increase academic growth in higher education (University Grants Commission & Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project, 2018). The teacher participants mentioned that they had been introduced to Moodle but had yet to receive proper training or begin its use. The effectiveness of MOODLE as a teaching and learning tool (Akter &, 2020) should have been acknowledged, which would have prepared teachers and students to enhance their teaching and learning during the pandemic. The transition to full-scale online teaching was abrupt, and the teachers lacked formal training. Before the pandemic, Hernandez (2019) and Rahman et al. (2012) discussed the barriers to adopting digital services or technologies in education. Access to hardware, affordability, awareness or knowledge, ICT-skilled teachers, and funding impacted ICT adoption. However, the respondents undeniably had the privilege of receiving adequate direction and support from the authority, colleagues, and, in many cases, funding to prepare

themselves for online teaching. Mostly the teacher participants learned through ‘trial and error,’ and despite some previous training in online course design, they had not fully implemented the systems in practice. Like T2 commented that although he had received training on online course design, he wished he had rehearsed it earlier. Teachers had access to the necessary technological tools, such as gadgets and internet services, but self-learning and support from colleagues played crucial roles in enabling them to begin teaching online.

Research by Huang et al. (2023) highlights the “collaborative experience” with peers or colleagues and access to ICT facilities, similar to ICT training positively affected teachers’ preparedness for online teaching. Also, teachers’ self-efficacy was impacted by ICT job resources- training, collaboration, and equipment (Huang et al., 2023, p. 15). This research showed that the respondents had the gadgets and internet connectivity service to conduct online classes, and no complaints were made from the teachers’ side. Hence, it makes it clear that the availability of ICT resources- gadgets and the internet, seminars and workshops provided by the institutions, and mutual support from colleagues helped undergraduate teachers adopt and transition online teaching during the pandemic.

Despite having resources, several challenges persisted, such as poor internet connectivity, load shedding, and keeping up with students’ attention and motivation online through the ‘black screen.’ Christoforou (2021) and Svihus (2023) refer to the black screen phenomenon as one of the challenges teachers faced during online teaching during the pandemic. The ‘black screens’ are the video-conferencing tools used in online classes, where students tend to hide themselves (Christoforou, 2021). Teachers found it concerning when students often refrained from keeping their video cameras on in online courses and forcing them to do so was not feasible, as students faced load-shedding and poor internet connectivity and were uncomfortable sharing their home space virtually. Strategies were developed by the teacher participants to address these issues. T1 and T2 made it obligatory for the students to

keep the video cameras on. Switching the cameras on would earn them marks in ‘class participation’ that consisted of ‘5-10 marks’ (T1 & T2). However, students were sometimes excused for genuine reasons. Although T3, T4, and T5 did not mandate the students to keep the video cameras on, they ensured that students participated in class discussions. Teachers randomly called out names to answer questions and prepared activities at the end of the class to ensure students understood the lessons.

The findings from the data also helped to explore the acceptance of online teaching by the teachers, illustrating the variables of the TAM model, “perceived usefulness (PU), and “perceived ease of use (PEOU),” that influenced “attitudes towards use (A)” and “behavioral intention to use (BI).” The teachers’ perceptions towards the adoption of online teaching during the pandemic were considered useful as it was necessary and made obligatory. The government and institutions’ decisions to mandate online teaching acted as external factors, forcing them to conduct emergency remote teaching and influencing teachers’ perceptions of its usefulness and ease of use. The participants in the interviews stated that students faced problems like poor internet connectivity, load shedding in rural areas, and health issues. The availability and features of social media platforms and other technological tools contributed to teachers’ perceptions of their usefulness. Teachers received technical support, training and access to hardware and software to conduct online classes. These factors shaped their perceptions of ease of use. Teachers’ motivation to self-learn the strategies and successfully implement them through ‘trial and error’ and ‘collaborative experience’ with colleagues marks the attitude of the teachers. Teachers’ adaptation of online pedagogies to teach on online platforms with the support of the institution while coping with the challenges encountered reflects the behavioral intention to use the technology by the teachers.

