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Online Learning as an Alternative Form of Education for Individuals Impacted by Conflict

A Case Study of Paper Airplanes

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Abstract

Through a small case study, this paper investigates one on-line learning organization devoted to providing ESL education to persons affected by conflict. Through interviews with administrators and tutors, and through survey data collected from participants, the paper will explore how administrators and tutors:

1) determine suitability of material when deciding what to teach in this virtual classroom format

2) foster reflection skills in this format

3) assess language acquisition

4) measure the benefits of technology in one on one instruction

Paper Airplanes consists of about five hundred to eight hundred students and around 800 hundred tutors (Wimer, 2018). It is a web-based organization with a global presence and operates completely in a virtual space. Although tutors and administrators are located throughout the global community, students are primarily located in Syria and Turkey (Paper Airplanes, 2019).The paper examines measurable areas of improvement and success in the English program and offers curriculum ideas based on these findings. Information was collected from anonymous student surveys for the 2018 English Program as well as interviews with tutors and administrators. Given the high percentage of women and girls whose education is disrupted by conflict, the paper concludes with recommendations for online educational platforms designed to meet the needs of children and women. Written for curriculum developers, this paper is intended as a curriculum development guide and includes a curriculum unit focusing on education and social justice.

ERIC Descriptors

Curriculum Organization

Online Courses

English Instruction

World Affairs

International Education

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Virtual and Flipped Classroom

According to Collins English Dictionary, a learner is someone that is in the process of learning. This definition can encompass a wide array of individuals with vast and varying backgrounds. A learner can be full of youthful energy and uninhibited by the world around them or can cautiously dissect new ideas based on the wisdom and woes of life. Regardless of an individual's demographics, the desire and motivation to understand and critically apply new aspects of a subject matter takes on a unique shape within each person**.** For years, educators and scholars have debated the role of learning styles, preferences, modalities, modes and intelligences in an effort to create a classroom atmosphere which encouraged learners to engage in critical analysis and dynamic discourse (Larsen-Freeman, 2018) .As we move towards a more digitally connected society, the notion of online learning has become the topic of many discussions. Educators, researchers and scholars seek to understand the benefits and downfalls of online education as well as the neurological and behavioral implications of a virtual classroom. Although the research is still ongoing, this paper seeks to highlight the immediate benefits of the virtual classroom as an alternative means of education, in particular for individuals in conflict or post conflict affected regions.

A flipped classroom is based on the premise that learners and facilitators have access to classroom materials prior to the start of the class (Gillette, 2018). This enables students to review the material before class and take note of information that is unclear or unfamiliar. In this classroom setting students are expected to attend class with a prepared list of questions, ideas or thoughts about the material. In order to create a successful flipped classroom, it is necessary for facilitators to spend a significant portion of time preparing for the class. It has been noted that although this type of classroom has multiple benefits for the learner, it does require more prep time for the facilitator (Gillette,2018). This is

important information to note when educators are developing curriculum for programs which will utilize

this teaching methodology. One of the primary goals of the flipped classroom is to foster reflective and

critical discourse (Gillette, 2018). This classroom format is possible through Google Classroom, Edmodo

or other online platforms. In order to create the optimal classroom experience students, should spend

about 60 minutes reviewing classroom material before entering the virtual setting. In addition to being

an effective teaching tool, the flipped classroom encourages students to develop deeper learning skills.

Requiring students to approach subjects with an investigative and questioning mindset, fosters a

discussion and leads to further research and inquiries on the topic. This in turn, creates a desire to

master the content and collaborate with others on the subject matter.

Overview of Paper Airplanes

Paper Airplanes is a nonprofit e-learning organization that provides one to one tutorials for 12-

16 week sessions. The tutorials are conducted via a video conferencing platform and the organization

focuses on five programs: English, Turkish, Youth Exchange, Women in Tech and Citizen Journalism. The

English Program works with students of varying levels from the beginner to the advanced level and

provides multiple ways for students to explore and showcase their linguistic progression. Tutors, from

diverse demographic and academic backgrounds, facilitate classes with students. The student body is

primarily composed of individuals impacted by the war in Syria. The number of participants has grown

steadily since the start of the program and the content focus continues to expand.

In 2013 Bailey Ulbricht, an ambitious college student, traveled to Aleppo, Syria and then a small

border town between Turkey and Syria to expand her understanding of international conflicts and

contribute to the conflict relief effort. Although there wasn't a significant NGO presence at the time,

she worked closely with organizations teaching math and psycho social skills. She collaborated with a

group of women of similar age to provide small informal classes. Eventually, she became acquainted

with many Syrian college students with an intense desire to continue their interrupted education. With only a computer and a desire to help, she laid the foundation for Paper Airplanes. It started out as a way to maintain connections and help students learn English and flourished into an online learning community. Today, the organization has more than seven hundred tutors from a multitude of countries volunteering to teach English to conflict- impacted students and has served more than one thousand students. The members rarely meet in person but the connection and community that has blossomed through the online coordination is unmatched. In addition, volunteers gain valuable mentoring and leadership skills to take into their career field (Paper- Airplanes, 2019).Although the number of staff members and students has expanded, the core mission remains the same-- to serve and connect through language. Paper Airplanes is able to function and serve individuals by using the internet as a virtual classroom througha community of volunteer staff and tutors. In turn, Paper Airplanes hopes to break down politicized cultural barriers and encourage cross-cultural understanding.

Geopolitical Implications

Based on a recent report from the Council on Foreign Relations, a quarter billion people are residing outside of their country of origin and one tenth are refugees (Laub, 2019).There are conflicts occurring in every corner of the world and the level of dysfunction that results from a multi-year conflict is unimaginable. Various parts of Southeast Asia, Eastern and Central Africa, the Middle East, South and Central America as well as portions of Europe are in the midst of ongoing conflicts which have drastically impacted their educational, health, political and economic structures (Remember, 2016). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is primarily responsible for assisting individuals impacted by emergencies and who become refugees seeking repatriation, integration or resettlement. With the influx of various prolonged conflicts, a profound number of communities and economies have been dismantled thus various non-profit organizations are finding innovative ways to help. The idea of

sending a girl to school is an afterthought in many instances due to the surmounting pressures of other

necessities. In addition, it is seen as a security risk which family members are rarely willing to take.

During a panel discussion entitled *The Opportunity to thrive: Girls' Education in Humanitarian Crisis*,

panelist Yasmine Sherif, Director of Education Can't Wait and Matthew Reynolds, Regional

Representative for the United States and the Caribbean, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, shared

some disturbing facts and figures in reference to the plight of girls in the refugee crisis:

> Currently thirty million girls living in countries impacted by conflict or natural disaster still do not
>
> have access to education. In addition to the staggeringly high numbers, girls are also two and a
>
> half times more likely to be out of school than their male peers (Stone, 2018).

Because education is often overlooked, pockets of the world are left with large portions of their youth

population uneducated. When you strip people of their ability to hope and grow you slowly destroy

them, thus making it doubly difficult to rebuild a nation (Oshiberu, 2016).

Paper Airplanes works with individuals seeking an alternative form of education due to various

reasons which range from convenience, cost and continuing education. It utilizes technology as its

primary classroom tool which enables the organization to take advantage of the cost-effective benefits

of free web services and platforms. Students are from conflict and post conflict areas primarily Syria,

Iraq and Afghanistan. The students are either displaced or refugees and range in age. Students are

primarily located in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Syria; however, there are some students scattered

throughout Europe and the Middle East. Most of the students have a bachelors or masters degree and

are interested in taking the IELTS-International English Language Testing System exam. However, the

Paper Airplanes experience is much more than an exchange of information; it is a pathway to cultural

and linguistic discoveries and a community of like-minded individuals.

It is important to uphold the most vulnerable portion of the population by not only maintaining their

wellbeing but by also, providing them with accessible and quality education. Thus, I believe it is

important to develop innovative and reliable methods to decrease poverty levels for women and increase their sense of economic independence. Studies have found that improving these key elements has a positive effect on both the women and the family as a unit (UN Women, 2015). As a result of the countless conflicts, natural disasters and the overall deteriorating conditions in rural areas throughout the Global South, women and children are often categorized as a highly marginalized and vulnerable community. After a natural disaster or conflict, it is often deemed too dangerous to return to their homes, or the living conditions are void of basic infrastructure and a functional health and education system. On many occasions these individuals are forced to relocate to a highly unfamiliar area and identify as refugees. The process of recovery from these traumatic events often does not include basic psycho social support or educational integration; as a result, women and children continue to deal with the aftereffects of civil conflicts or natural disasters for many years.

In today's highly interconnected world, it is difficult to view civil and national conflicts as isolated incidents which do not impact individuals. It has been noted in various studies that women and children are disproportionately affected by geopolitics. Thus, in many post-conflict zones the community suffers from severe economic and political instability as well as the destruction of the civil, educational and healthcare systems. In many instances, individuals are more vulnerable and susceptible to harsh conditions due to their status within society. According to Filippo Grandi, UNHCR High Commissioner, "Syria is the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time, a continuing cause of suffering for millions which should be garnering a groundswell of support around the world" (UNHCR, 2018). As a result, women and children throughout the global south represent a large portion of the lower socioeconomic demographic and maintain staggeringly high illiteracy rates as well as low rates of secondary school completion or matriculation. This trend is also evident in refugee populations which relocate to regions with linguistic expectations. Recently, many organizations have turned to alternative

forms of education through the use of technology as a means of providing more immediate relief to individuals displaced by war.