Adaptive Strategies in Online Teaching

The strategies and approaches the teachers employed to meet the students' needs to subdue the difficulties of online teaching were stated in their interviews. Respondents agreed that although there remained a few challenges, eventually, they felt satisfied with conducting online classes. Video-conferencing software, like Zoom and Google Meet became key tools to conduct online classes used for its safety, clarity, and affordability (Chapagai, 2022). The participants said the authorities decided to use Google Meet during the pandemic for its ease of use and functional features. The teachers found features like "chat option," "breakout rooms," "class recording," and "screen-sharing" effective, which helped to make classes interactive.

Integrating ICT tools and LMSs to create interactive and collaborative classes was the key strategy the private university teachers used in their courses. Language teaching has long benefited from technology, notably with Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in language labs (Crystal, 1987, as cited in Gunduz, 2005). Language educators have since acknowledged that language classrooms can have engaging tasks with technological-mediated learning. (Erarslan, 2021; Hossain, 2021; Slaouti, 2013). E-learning has been a popular "alternative to traditional classrooms" that allowed the teachers to adopt asynchronous learning (Zhang et al., 2006, p. 16; Zhang & Nunamaker, 2003), giving students flexibility while maintaining real-time interactions. T1, commented, "Transforming impersonal teaching strategy and pedagogy for online classrooms was the first challenge." The ELT teachers used different LMSs to create online materials and designed activities and tasks. Transferring course materials applicable to physical classrooms to online platforms needed preparation and input from the university authorities and teachers. The interviewees

informed that university authorities provided guidance and workshops on using technological tools, but the latter part of the work depended on the ELT course instructors.

Videos emerged as an effective online teaching tool learning tool. Videos as non-textual media helped “speech recognition, natural language understanding, image processing, human interaction, and information retrieval technique.” (Zhang & Nunamaker, 2003, p.211). Moreover, Ginting (2022) discusses that videos help enhance the quality of teaching and learning, significantly initiate self-regulatory learning, and help students focus. The teacher participant T2 mentioned that he created “mini-videos on course content and self-learning materials.” Also, T1 stated that he learned to make videos and edited them to present the lesson concepts more clearly. The respondents T3, T4, and T5 said they used short videos to help make the contents of the lesson fun for students and easy comprehension of the concepts. Thus, the ELT teachers mentioned that classroom videos made classes more interactive and helped students retrieve and retain information rather than just reading the texts alone and helped to keep students’ interest and attention and initiated speaking and writing tasks (T5).

Moreover, this qualitative research findings presented that integrating social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Google Applications like Google Drive, Google Slides, Google Classroom, Podcasts, Slack, Adobe, and Canva as LMSs with MOODLE, mentioned by the ELT teachers had helped in creating materials and designing online tasks and activities. Eissa (2022) talks about the effectiveness of LMSs as learning tools to enhance the resilience of the teaching-learning process during the epidemic. The role of LMSs was crucial in managing online teaching. Eissa (2022) highlights that effective LMSs, such as Google Classroom and Moodle, facilitated course material access, assessments, and feedback. Teachers also integrated podcasts, e-journals, and audiobooks for language activities like reading, listening, and speaking, ensuring a balanced approach

between synchronous and asynchronous learning (Zhang & Nunamaker, 2003). Authentic materials, including videos and web sources, played a key role in enhancing language learning and promoting critical thinking (Zheng, 2010; Ginting, 2022).

One of the strategies adopted for online pedagogic instruction by undergraduate teachers was to provide materials to students beforehand. The strategy used to provide classroom materials before class significantly influenced students' motivation. Cueva and Inga's (2022) study suggests the effectiveness of ICT in flipped classrooms. The ELT teacher participants provided short videos on course materials, lecture slides, audiobooks, and all course-related materials in Google Docs before class. This was an adaptive strategy integrated for effective online teaching during the pandemic. In flipped classroom-based learning, the teacher should provide resources for review to the learners in advance. Afterward, the teacher should reinforce the topic and answer students' questions (Zheng et al., 2020, as cited in Cueva & Inga, 2022). This strategy was meant to make students comfortable during the pandemic emergency, and that helped them with classroom preparation and participation. The ELT teacher instructors tried to keep a blend of synchronous and asynchronous e-learning that was needed during the emergency period.

Furthermore, online tools were used with new pedagogical approaches to develop language skills in writing, speaking, listening, and writing. Nguyen & Nguyen (2022) suggest that Google Docs help improve students' writing performance. The respondents used Google Docs for real-time writing and editing for their language courses. The teachers gave examples of using Google Docs to design scaffolding activities. This included collaborating on research while web-browsing, peer/group drafting, writing, and editing. Teachers and students felt comfortable using Google Docs for its 'accessibility and flexibility' and its communication features to give and receive feedback that anyone can access through a link (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022, p.188). E-journals, online web sources, audiobooks, and PDF files were used

for reading activities by the teacher participants to unload the burden of hard copies from students during the pandemic. Moreover, YouTube videos and podcasts helped with elicitation and speaking activities. Teacher participants T3, T4, and T5 were assigned listening activities with audio files. Thus, with the help of e-learning tools and student interaction and collaboration, learning occurred successfully in online classes during the pandemic.

Facebook was another effective learning aid integrated into online teaching during the pandemic. This social networking site was used as the first learning tool during the first phase of the pandemic in Bangladesh. Facebook, a collaborative learning tool, is considered an effective forum for learners and instructors (Yin et al., 2021). Martinez and Sancho (2020, as cited in Yin et al., 2021) analyze that through Facebook, learners can connect with peers, improve creativity, learn quickly, and exchange ideas (p. 179). A study on using social media websites at the tertiary level during the pandemic revealed that ‘Facebook’ helped learners easily share materials, documents, and videos. Learners could communicate with their peers and instructors sitting at home and find a collaborative environment, thus helping them learn smoothly (Rabbi et al., 2020, pp. 260-261). During the pandemic, the students could not have face-to-face meetings. Facebook was then used for peer engagement during the crisis as it was easy to access (Husna et al., 2022).

Moreover, the situated learning theory resonated with the strategies used in online undergraduate courses. Situated learning as a learning theory was first presented by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991, explaining that learning occurs through participation in a community. This theory suggests that learning is mediated through relationships within a “community of practice,” where group members learn, share, and develop (Lave & Wenger, 1991, as cited in Beşar 2018, p. 51). The ELT teachers made students collaborate in groups on different platforms like Google Docs, Facebook, chat rooms, or breakout rooms. In this

way, even though students were not in a face-to-face setting, teachers ensured they could share knowledge and create a social environment, making students feel they were part of the class and community facing the same challenges. Thus, within the virtual community, students share knowledge and develop skills.

An essential aspect of language teaching is the use of authentic materials.

Implementing online education during the pandemic has helped create an authentic learning environment for students using technological tools and the Internet. As technology aids in online language learning, authentic learning materials enhance learning. Stein (1998) discusses that in a situated learning environment, learners are put in authentic situations or immersed in problem-solving tasks that help to develop their critical thinking skills (para. 3). The interviews conducted presented that the ELT teachers had been involved in tasks like web browsing to find authentic resources and materials. This also helped to enhance their research skills, helping them to immerse themselves in an authentic situation where students collaborated to perform tasks. Zheng (2010), mentioning Herrington and Oliver (1999), discussed that learning with interactive multimedia with the presence of authentic texts and authentic activities influenced students' higher-order thinking skills (Zheng, 2010, p.471). Thus, this can be seen as congruent with the ELT teacher's adaptation of reading and writing activities from traditional to online teaching. Writing tasks such as group work in Google Docs, reading, writing, editing, and proofreading in real time helped the students learn more authentically. According to Ginting (2022), as a learning tool, videos replicate authentic life settings and encourage problem-solving (p.1). Thus, using videos and Facebook that the teacher participants incorporated in their language courses added to the authentic learning principles (Ginting, 2020 & Susilo, 2014).