This paper is meant to serve as a resource for administrators and curriculum writers working with students living in areas affected by conflict. The paper will widely reference the student body at Paper Airplanes, which is an organization that utilizes virtual classrooms as a means of providing English language instruction as well as other courses. Through peer to peer instruction and a flipped classroom, students are able to connect with tutors from around the world. Most of the students have attended higher education institutions in their home countries and they are interested in attending an American or British university. Thus, the role of assessment and the measurement of progression is important to both the learners and the administrators. This paper will highlight the importance of curriculum content which includes a range of highly engaging topics which appeal to the personal interest and needs of the learners. The paper will also explore various means of providing appropriate material for the student body while maintaining certain standards. In addition, the paper will discuss the need for cultivating a classroom which encourages reflective thinking and requires students to engage with the material via a flipped classroom learning methodology. The paper will discuss the benefits of periodic shared classrooms in a peer to peer learning environment. Finally, this paper will consider the needs and expectations of this unique student body and seek to identify if the students feel that the material is conflict sensitive.

English as a World Language

English is considered the lingua franca for countless people with varying nationalities and ethnicities. Although the colloquial form has been adapted to incorporate and reflect the linguistic and cultural aspects of many regions, the standard form of the language still remains unchanged. Globally there are different tiers of linguistic expectations (refer to Figure 1.1) among speakers of English. Those within the inner circle use the language as the primary means of communication within their homes, government

and school systems. This consists of five countries: the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Those within the outer circle use the language as a means of communication within the government and school systems. This consists of twelve countries: Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Zambia. The majority of these countries developed English as a lingua franca due to colonial ties. This historical factor is reflected in the areas of society in which the language is present. Those within the expanding circle use the language as a means of communicating with people from other countries. This consists of eleven countries: China, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Korea, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Russia and Zimbabwe (Crystal, 2006). The use of English in this tier is primarily among a wealthier portion of the population and used in specific social settings. The general outlook towards the language, the expressed motivation and the reaction of those impacted by the linguistic shift varies widely within each tier. In more recent years a significant portion of the population has been forced to become language learners in order to endure in temporary or semi-permanent situations. Refugees and displaced individuals are not accounted for in these tiers and follow a different set of norms and expectations. As conflicts and climate emergencies worsen and educators and aid workers look to new ways to ameliorate the long-term educational effects, alternative forms of education have been viewed as a more viable option as the use of English has reached a greater global tier. Overtime the linguistic index has moved from an inner circle with central ties to the language, to an outer circle with historical ties, to an expanding circle with strategic ties and a global circle with geopolitical ties.
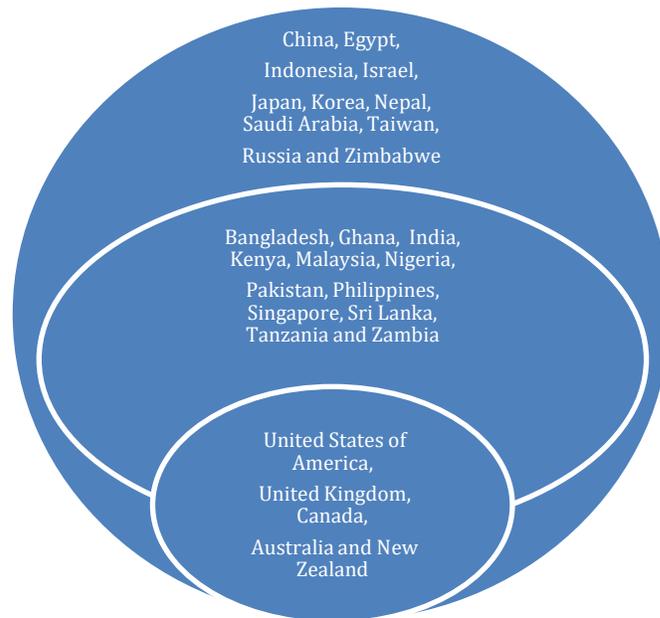
China, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Korea, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Russia and Zimbabwe

Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Zambia

United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

Figure 1.1 Tiers of linguistic expectations (Crystal, 2006)

Language teachers play the crucial role of leading individuals on a journey past their comfort zone and into the wilderness of growth. Temples states that, "in an ideal world the classroom allows students to re-evaluate the past with a critical eye and in context to the present leads to reflection and new cultural fusions of tradition" (Pennycook, 2000,p. 99). This re-evaluation occurs in steps in which an individual embraces an inclusive stance, discusses issues and finally engages with different cultures. As an individual takes on the journey of language acquisition he also inadvertently embarks on a cultural and historical escapade. Discovering a language is like discovering another dimension of oneself and it is often layered, nuanced and complicated. Through communication, relationships and boundaries are

formed, communities and borders are erected, families and enemies are developed. Culture is exchanged, transposed and fused. Languages are laid to rest and become part of elaborate territorial claims.

Language instruction is often a nuanced topic because it combines the social and cultural aspects of instructors and learners core identity with the pedagogical approach of the learning institution. Norton mentions the importance of being fully aware of the power dynamics between a language learner and the target language; in addition, she explores the idea of the learner choosing when and how to engage in the target language due to motivating factors, comprehension levels and one's affective filter(Norton, 1995).Viewing the student as a whole individual with intersecting values and identities, allows the facilitator to acknowledge the individual's social, cultural or ethnic identity and establish ways to incorporate these elements into the learning experience. The ultimate goal is to create space in which the learner feels motivated, academically challenged and accepted; thus, allowing for the classroom to operate as a learning laboratory. In this space the facilitator and learners will engage in intellectual, linguistic and cultural exchanges and move from a state of motivation to investment within their personal learning process (Norton, 1995). These stages of transformation within the classroom are accompanied by overlapping, intersecting and clashing aspects of power, identity and language learning.

Paper Airplanes strives to combine the teaching techniques of the traditional classroom with the learning strategies and tools of the online atmosphere. Through the use of innovative techniques the entire organization operates through a virtual platform. Interviews are conducted via an online video platform and a similar method is used to conduct tutorials. The concept of online education has been widely debated over the last several years and educators have conflicting views in reference to the effectiveness of this educational mode. Many educators are skeptical about the pedagogical strategies, learner engagement and cognitive implications that occur within a virtual learning environment. Researchers have written about the various advantages of online learning environments such as the

allowance for flexibility of timing and location as well as the ability to engage in more ongoing

interactions with facilitators (Wang, 2013). One of the main points of discussion among educators is the

notion of creating a learning space which enables students to think creatively, critically and

constructively and in turn understand a concept, apply learning techniques, analyze the information and

synthesize it in other aspects of their academic life. This idea is coupled with the looming concept of

cognitive overload and the countless negative aspects associated with it; such as, inefficient processing

time, excessive auditory and visual sensory input, and unbalanced neural stimulation. Researchers are

still developing ways to combat these downfalls within an otherwise innovative and advantageous field.

Due to the mobility of an online learning atmosphere, this mode of education is useful for educational

institutions, private corporations and organizations working with individuals in conflict zones.

It provides expanded accessibility in a cost effective and borderless manner. At the surface, it is

viewed as a revolutionary approach to a rather stagnant traditional mode of education and requires

learners, instructors and administrators to reevaluate their views. The concept of instructional

approaches, learning environments and meta-cognition must be expanded in order to fully embrace a

virtual learning classroom. Although researchers are still in the midst of evaluating the long-term

implications of an e-learning environment, it is evident that this mode of education is closely aligned

with global trends, educational innovations and the transformation of education.

E-learning in Areas Impacted by Conflict

Online education is a global phenomenon which is quickly fusing with or replacing more

traditional classroom settings. Higher learning institutions have embraced online learning as the wave of

the future. However, it has different implications based on various socio-economic factors. In more

stable economic regions online learning can be used to its maximum potential. Thus, many universities

have undergraduate and graduate level courses and programs completely constructed for an online

learning platform. Khairan D. Rajab, Vice Dean of e-learning and distance education and Head of the

Network and Communication Engineering Department at Najran University, conducted a study in which

he collected data based on the rate of enrollment, completion, faculty challenges and effectiveness of

the e-course and face to face courses. This study was conducted at Najran University in Saudi Arabia

after the university suspended face to face courses due to an ongoing conflict between Saudi Arabia, the

Arab Coalition and Yemeni rebel groups. According to Rajab, this instance was unique since it was "the

first time in the history of the Saudi higher educational system, where a department transferred all its

courses from traditional settings to an e-learning environment" (Rajab, 6787). The study includes thirty-

six courses and more than one thousand enrolled students. The author sought to display the

effectiveness of an online program completed within a university setting compared to a face to face

program. Through the comparison of a multitude of empirical and quantitative data, Rajab concluded

that there was no statistical difference between the two modes of education. He further stated that, -

"evidence indicates that well-designed e-learning initiatives allow universities to provide equitable, high

quality and efficient higher education to inaccessible populations" (Rajab, 6784). This type of learning

atmosphere is ideal for the current state of unsteady global circumstances due to natural disasters or

civil conflicts. In his research, he pointed to several factors which indicated the role of e- learning as a

means of mitigating the interruption of education for individuals impacted by emergencies. There are

many advantages within the e-learning field for both learners and facilitators such as:

Materials

1. access to content from anywhere

2. access to content at any time

3. more options and flexibility

4. disseminate information to a larger audience

5. allows for a balance between deeper learning and quick thinking

Students

1.improve virtual collaboration

2.increase individual/independent learning habits/ work ethics

3.improve critical thinking skills

4. improve problem solving skills

Faculty

1.encourages teachers to utilize various modes of motivation

2.identify students' weaknesses

3.improve technological skills (Rajab, 2018)

This mode of education is ideal for the various times that regions are faced with sudden or prolonged periods of unrest. In the case of Paper Airplanes, a significant portion of the population is of Syrian origin, displaced within the country or residing as refugees in neighboring countries. Although the civil war stems from years of geopolitical rivalries, the past several years have led to sheer destruction of the infrastructure within the country. This has had a devastating impact on the population and has resulted in six million internally displaced Syrians and six million Syrians that are seeking refuge (Laub, 2018). This destruction of infrastructure has led to a growing portion of the population with stints of interrupted education and the role of alternative forms of education has become increasingly necessary in these areas. Paper Airplanes has more than 250 students per semester and five programs which cater to different academic interests. In past years, the students that shared their location were primarily located in Syria; however, during the summer of 2018 there was a sharp change in student location (Paper Airplanes, 2019).

The role of alternative forms of education is important for individuals and for society as a whole. Many emergencies and conflicts are lasting for multiple years and; in turn, are setting the foundation for generations of people without viable basic health, nutritional and educational services. The education statistics for refugees and displaced people are quite alarming and continue to rise as regional conflicts,

natural disasters and emergencies flourish. According to experts in the field, refugees impacted by regional conflicts are dispersed among seven countries.

> Refugees are five times more likely to be out of school than the normal average. Sixty-one percent of refugee children go to primary school, compared to 91 percent at the global level. This means that 1.5million children—refugee children—are not in primary school. Twenty-three percent of refugee adolescents attend secondary school, compared to the global average of 84 percent, and 1 percent of refugees go to university, compared to the global average of 36 percent, and more than 50 percent out of those—of school refuge children are in seven countries (Stone, 2018).

These statistics not only have an immediate impact on children but also represent a long-term problem. Leaving a portion of the population without basic opportunities for growth sets the foundation for unenlightened exterior influences.

Women and The Virtual Learning Environment

Throughout history, there have been instances in which people have been forced to flee their homes due to unstable political or economic situations or due to regional conflicts. However, it is often noted that women and children bear a disproportionate load during these unstable times. According to a recent report by the Georgetown Institute for Women Peace and Security, 23 million people are internally displaced as a result of the aforementioned factors (Klugeman, 2018). These individuals are located in "fifteen fragile and conflict affected countries with protracted conflict, and total about 6 percent of the total population" (Klugeman, 2018, p.11). Fragile and conflict- affected countries are spread throughout the world but are primarily located in Sub-Saharan Africa. The socio-economic, linguistic and religious stance in these countries varies however these countries share in their lack of economic security and political stability. (Klugeman,2018). In all of these countries, women suffer from the long-term impact of political and economic instability which has lasting effects on the basic infrastructure. Thus, women are more likely to be affected by

prolonged gaps in education, unemployment and financial instability. In post-conflict countries, close to

four in five women who are employed work for themselves or for their family, mostly in informal work,

which is low paid or unpaid, typically low-skilled, and offers little, or no legal or social protection

compared to formal work (Klugeman, 2018).

It has been noted that women represent a smaller portion of the Paper Airplanes student body as

well as a smaller portion of the student body in other studies on global e-learning. This is due to various

reasons that range from varying financial obligations, personal beliefs as well as other factors. This trend is

significant when noting the percentage of women present in the formal and informal working sector in

conflict affected countries. According to Georgetown Institute for Women Peace and Security, "there are

about 30 million fewer working age women than men in paid employment in fragile and conflict-affected

countries" (Klugeman, 2018, p.6). One of the key reasons women need to receive an education is to enhance

their ability to operate as independent and financially secure individuals. In light of the fact that these

women are living in conflict-affected areas, there are still underlying factors impeding their ability to function

as financially secure beings, Klugman and Quek (2018) mention four barriers that deter women's economic

opportunities:

1. Adverse Social Norms

2. Restrictive Discriminatory Laws

3. Access to property, financial and digital assets

4. Unpaid care and household burdens

Thus, some would argue that E-learning is the solution for a multitude of education gaps in

conflict prone regions. It provides an alternative to traditional education and doesn't require physical

space or local instructors. However, the use of technology also highlights many challenges in low income

countries. Gender parity and internet access are not highly correlated and many would state that the

movement towards a technologically based education platform is leaving women behind. Stone (2018)

highlights that the gender gap in technology is based on three barriers: family, monetary responsibilities and negative connotations (para., 7). In many instances, women are forbidden or frowned upon when utilizing the internet for extended periods of time. It is assumed that they are being exposed to dangerous individuals or unacceptable information. Stone (2018) states, "In low and middle income countries women's use of the internet is 25% lower than men" (para., 6). Thus, despite the availability of a borderless mode of quality education, women are still being marginalized. This gap is also evident in the student English Program population at Paper Airplanes, women represented about 30% of the student body during 2017 and 2018. In turn, online learning still poses internal barriers and biases which impact the level of accessibility for certain individuals.

Administrator and Tutor Interviews:

In order to have a greater understanding of the needs of and expectations of the students, tutors and administrators, I conducted thirty to forty-five minute online interviews. The feedback received from the participants has the potential to lead to further improvements and changes to future curriculum. During the interviews the audio was recorded and the video capabilities were disabled. The interviews were based on research questions from my proposal and narrative questions from my survey. One hundred and thirty Upper Intermediate and Advanced level students completed a multi-question anonymous survey indicating their thoughts about the curriculum, their level of improvement and their level of comfort speaking English in an academic setting. Students were asked to complete anonymous surveys via an online form and tutors and administrators with at least one year of service were asked to participate in short interviews. A letter was sent to students and tutors requesting volunteers to participate in the anonymous questionnaire or interview, respectively. Participants were provided with details about the research and completed consent forms. Upon the completion of the case study, participants will receive a finalized version of the paper along with a thank you note for their assistance. This section will highlight first hand experiences of administrators and tutors that work with students,

create curriculum and manage a virtual team of people located all over the world. The questions which

guided the interviews are listed below:

1. How do the curriculum developers at PA determine what will be suitable content for students living in conflict zones?
a) How do they assess the suitability from learner perspectives?
b) How do they assess the suitability from tutor perspectives?
c) How do tutors determine what to teach on based on what they feel is suitable for their tutees?

2. How is language acquisition measured over a prolonged period of time?
a) What types of summative assessments are provided?
b) What types of formative assessments are provided?
c) How are learners completing self-assessments?

3. How is reflective thinking incorporated into the curriculum?
a) How do the learners view this learning mechanism?

4. How is the usefulness of technology in a one on one instructional setting measured?
a) What are the benefits of providing virtual instruction to marginalized communities?

After interviewing eight tutors and administrators, I found a general consensus among various

ideas concerning Paper Airplanes English program. The interviewees mentioned a sense of cohesiveness

and contentment with the structure of the curriculum. They noted that the curriculum and lesson plans

have improved tremendously over the course of the program. In turn, the initial week of the lessons has

helped tutors develop a strong rapport with their students. One tutor shared her experience with her

student, "I believe we were able to develop a strong rapport and I would consider my student a friend

now. I think the curriculum has a lot of really interesting topics which open up the possibly to get to

know each other" (Pedereson,2018). The importance of creating a rapport with students has higher

significance in an online setting because tutors are expected to observe their students learning style

without the benefits of face to face contact. Tutors rely heavily on needs assessments, limited

observations and student feedback. Thus, the curriculum needs to be constructed in a manner that

allows for reflection, critical discourse and application of various concepts while simultaneously

preparing students for successful completion of formative assessments. Tutors also shared their views

on the content of the curriculum. When discussing the idea of modifying the lessons to reflect events

which are more closely tied to the majority of the student body, tutors stated that it should be included

in a very strategic and sensitive manner. Veteran tutor, Bianca Navia shared her ideas about this topic,

she thinks that these topics could possibly be included in the curriculum if it was constructed in a

strategic manner which takes note of the level of sensitivity of the matter (Navia,2018). This seemed to

be the general view of the curriculum content among the interviewees. Some tutors mentioned the

possibility of adding more role play and authentic speaking opportunities into the lessons in order to

help with student fluency (Henderson, 2018). The idea of a virtual classroom didn't seem to pose a

significant hindrance in the teaching process. Tutors stated that the lack of reliable and consistent

internet service was the main problem. Tutors also stated that this type of learning mode allowed for

greater accessibility, a diverse staff and a cost-effective approach (Sherer,2018). In general, tutors found

that the curriculum was well-organized in a sequential manner and allowed individuals from a diverse

geographic location to participate in a virtual learning setting. According to the anonymous surveys the

majority of the students used the curriculum weekly during their tutorials and felt that the curriculum

helped them learn English. In addition, more than half of the students felt comfortable using their

English skills in a university setting after completing courses with Paper Airplanes and were confident

with their current English skills.

Based on conversations with administrators and tutors as well as survey results from students,

individuals seem to be generally pleased with the program and the curriculum that is currently available.

After recent changes were made to reflect the weekly format of the tutorials, tutors have access to

more specific information. The Managing Director stated that when she first joined the program as a

tutor, the curriculum was roughly based on suggestions instead of sequential lessons, activities and

assessments (Wimer, 2018). She noted the positive feedback that she has received from tutors as a

result of this change. Tutors also provided areas in which the curriculum could be improved or

enhanced:

1. Ensuring that all documents are accessible
2. Ensuring that all hyperlinks are functioning
3. Ensuring that up to date contact information is available for students
4. Ensuring miscommunications are addressed in a quicker manner
5. Acknowledging the amount of technical difficulties
6. Establishing a stronger sense of community among tutors
7. Expanding the emphasis on intercultural communication

Administrators stated that they intended to use the feedback to improve the curriculum for the

upcoming semesters and that they have already started planning for webinars.

Administrators shared that students were likely to take the IELTS exam after completing the

program thus the curriculum is largely based off on the European Common Framework. The English

Program Manager shared some anecdotal information in reference to students target scores and their

ability to meet these scores. She stated, two women didn't reach their target score based on other

responsibilities interfering with their ability to fully engage in the program. These responsibilities

included family obligations and focusing on completing their masters degree (Lucas, 2019). These

results highlight the intersection of gender and other factors which impact the students' level of

engagement as well as their likelihood to successfully complete the program. She also emphasized the

importance of cost and access to materials in the students' decision to participate in the program. She

explained that some students chose not to complete the exam due to inadequate access to prep

materials and that this program was their sole source of guided preparation. In addition, she stated that

students mentioned that the Paper Airplanes IELTS program is one of the few affordable programs

available. Thus, this program holds both monetary and informational value for many students within

Syria and residing outside of the country.