Teachers' roles during online teaching extended beyond instructional duties to include providing emotional support. Many students were unfamiliar with the university environment

and faced challenges adjusting to online classes. Teachers maintained empathetic attitudes, motivating students through communication and problem-solving tasks. A few university authorities considered the students' financial problems and waived the fee. Teachers were always keen to provide positive feedback during online classes and later. Here, the applicability of Krashen's (1985) hypothesis of motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety with the theory of 'affective filter' can be evaluated. Lin (2008) states that according to Krashen's hypothesis of the affective filter, students can have negative emotions, stress, and low self-esteem, which can cause hindrance to language learning. The sudden changes brought in the education system made students feel uncomfortable. Students tried to be accustomed to the new mode of teaching. Hence, we observe that keeping a positive environment for students in the online classrooms kept them motivated, making them confident and less anxious. This reflects Du's (2009) analysis of using affective filters in language teaching. The teacher participants said they wanted to make a conducive environment for the students and be empathetic listeners. It was only possible when teachers successfully dealt with online classes during the pandemic. Therefore, teachers then played the role of 'motivators' and 'mentors' for the students.

In conclusion, the data findings on the adaptive strategies and tools used by English language teachers to conduct online courses can be assessed through the variables of TAM. Teachers used video conferencing software tools, social media platforms, videos, LMSs, and other technological media as useful adaptive tools to interact with students and reduce barriers to online teaching. Teachers perceived the tools as useful to communicate virtually as physical classes were stopped. Moreover, e-learning tools, YouTube videos or web videos, and Google productivity Applications were considered effective by teachers for their features that aided in transferring course materials and pedagogy to online teaching. For example, Google Docs were used for real-time interaction, collaborative teaching practices, and

providing feedback. Teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the tools helped to integrate technology into teaching practices. Furthermore, the findings from the data show that the teachers adapted tools for their ease of use. Teachers perceived Zoom and Google Meet as being chosen by the institution for their easy access and effective ease of use to facilitate interaction and peer/group activities, with features like break-out rooms, chat rooms, screen recording, and screen sharing. Thus, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of the technological tools adopted influenced and increased behavioral intention to use them. The actual usage of tools was those that met the teaching objectives, approaches, and strategies of the language classrooms.

Motivation and support driving Teachers' perceptions during the pandemic

According to the research data, the challenges faced by the teacher participants are lack of training, availability of resources, internet speed, balancing home and work, and ensuring students' participation in the online environment. The challenges led to the negative feelings and stress that teachers initially felt. Casimiro et al. (2020) scrutinize the emotional factors of university teachers during the pandemic: stress, anxiety, anguish, and resilience. Their study shows that emotion is a response to a stimulus that occurs due to perceptions, experiences, or events that can be positive or negative (Bisquerra, 2011, as cited in Casimiro et al., 2020). According to the study, the levels of stress, anxiety, and anguish were higher when social isolation was mandated, and the lack of time and resources to prepare for online teaching became a concern. In this research, the factors impacting online teaching strategies presented the factors that caused stress and anxiety initially. Beginning online classes without previous knowledge and training, preparing resources, and conducting classes while meeting other challenges like managing work and family (for female teachers) and ensuring students' attention caused stress and anxiety for teachers. However, teacher participants' positive

outlook on taking the pandemic as a learning opportunity reflects Casimiro et al. study on the dimension of resilience (Casimiro et al., 2020, p.461). The teacher participants took online teaching as a challenge and an opportunity for personal growth.