Paper Airplanes Data Analysis

In order to have a greater understanding of the student and volunteer demographic, Paper Airplanes collects data about the students and tutors gender, location and classroom expectations. One of the many goals of Paper Airplanes is to reach gender parity both among the students and tutors. The information listed below reflects the most up to date data about students and staff participating in the English Program. The English Program at Paper Airplanes consists of weekly lessons, formative and cumulative assessments and a student portfolio. The students are divided into four levels- beginner, lower intermediate, upper intermediate and advanced- based on the results of their pre assessment exams. Students at each level are able to participate in spring, summer and fall semesters and tutors are encouraged to work with the same student throughout their service.
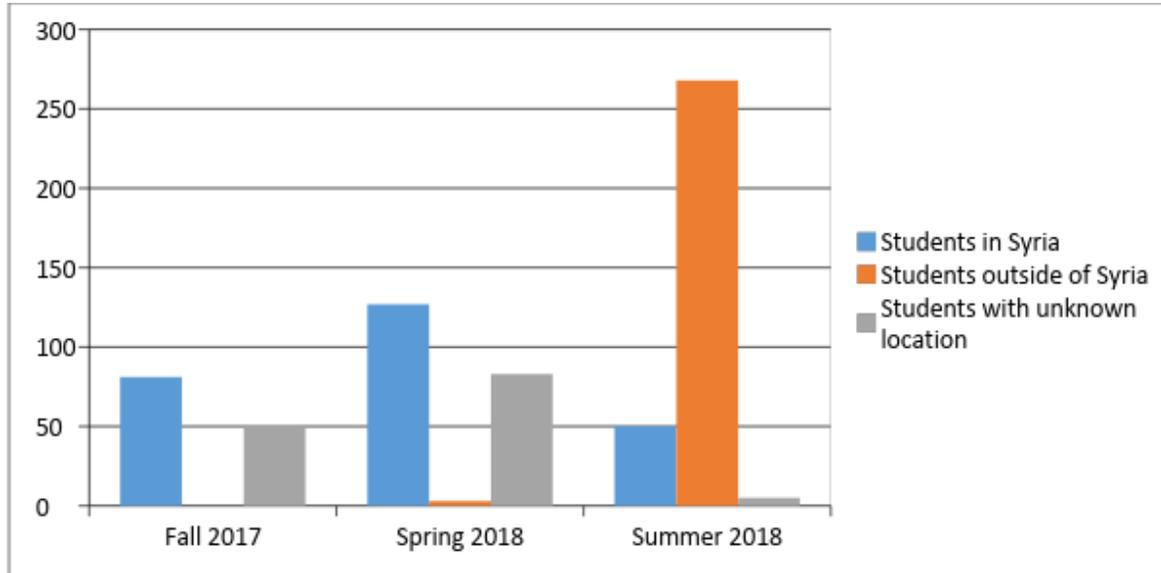
Figure 2.0

Figure 2.0 displays an overview of student locations during the Fall 2017, Spring 2018 and Summer 2018 semesters. During the Fall of 2017 eighty-one students reported Syria as their current location. During the Fall of 2017 one hundred twenty-seven individuals reported that they were located outside of Syria and fifty students did not report their locations. The number of students located in Syria dropped drastically to zero in the Spring of 2018. In addition, three students reported that their location was outside of Syria while two hundred and sixty-eight students had an unknown location. In the summer of 2018, forty-nine students reported that Syria was their location of residence while eighty-three students reported that they were located outside of Syria. During this semester five students chose not to report their location (Wimer, 2018). This information was provided by Gabby Wimer, Managing Director of Paper Airplanes.
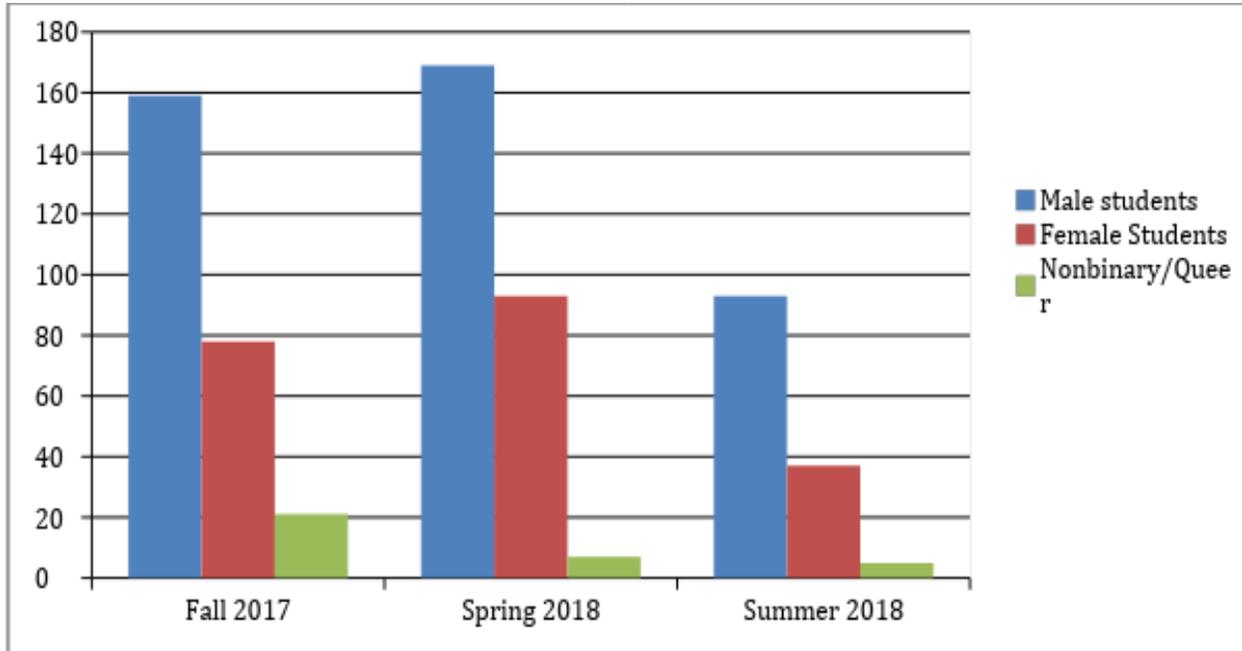
Figure 2.1

Figure 2.1 displays an overview of student gender during the Fall 2017, Spring 2018 and Summer 2018 semesters. During the Fall of 2017 one hundred fifty-nine students reported as male, seventy-eight reported as female and twenty one reported as non-binary or queer. The number of students that reported as male (one hundred sixty-nine) stayed somewhat consistent during the Spring of 2018 while the number of individuals reporting as non-binary or queer dropped to seven. In the Spring of 2018 ninety-three students reported as female. In the summer of 2018 ninety-three students reported as male, thirty seven designated female as their gender and five reported as non-binary or queer (Wimer, 2018). This information was provided by Gabby Wimer, Managing Director of Paper Airplanes.
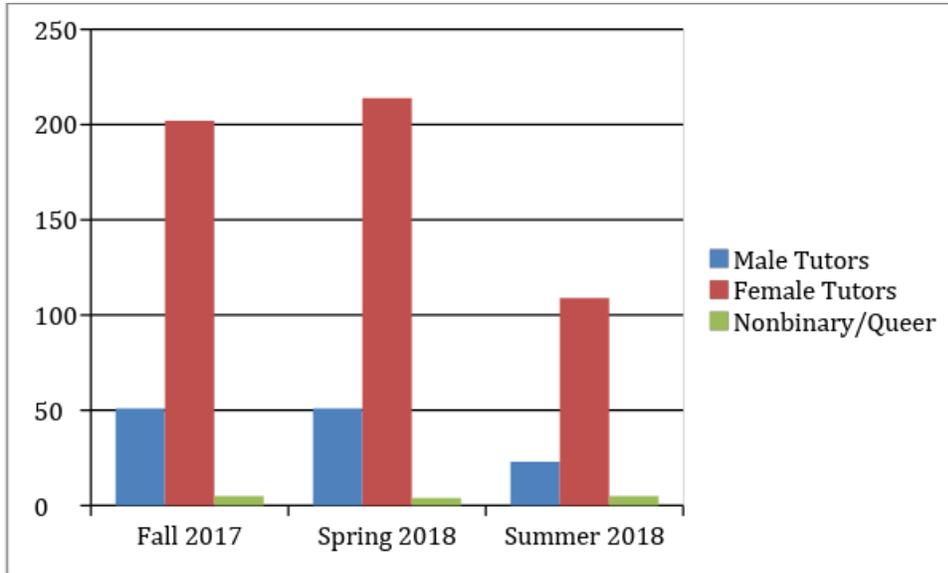
Figure 2.2

Figure 2.2 displays an overview of tutor gender during the Fall 2017, Spring 2018 and Summer 2018 semesters. During the Fall of 2017 fifty-one tutors reported as male, two hundred and two reported as female and twenty-five reported as non-binary or queer. The number of tutors that reported as male (fifty one) stayed consistent during the Spring of 2018; in addition, the number of individuals reporting as female (two hundred and fourteen) remained within the same range. During this semester four tutors reported as non-binary or queer. In the summer of 2018 twenty-three tutors reported as male, one hundred nine designated female as their gender and five reported as non-binary or queer (Wimer, 2018). This information was provided by Gabby Wimer, Managing Director of Paper Airplanes.

IELTS Program

The International English Language Testing System prep program is a part of the English Program at

Paper Airplanes. It consists of various lessons and resources for listening, writing, speaking and reading.