Teachers' motivation largely depends on "institutional environment, sense of belonging to a community and relationship with students" (Panadero et al., 2022, para. 7). The respondents had a similar kind of perception of motivation during the pandemic. The teacher participants received technical support from the universities, along with short training and workshops for conducting online classes. One of the teacher participants revealed that she received funding for gadgets and internet data. Thus, these aspects created a healthy work environment and relationship with the institution, motivated teachers, and enhanced their teaching performance. Moreover, building a rapport with students was taken as an essential strategy to defeat the barriers online classes caused. Relieving students' stress and problems would, in return, affect teachers' motivation. The teacher participants stated that they overcame their stress and anxiety while boosting their confidence with problem-solving practices. Teachers devoted time to self-learn the use of technology, boosted each other's confidence and expressed positive and satisfactory behavior towards online teaching. Colson et al. (2015) state that feedback and social support help in reducing burnout and increase teachers' engagement. The positive feedback and appraisal received from their respective university authorities and students at the end of the semesters boosted teachers' confidence and motivation in online teaching. Thus, technical and mental support from the institutions reduced teacher burnout and stress and changed teachers' negative emotions into positive ones.

Fear of pay cuts and job loss are the reasons that affect the well-being of teachers of higher education levels (Sultana et al., 2022). Job satisfaction directly affects teachers "well-being, quality of life or stress at work." (Alves et al., 2022). The qualitative research

data showed that positive perception of well-being among teachers increased with job security, institutional support, and increased rapport with students. Teachers valued student engagement as a factor influencing job satisfaction (Alves et al., 2022). None of the private university teachers interviewed faced layoffs or pay cuts at that time. Eisenberger et al. (1986) identified how the relationship between employees and the organization affected well-being. Teachers' perception of organizational support from the universities as employees increased affective attachment (p.504). As teachers received technology-mediated teacher training, support from troubleshooting teams, and appraisals at the end of the semesters, teachers' motivation increased. This also influenced increased self-efficacy and proactive roles in teachers to contribute more to enhancing their performance (Alves et al., 2022; Maan et al., 2020). Not only did they self-learn to enhance their skills in online teaching, but they also created materials and strategies for students. The teacher participants motivated each other and took this challenge for the sake of continuing students' learning and job security.

The perceived ease of use and usefulness of technological tools impacted teachers' coping strategies. Teachers' changes of negative emotions to positive were due to the challenges that were overcome with time. Moreover, the usefulness and easy use of tools to conduct classes from home affected the behavioral intention to adapt to online teaching. Self-determination, pro-active roles and confidence led the teachers to overcome the challenges and assess the best utilization of the tools for instructional delivery. Furthermore, job-security, financial and institutional support conveyed the usefulness of continuing online teaching and thus motivated teachers. As the teachers were provided training, workshops, and technological support, the teaching tools became easier to handle. Along with this, appraisal from the authority and positive feedback from students influenced the attitude of teachers to use technology with a positive mindset. Teachers found online learning as a

valuable lesson and that they incorporated the teaching techniques after the pandemic reinstated their intention to incorporate technology even after the pandemic ended.

5.2 Implications of the study

We have taken a step toward introducing remote and online learning on a large scale. This research attempts to demonstrate how technology can be incorporated into mainstream higher education teaching through adaptive strategies. Therefore, it presents the possibility of transitioning from traditional to digital literacy in Bangladesh by employing technology alongside teaching techniques such as blended, hybrid, or mixed approaches. Integrating technology into face-to-face physical classrooms will help improve learning outcomes in the current context. Finally, it will contribute to the development of skilled individuals in the country and further enhance teaching and learning approaches in higher education through training and the effective blending of technological media in physical classrooms.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations of this research. The research is based only on the private university ELT teachers' experiences and perspectives. The research included a qualitative approach, and interviews needed to be conducted. However, the availability of university teachers was challenging because of their busy schedules and commitments. It took weeks to get an appointment to take the lengthy interviews. So, teachers gave their interviews via phone calls, Facebook Messenger calls, and WhatsApp calls. Also, private university teachers outside Dhaka could not be included as participants. Therefore, only five ELT teachers from five well-reputed universities in Dhaka city were approached, and so the sample size is smaller. Regardless, the participants and the samples collected were relevant in context to explore the pedagogical strategies used during the pandemic.