The classroom is led by instructors in order for students to review materials in preparation for the IELTS

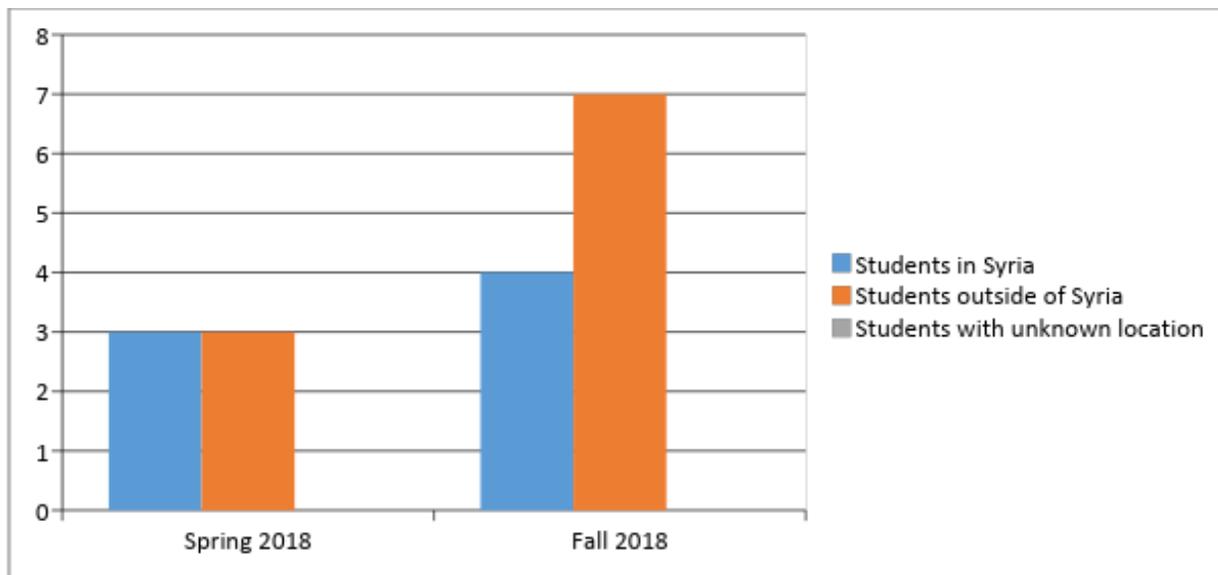exam and reflect on methods to reach their target scores.

Figure 3.0

Figure 3.0 displays an overview of student locations during the Spring 2018 and Fall 2018 semesters. During the Spring of 2018 three students reported Syria as their current location, three students reported that they were located outside of Syria and zero students did not report their locations. The number of students located in Syria (four) remained consistent in the Fall of 2018. In addition, seven students reported that their location was outside of Syria while zero students had an unknown location (Lucas, 2019). This information was provided by the Kaitlin Lucas, English Program Manager of the English program.
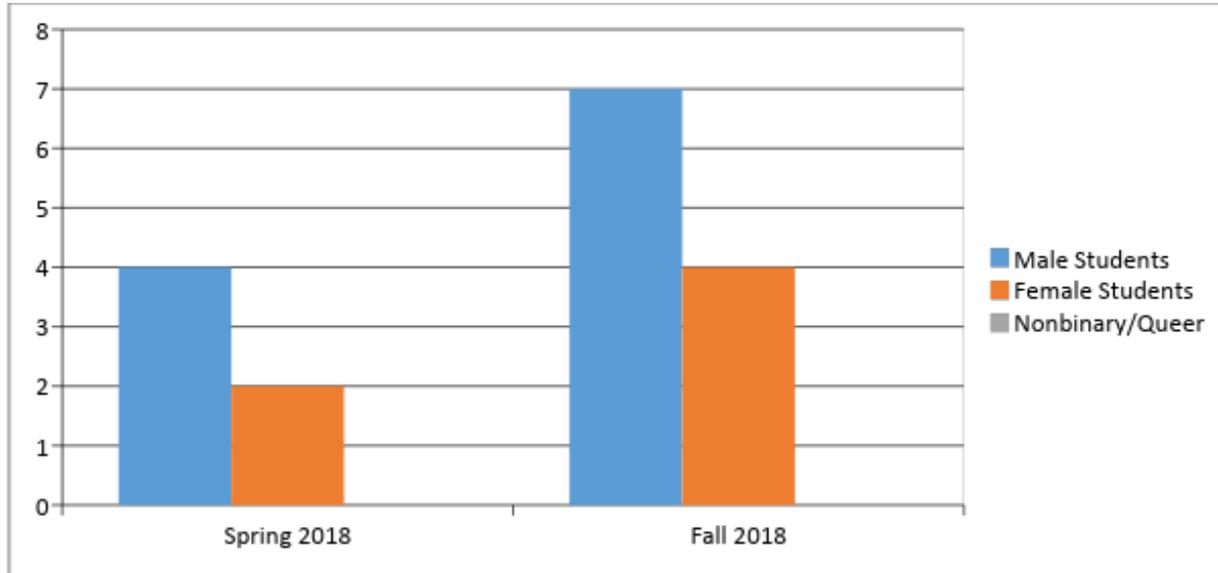
Figure 3.1

Figure 3.1 displays an overview of student gender during the Spring 2018 and Fall 2018 semesters. During the Spring of 2018 four students reported as male, two reported as female and zero reported as non-binary or queer. The number of students that reported as male (seven) increased somewhat during the Fall of 2018; in addition, the number of individuals reporting as non-binary or queer remained at zero. In the fall of 2018 four students designated female as their gender (Lucas, 2019). This information was provided by the Kaitlin Lucas, English Program Manager of the English program.
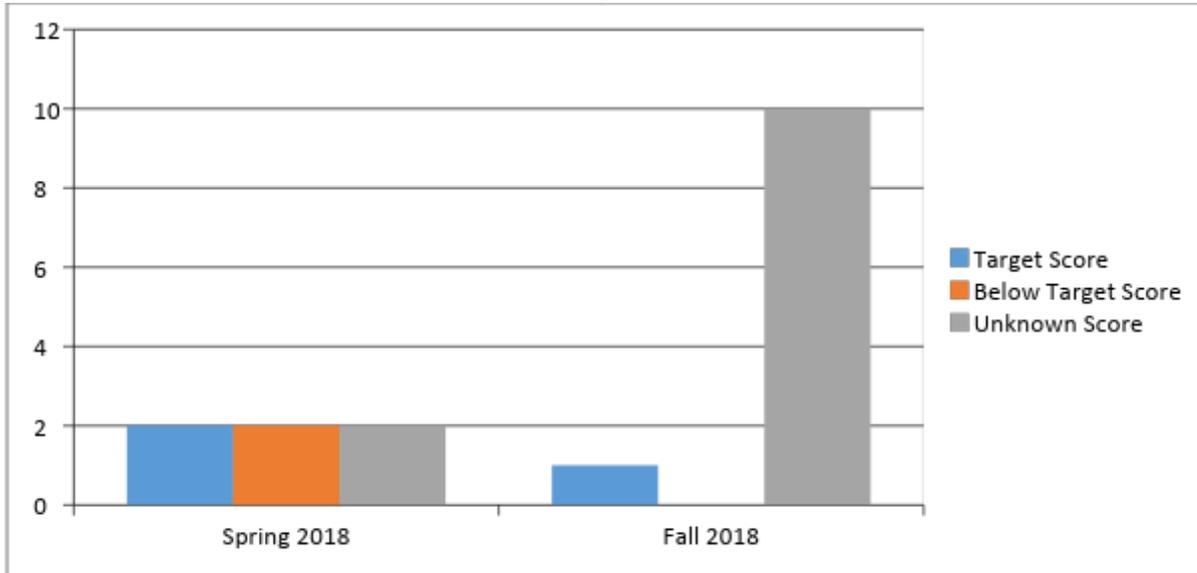
Figure 3.2

Figure 3.2 displays an overview of test results for the IELTS exam during the Spring 2018 and Fall 2018 semesters. During the Spring 2018 two students reported reaching their target score, two reported that they were unable to reach their target score and two reported that the exam had not been completed yet. The number of students that reported reaching their target score (one) stayed consistent during the Fall of 2018 while, the number of students that reported they were unable to reach their target score (zero) decreased. During this semester ten students reported that they had not completed the exam yet. (Lucas, 2019). This information was provided by Kaitlin Lucas, English Program Manager at Paper Airplanes.
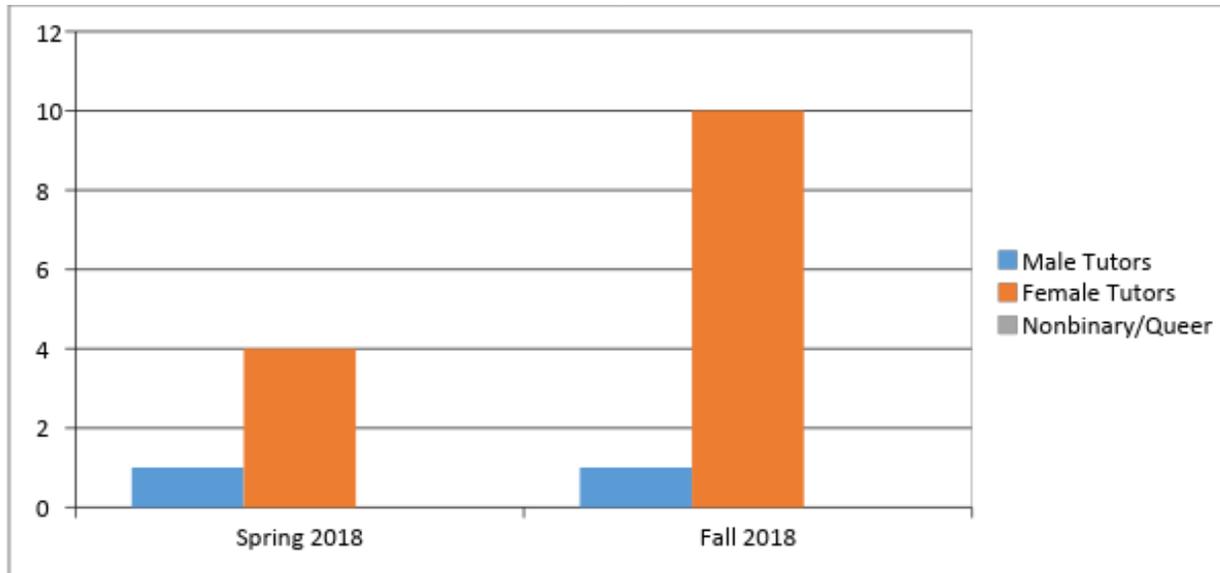
Figure 3.3

Figure 3.3 displays an overview of tutor gender during the Spring 2018 and Fall 2018 semesters. During the Spring 2018 one tutor reported as male, four reported as female and zero reported as non-binary or queer. The number of tutors that reported as male (one) stayed consistent during the Fall of 2018 while, the number of individuals reporting as female (ten) increased. During this semester zero tutors reported as non-binary or queer (Lucas, 2019). This information was provided by Kaitlin Lucas, English Program Manager at Paper Airplanes.