5.4 Conclusion

This research aimed to investigate undergraduate language teachers' adaptive strategies for online teaching during the pandemic. Teachers faced challenges in adopting the online method of teaching. A lack of prior knowledge and training, limited availability of resources, slow internet speeds, and low student participation were factors that affected teachers' ability to adopt new teaching techniques. The qualitative research data highlights the significant role of strategic technology use in online language classrooms. The data revealed how social networking websites, learning management systems (LMSs), and other technological tools were effectively used as adaptive strategies in language classrooms.

The research suggests that technological tools can facilitate meaningful social interaction, collaboration, and authentic learning. Tools like videos, flipped classroom techniques, and collaborative learning contributed to the successful pedagogical approaches designed by the research participants. The data also explored teachers' emotions after the shift to online teaching, showing that their initial negative feelings gradually became more optimistic as they received technological and technical support, motivation, training, and experience.

The study examined the variables of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and attitude, and correlated them to determine teachers' behavioral intentions regarding the successful adoption of online teaching during the pandemic and beyond. While the challenges faced by teachers sometimes affected their attitudes and intentions to use certain technological tools, over time and with experience, their initial concerns and negative attitudes shifted to positive ones. Online teaching was found to be practical, useful, and easy to use. The combination of effective strategies and tools helped create meaningful language classes, leading to the acceptance and continued use of online teaching during and after the pandemic.

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Appendix

Interview Questions

1. Describe the factors that forced you to adapt to new challenges in your teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic period.
2. Did you have prior knowledge or training in using the technological media/tools for online teaching?
3. What are the primary challenges you faced while conducting online classes for your language course at the beginning of the pandemic lockdown?
4. What key strategies did you adapt in your language course during the pandemic? Shed light on the pedagogical adaptations you brought in online teaching during this period. Mention the tool, App, or technological media you used in your course for online teaching. How convenient was it in use and how did it help in your teaching?
5. Did you use any specific technique or strategy to teach language skills online: speaking, listening, reading, and writing using the technological tools?
6. Could you incorporate authentic and meaningful group tasks to support situated learning and develop students' higher skills order ?
7. As an ELT teacher, how did you cope with professional 'pressure or stress' during the pandemic? What kind of 'support and motivation' as a teacher did you receive from your university for adapting to the new teaching mode during the pandemic?
8. Did you resume entirely the previous method of teaching used before the pandemic? What changes have been brought in your teaching strategy after the pandemic ended?

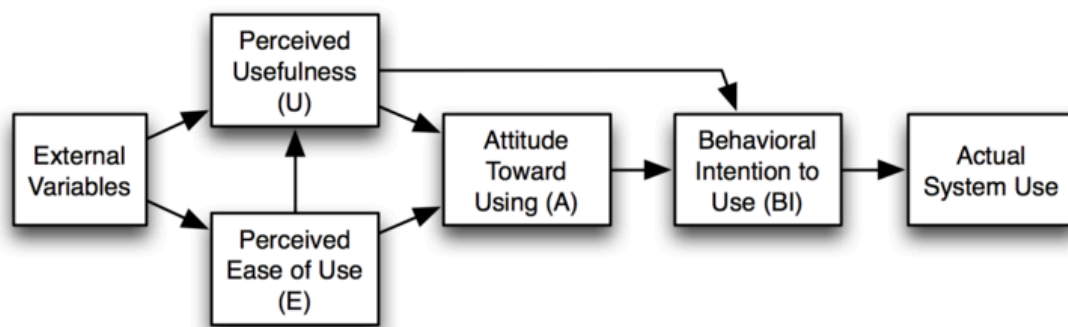
Figure

Figure1 :The Technology Acceptance Model by Davis, 1989 (Davis et al., 1989)