Although there is a noticeable gender gap within both sections of the English Program, there are various historical and socio-cultural factors which must be considered. Prior to the Syrian conflict, female employment rates ranged between 10-15 percent and only thirty two percent of girls completed lower secondary school (Klugeman, 2018). Therefore, the conflict within the country only exacerbated existing conditions and widened the gender gap. In addition to socio-cultural factors inhibiting women's participation, there are also legal barriers that contribute to the low percentages of women in the work environment. These factors are evident in the despairingly low numbers of women in the formal work force (Klugman, 2018). Thus, the term "necessity entrepreneurs" has been coined by GIWPS Managing Director, Dr. Jeni Klugman and Hillary Rodham Clinton–McLarty Research Fellow, Yvonne Queck. These individuals choose this line of work due to lack of options and their work typically involves agricultural or domestic activities (Klugman, 2018).

Conclusion

E-learning can serve as a tool to narrow the gender gap and provide quality and accessible

education to both women and men. This alternative form of education is not only convenient and cost-

effective but it is also a strategic and necessary means of combating the negative impacts of war.

Although scholars and researchers are still debating about the neurological and behavioral implications

of a virtual classroom, the immediate necessity of this alternative form of education in conflict-affected

countries is irrefutable. As civil and regional conflicts increase and fewer areas are habitable due to

climate concerns, more and more people are being displaced from their homes. One of the long-term

impacts of war is the dismantling of basic infrastructure and the functionality of the education system.

In turn, there is a rising portion of the population that is temporarily or internally displaced as well as

permanently relocated. Within this population, women represent a large portion; however, their

representation dwindles within the formal employment sector or among individuals that have

completed secondary school (Klugman,2018). Here lies the area of possibility and positive progress

within the scope of women and children. As we move towards the next wave of education advances, we

stand in the intersection of boundless opportunities for a portion of the population that is often

overlooked. The living conditions in conflict affected countries are unbearable; however, there is still a

possibility for a positive shift in the education sector despite the severities of the catastrophes. It is

imperative that organizations create curriculum that is not only accessible and affordable but also

focused on maintaining a safe, virtual space for women to learn and thrive.

A curriculum specifically for female learners should include:

Female tutors & administrators
- tutors & administrators that are trained in intercultural communication
- tutors & administrators that have an awareness of geopolitical events impacting students

- tutors & administrators with an awareness of the cultural and social norms
- tutors & administrators with an awareness of social linguistic identity
- administrators trained in second language or foreign language acquisition
- administrators with linguistic competence in the students first language
- courses framed around cultural and social norms
- courses based on a flipped classroom

Reaching gender parity within the online educational sphere is a plausible goal which should be approached with a keen awareness to the cultural and societal norms of the student body. Not only is it important to provide access to education but it is also important to provide education that suits the needs of the target student body. This approach means educators and administrators must view students as whole individuals and consider the norms, values, beliefs and identities that accompany each individual and in turn influence the dynamics within the classroom. As aforementioned this student body is primarily composed of individuals from countries affected by conflict, according to the UN High Commissioner for refugees, we are now witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record these numbers include 68.5 million forcibly displaced individuals and 40 million internally displaced individuals (UNHCR, 2019). Within this group there may be future female innovators and thought leaders; however, without access to sustained periods of quality education reaching their full potential may be deterred (Oshiberu, 2016). As we move towards a more digitally connected society, the notion of online learning has become the topic of many discussions. Educators, researchers and scholars seek to understand the benefits and downfalls of online education as well as the neurological and behavioral implications of a virtual classroom. Although the research is still ongoing, this paper seeks to highlight the immediate benefits of the virtual classroom as an alternative means of education, in particular for individuals in conflict or post conflict affected regions.

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Appendix A

The Umbrellas of Social Justice

Unit 1 Education

UNIT BACKGROUND

As a volunteer for Paper Airplanes, I have worked on various teams within the organization. Over the years I have served as a tutor coordinator, curriculum developer and webinar speaker. One of the most rewarding task is working on curriculum and watching it all come together in the end, like a well written story. My vision for this course was a mixture of academic and useful topics with a slight touch of creative and innovative flair. With the hope that the students would learn practical information, expand upon and think of innovative ways to apply it to the various complex scenarios in their countries of origin. This course is organized in a manner that aligns with the flipped classroom and allows for the classroom to serve as a learning laboratory. The design of the course is meant to give students time to digest, dissect and discover the information while simultaneously retaining a deeper grasp of the English language. It is created in a manner in which facilitators have the opportunity to mold and incorporate particular sections so it further pertains to their students' needs, background or interest without excluding any particular group. This course included three units which were all focused on highlighting dilemmas and creative solutions within common elements of society. Creating the lessons and overview of the unit enabled me to take a closer look at the details of the course. I tried to think of the class from a teacher, a student and an observer's perspective. As a result my first draft of my lesson was much

more bare bone than my revised version. In order to create the lessons and the activities, I worked

backwards from week five to week two. Then, I reviewed all of the information and checked for

sequential clarity. I attempted to assign the most time consuming portion of the lessons as pre-class

materials. The goal is to allow the students ample time to review, digest and process the information in

order to increase their ability to speak in class. Hopefully since the students will be more familiar with

the information they will feel an increased sense of confidence. Overall most of the lessons follow a very

similar pattern which will help the students know what to expect during the class. One of my key

priorities was incorporating a sense of teacher authenticity or ownership within the lessons. I attempted

to create a very unrestricted Warm Up and Final Activity for each lesson so teachers could facilitate it in

the manner that fits best for them.

COURSE FOUNDATION

CONTEXT

In this course students will explore different aspects of social justice which include education, health and employment. This exploration will take place through a combination of reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. Students will encounter education, health and employment dilemmas and creative solutions. In addition, students will engage in reflective writing and speaking. It is intended for Upper Intermediate adult ESL learners attending a program called Paper Airplanes. The students are from conflict or post conflict countries in the Middle East and are mainly located in the Middle East or parts of Europe.

People
Students are from conflict and post conflict areas primarily Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. The students are either displaced or refugees and their ages range between 18 and 35. Students are primarily located in Turkey or Syria; however, there are some students scattered throughout Europe and the Middle East. Some of the students have a bachelors or masters degree and they are interested in taking the IELTS or TOEFL exam.

Setting
This is an online learning community utilizing a flipped classroom. Students will participate in Paper Airplanes and join the English Program as an upper intermediate learner. This course will utilize a flipped classroom through Google Classroom. Students are expected to review material before class and engage in discussions based on the materials in the virtual classroom.

Nature of the course and organization
Initially, students take an entrance exam in order to determine their language level. The students are able move to the next level once they complete all the lessons and successfully pass the midterm and final. In addition, students will complete formative assessments throughout the course. The student portfolios consist of essays, language goals and speaking samples which highlight the students' language progression. Throughout the course the students and instructors work together to gather their submissions in order to create student portfolios. If students continue until they have passed the advanced level then their portfolios are used as one of the tools to determine their eligibility for a scholarship.

Resources
The teachers have access to all of the lessons as well as the answer keys for each exam prior to the start of the semester. The course will be designed to allow students and teachers to reflect and engage in conversations about the subject matter. Therefore this will be a flipped classroom in which the material is provided in advance (via Google Classroom) and students are expected to review the information prior to meeting with the teacher.

Time
This is a 16- week course in which students meet for at least once a week for an hour and are expected to review class work for at least 2 hours per week.

Appendix B

The Umbrellas of Social Justice

Upper Intermediate English Course

Paper Airplanes

This course takes an in depth look at various aspects of education and ways in which alternative techniques impact the access and quality of education globally. In this course students will explore different aspects of social justice. This exploration will take place through a combination of reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. In addition, students will participate in a range of reflective activities. Students will confrontsocietal dilemmas with creative solutions that provide equal access and inclusion.

Online Learning Community-Flipped Classroom

Students will participate in Paper Airplanes online learning community and join the English Program as an upper intermediate learner. This course will utilize a flipped classroom through Google Classroom. Students are expected to review material before class and engage in discussions based on the materials in the virtual classroom.

Flipped Classroom Learning Approach

Students are expected to spend between 45 -60 minutes completing or reviewing class materials before the start of each class.

- Take notes on the material

- Prepare a list of questions to ask during class

- Take note of unfamiliar words

- Share details about the material in class

- Share opinions and thoughts about the material in class

Classroom Expectations

- Reflect on material

- Participate in discussions

- Engage in critical thinking

- Review listening & writing material

- Research, plan & share presentation

- Provide peer feedback

Course Overview

- Students will meet in the virtual classroom for an hour and a half once a week

- Students have the option to join a weekly discussion class

- Students have the option to join a study skills class (1rst, 4th, 8th, 12th week)

- Request more information about the optional classes from your teacher

** Prior to class
***Homework

Week 1 - Welcome Week	Week 2- Education- Technology
What does it mean to create a responsive and inclusive classroom culture?	How can educational technology impact access and inclusion in education?

Grammar - review grammar from the previous semester** **Writing** - share their expectations/needs and interests for the class - complete diagnostic written test* **Listening** - listen to the expectations and requirements for a flipped classroom - review the assessments, presentations, homework and material for class - complete diagnostic listening test* **Speaking** - share thoughts interest/needs and expectations - complete diagnostic speaking test*	**Listening** - listen to a speech about education and technology ** **Writing** - free write for 5 minutes about personal, professional and educational goals **Speaking** - share thoughts about the speech **Grammar** - focus on syntax sentence structure with coordinating conjunctions

Week 3 - Education- Deep Learning	Week 4 - Education- Innovation
What makes education deep learning vs. machine learning and why does that matter?	How can innovations in education be used to impact social justice goals?
Reading ● read article about education, deep learning and machine learning** **Writing** ● write notes for each section highlighting key points** **Listening** ● watch video about education, deep learning and machine learning **Speaking**	**Reading** ● read an article about innovations in education** **Speaking** ● practice giving short persuasive speech using stress and intonation to emphasize certain points **Grammar** ● useful words or phrases in persuasive speaking/writing

● provide a short summary of the article ● share how this impacts access to education **Grammar** ● explanation of reciprocal & reflexive verbs	● **Writing** ● descriptive paragraph summarizing thoughts on education (technology, deep learning, innovation)***
Week 5 - Presentation & Student Portfolios	Week 6 - Health- Work Life Balance

Speaking
 	
● share presentations based on the positive or negative impacts of technology on education
●
   student led discussion
 	
Listening
● listen to peers share presentations
 	
Writing
 	
● review/edit essays and assessments
 	
   for the student portfolio
	Reading
	
	● read a couple paragraphs or the entire article**
	Writing
	● free write for 5 minutes about work
	
	   life balance
	Speaking
	● discuss thoughts and opinions about work life balance
	Grammar
	
	● review subject verb agreement
	
	   irregularities

Week 7 - Midterm Review	Week 8 - Midterm
Review class work from weeks 2-6	Complete midterm
Week 9 - Health- Lifestyle Choices	**Week 10 - Health- Awareness**
Writing ● write about relaxing/stress relieving activities** **Listening** ● listen to the short filmhappiness and health **Grammar** ● present progressive	**Reading** ● read an article about health education ** **Writing** ● answer several comprehension questions about the article ● free write for 5 minutes **Speaking** ● review short persuasive speech using stress and intonation to emphasize certain points

	● discuss ideas about a health issue that has personal importance
Speaking ● share thoughts about the film ● answer discussion questions	**Grammar** ● review how to form sentences with Hope, Want & Plan
Week 11 - Presentation & Student Portfolios	**Week 12 - Employment- Innovation** How can creative solutions to unemployment be implemented in order to benefit individuals impacted by conflicts?
Speaking ● share presentations on one of the health topics ● student led discussion **Listening** ● listen to peers share presentations **Writing**	**Writing** ● identify the main idea of the clip ● summarize the key points in 3-4 sentences** **Listening** ● watch a clip about refugee startups ● complete discussion questions **Speaking** ● share opinions about startups

● review/edit essays and assessments for the student portfolio	● complete discussion questions

Week 13 - Employment- Economic Independence
 	
Why is financial security a key component in the livelihoods of marginalized communities?
 	
Reading
 	
    ● review an article about a business academy for women & the youth**
Speaking
 	
    ● share opinions about the importance of economic independence & job security for young adults
 	
Grammar
 	
    ● conditional forms zero-three
Writing
 	
    ● write a paragraph explaining views on economic independence***
	Week 14 - Employment- Social Entrepreneurship
	
	How can social entrepreneurship help ameliorate social, economic and educational dilemmas?
	
	Speaking
	    ● share thoughts about starting a
	
	      business
	Listening
	
	    ● listen to a clip about the growth of
	
	      social entrepreneurship in India
	    ●
	Grammar
	    ● review parallel structure, singular plural nouns and the use of articles
	
	Writing
	
	    ● construct 2-3 paragraphs describing
	
	      personal startup ideas ***

Week 15 - Final Review Review class work from weeks 9-14	**Week 16 - Final** Complete final exam

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Appendix C

SYLLABUS

Context

In this lesson students will explore different aspects of social justice. This exploration will take place through a combination of reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. Students will focus on education dilemmas and creative solutions. In addition, students will engage in reflective writing and speaking.

Students will participate in Paper Airplanes online learning community and join the English Program as an upper intermediate learner. This course will utilize a flipped classroom through Google Classroom. Students are expected to review material before class and engage in discussions based on the materials in the virtual classroom.

Assumptions

The students are upper intermediate level learners and recognize the simple, progressive and perfect grammatical structures. The students are able to actively listen at a low intermediate level and are able to utilize listening, speaking, reading and writing skills for a simple interactive activity.

Timing/Sequencing

The lesson will take about 90 minutes.

Unit 1 Education

This unit will uncover various aspects of education including the use of technology, deep learning techniques and innovation. Students will utilize reading, audio, and visual materials to explore the topics.

Unit 2 Health

This unit will cover various aspects of health including work life balance, lifestyle choices and

health awareness. Students will utilize reading, audio, and visual materials to explore the topics.

Unit 3 Employment

This unit will cover various aspects of employment including the role of innovation, economic independence and social entrepreneurship. Students will utilize reading, audio, and visual materials to explore the topics.

Presentations

Students are expected to create a 2-4 minute expository presentation based on one topic from weeks 6- 10: Work, life & balance, Healthy lifestyles, Stress Relief or Sexual Health for young women. Students will present their projects to their peers after conducting research. The projects will include a visual component, a written summary and an oral presentation. The written summary will consist of a 500-1000 word expository essay. In addition, students will lead a 2-4 minute discussion at the close of their presentation.

Student Portfolios

Students will complete writing and speaking submissions throughout the course which will be included in their portfolios. This portfolio will be used as a summative form of assessment to display the students writing and speaking progression over a prolonged period of time.

The Umbrellas of Social Justice
Unit 1 Education

UNIT 1 OBJECTIVES

Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum.

Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to discuss, write and reflect about these issues.

Students will work to learn different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to a range of speakers and engage in speaking activities in class.

Students will work to explore, compare and contrast different writing styles. Students will complete a descriptive paragraph.

Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.

INTER-RATIONALE

The first Unit in the course is focused on Education and consists of three sections Technology, Deep Learning and Innovation. This unit occurs in the first quarter of the 16-week course immediately after the introduction week. This unit takes an in depth look at various aspects of education and ways in which alternative techniques impact the access and quality of education globally. After completing this unit students explore various components of health and employment.

INTRA-RATIONALE

This unit is the first in a sixteen-week course which consist of three units. The course covers Education, Health and Employment. In unit one the students are expected to complete listening, reading and writing activities on the topic matters before each class session. In order to successfully complete the flipped course students are expected to spend 45-60 minutes preparing for class. During the class students will engage in a wide range of activities such as giving persuasive speeches, summarizing listening clips and writing descriptive paragraphs. The listening and reading material for this course are based on information from popular news sites. After this unit is complete students will share presentations on education, participate in peer feedback and update their portfolios. The student portfolios will include sample speaking and writing submissions from unit one.

ASSESSMENTS

Students will complete a series of written and spoken assessments throughout the course. Students are expected to complete all of the following tasks by the end of the course and receive a 75% or higher in order to move to the advanced level.

Ongoing Assessments

- 5% Reflective essay
- 5% Persuasive essay
- 5% Reflective discussions

Summative Assessments
- 10% Student Portfolios
- 15% Presentations
- 5% Peer Feedback

Essay Guidelines- Health	Presentation Guidelines- Health
Create an 500-1,000 word expository essay	Create a 2-4 minute expository presentation
Choose from the topics from weeks 6- 10	Choose from the topics from weeks 6- 10
Work, life & balance Healthy lifestyles Stress Relief Sexual Health for young women	Work, life & balance Healthy lifestyles Stress Relief Sexual Health for young women
Times New Roman Double Spaced 12 font	Conduct additional research
Create first draft of essay (scored)	Include at least two sources Create and share a visual representation
Edit based on tutor feedback Create second draft (no score)	
Edit based on tutor feedback Create final draft (scored)	Create questions and engage students in group discussion

Background on Lesson Education – Technology

Objectives/Aims

Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum.

Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to discuss, write and reflect about these issues.

Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to a range of speakers and engage in speaking activities in class.

Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will complete a descriptive paragraph.

Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.

Language Analysis

The students may encounter various unfamiliar terms throughout the selected text. The teacher will ask students to identify unfamiliar words and define the words and use them in context. Throughout the lesson the teacher may provide additional language input in accordance with the students' needs.

Materials

Virtual Whiteboard, Lesson Document, Selected Readings, Listening Clips, https://www.speakpipe.com/voice-recorder

Assessment

Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document.

Education Technology			
Objective: Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum. Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to discuss, write and reflect about these issues. Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to a range of speakers and engage in speaking activities in class. Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will complete a descriptive paragraph. Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.			
Stage	Procedure	Materials	Time
Warm Up	Students and teachers will share their thoughts about personal, professional or educational goals. Teachers will share the requirements for the student portfolio and highlight the goal essay. Students will free write for 5 minutes about their personal, professional and educational goals. **Teaching Belief:** It is important to include periods of creative silence and allow students enough time to gather their thoughts and articulate them in a meaningful manner. Therefore, this will be a flipped classroom in which the students and teachers can review the details of the materials prior to meeting and spend their time reviewing, reflecting and discussing the suggested topics.	Virtual Whiteboard	5 minutes 5 minutes
Activity 1	Students will review the listening clip on the use of technology with education and review any unfamiliar words or ideas. Next students will review the comprehension questions. Teachers will highlight any areas of the clip that the students would like to have clarified. In addition, teachers will define new words and review their use in context. **Teaching Beliefs:** The content of the curriculum should include a range of highly engaging topics which appeal to the personal interest and needs of the learners. In order to prepare the students for the TOEFL or IELTS exam, the students will participate in practice speaking & reading assessments on a variety of topics.	- Technology Document https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Oo3QcpGk84	20 minutes

Activity 2	Students will review syntax and parallel structures. Teachers will provide model sentences using the conjunctions by discussing their views on technology in the classroom. Students will create sentences using the conjunctions. **Teaching Beliefs:** The classroom should be a learning laboratory in which the students discover the various rules, patterns and components of the language. Through the use of a flipped classroom students will review the details of various grammar structures and identify them in reading and listening materials. During the tutorial, students will have the opportunity to ask clarification questions about these structures and utilize them in them speaking activities.	-Syntax & Parallel Structures Document	10 minutes 10 minutes
Activity 3	Students will view pictures and share words to describe the pictures. Students will answer prompts Teachers will help students brainstorm words to describe the pictures. **Teaching Beliefs**: My goal is to encourage students to feel comfortable speaking in front of their peers (virtually) and eventually improve other aspects of English such as rhythm, intonation and stress.	-Speaking Technology	15 minutes
Activity 4	Teachers will summarize the key points from the reading and provide the reflection prompt. Students will discuss their thoughts about artificial intelligence and human intelligence. **Teaching Beliefs**: It is important to include periods of creative silence and allow students enough time to gather their thoughts and articulate them in a meaningful manner. Therefore, this will be a flipped classroom in which the students and teachers can review the details of the materials prior to meeting and spend their time reviewing, reflecting and discussing the suggested topics.	-Reflection Technology Document	10 minutes
Assessment	Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document.		
Wrap up	The teacher will summarize the lesson and highlight the objective. Homework: read the article on deep learning techniques and complete the reading comprehension worksheet.	Virtual whiteboard	5 minutes

Background on Lesson Education-Deep Learning

Objectives/Aims

 Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum.

Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to discuss, write and reflect about these issues.

Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to a range of speakers and engage in speaking activities in class.

Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will complete a descriptive paragraph.

Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.

Materials

Virtual Whiteboard, Lesson Document, Selected Readings, Listening Clips, https://www.speakpipe.com/voice-

recorder

Assessment

Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document.

Education Deep Learning			
Objective: Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum. Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to discuss, write and reflect about these issues. Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to a range of speakers and engage in speaking activities in class. Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will complete a descriptive paragraph. Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.			
Stage	Procedure	Materials	Time
Warm up	Students and teachers think of words that are associated with innovation based on the article that the students read prior to class. Teachers share a couple of words to provide examples for students and remind them to use synonyms or places, things and objects that remind them of innovation. **Teaching Beliefs:** It is important to include periods of creative silence and allow students enough time to gather their thoughts and articulate them in a meaningful manner. Therefore, this will be a flipped classroom in which the students and teachers can review the details of the materials prior to meeting and spend their time reviewing, reflecting and discussing the suggested topics.	Virtual Whiteboard	5 minutes
Activity 1	Students will review the article on machine learning and review any unfamiliar words or ideas. Next students will review the comprehension questions. Teachers will highlight any areas of the article that the student would like to have clarified. In addition, teachers will define new words and review their use in context. **Teaching Beliefs:** The content of the curriculum should include a range of highly engaging topics which appeal to the personal interest and needs of the learners. In order to prepare the students for the TOEFL or IELTS exam, the students will participate in practice speaking & reading assessments on a variety of topics.	- Reading Education Deep Learning Document https://learningenglish. voanews.com/a/ai-beats-human-scores-in-major-reading-test/4215369.html	20 minutes
Activity 2	Students will review reciprocal and reflexive pronouns. Teachers will provide model sentences using the	--Reciprocal and Reflexive Pronouns Document	10 minutes

	pronouns by discussing their views on machine learning. Students will create sentences using the pronouns. **Teaching Beliefs:** The classroom should be a learning laboratory in which the students discover the various rules, patterns and components of the language. Through the use of a flipped classroom students will review the details of various grammar structures and identify them in reading and listening materials. During the tutorial, students will have the opportunity to ask clarification questions about these structures and utilize them in them speaking activities.		10 minutes
Activity 3	Students will listen to the clip about Machine Learning and include reciprocal and reflexive pronouns in their listening comprehension responses. Teachers will play the clip the first time and ask students to listen. Next the teacher will play the clip again and ask students to listen for specific details. **Teaching Beliefs:** Despite the fact that all of the classes take place online, it is important to include visual and auditory options within each lesson as well as simple writing or speaking activities. In order to deal with some of the constraints of being in a virtual community tutors will have the option to share their screen to display the material via Google Classroom or an online whiteboard.	-Machine Learning Document https://youtu.be/5w5_7ZlAWwE	15 minutes
Activity 5	Students will view pictures and share words to describe the pictures. Students will answer prompts Teachers will help students brainstorm words to describe the pictures. **Teaching Beliefs**: My goal is to encourage students to feel comfortable speaking in front of their peers (virtually) and eventually improve other aspects of English such as rhythm, intonation and stress.	-Speaking Deep Learning	10 minutes
Activity 6	Teachers will summarize the key points from the reading and provide the reflection prompt. Students will discuss their thoughts about artificial intelligence and human intelligence. **Teaching Beliefs**: It is important to include periods of creative silence and allow students enough time to gather their thoughts and articulate them in a meaningful manner. Therefore, this will be a flipped	-Reflection Innovation Document	10 minutes

	classroom in which the students and teachers can review the details of the materials prior to meeting and spend their time reviewing, reflecting and discussing the suggested topics.		
Assessment	Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document.		
Wrap up	The teacher will summarize the lesson and highlight the objective. Homework: read the article on innovations in education, identify unfamiliar words and complete the reading comprehension worksheet.	Virtual whiteboard	5 minutes

<u>Background on Lesson Education Innovation</u>

Objectives/Aims

Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum.

Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to discuss, write and reflect about these issues.

Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to a range of speakers and engage in speaking activities in class.

Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will complete a descriptive paragraph.

Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.

Language Analysis

The students may encounter various unfamiliar terms throughout the selected text. The teacher will ask students to identify unfamiliar words and define the words and use them in context. Throughout the lesson the teacher may provide additional language input in accordance with the students' needs.

Materials

Virtual Whiteboard, Lesson Document, Selected Readings, Listening Clips, https://www.speakpipe.com/voice-

recorder

Assessment

Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document.

Education Innovation			
Objective: Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum. Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to discuss, write and reflect about these issues. Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to a range of speakers and engage in speaking activities in class. Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will complete a persuasive paragraph. Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.			
Stage	Procedure	Materials	Time
Warm up	Students and teachers think of words that are associated with innovation based on the article that the students read prior to class. Teachers share a couple of words to provide examples for students and remind them to use synonyms or places, things and objects that remind them of innovation. **Teaching Beliefs**: It is important to include periods of creative silence and allow students enough time to gather their thoughts and articulate them in a meaningful manner. Therefore, this will be a flipped classroom in which the students and teachers can review the details of the materials prior to meeting and spend their time reviewing, reflecting and discussing the suggested topics.	Virtual Whiteboard	5 minutes
Activity 1	Students will review the article on education innovation and review any unfamiliar words or ideas. Next students will review the comprehension questions. Teachers will highlight any areas of the article that the student would like to have clarified. In addition, teachers will define new words and review their use in context. **Teaching Beliefs**: The content of the curriculum should include a range of highly engaging topics which appeal to the personal interest and needs of the learners. In order to prepare the students for the TOEFL or IELTS exam, the students will participate in practice speaking & reading assessments on a variety of topics.	- Reading Education Innovation Document https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/10/04/554316261/want-change-in-education-look-beyond-the-usual-suspects-like-finland	20 minutes
Activity 2	Students will review common words and phrases for persuasive speeches.	-Persuasive Speech Document	10 minutes

| | Teachers will model persuasive speech by discussing their views on education. Students will choose a point and prepare a persuasive speech about their views towards innovations in education.

Teaching Beliefs: The classroom should be a learning laboratory in which the students discover the various rules, patterns and components of the language.

Through the use of a flipped classroom students will review the details of various grammar structures and identify them in reading and listening materials. During the tutorial, students will have the opportunity to ask clarification questions about these structures and utilize them in them speaking activities. | | 15 minutes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Activity 3 | Students will practice giving persuasive speeches and record a final version.

Teaching Beliefs: My goal is to encourage students to feel comfortable speaking in front of their peers (virtually) and eventually improve other aspects of English such as rhythm, intonation and stress.. | https://www.speakpipe.com/ | 10 minutes |
| Activity 5 | Teachers will summarize the key points from the reading and provide the reflection prompt. Students will discuss their thoughts about different types of education.

Teaching Beliefs: It is important to include periods of creative silence and allow students enough time to gather their thoughts and articulate them in a meaningful manner. Therefore, this will be a flipped classroom in which the students and teachers can review the details of the materials prior to meeting and spend their time reviewing, reflecting and discussing the suggested topics. | -Reflection Innovation Document | 10 minutes |
| Assessment | Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document. | | |
| Wrap up | The teacher will summarize the lesson and highlight the objective. Homework: write a descriptive paragraph about their views on innovation, deep learning and technology in education. | Virtual whiteboard | 5 minutes |

<u>Background on Lesson Education Presentation & Student Portfolio</u>

Objectives/Aims

Objective: Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum.
Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to present, discuss and reflect about these issues.
Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen to presentations and engage discussions.
Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will revise portfolios.
Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.

Language Analysis

The students may encounter various unfamiliar terms throughout the selected text. The teacher will ask students to identify unfamiliar words and define the words and use them in context. Throughout the lesson the teacher may provide additional language input in accordance with the students' needs.

Materials

Virtual Whiteboard, Lesson Document, Selected Readings, Listening Clips, https://www.speakpipe.com/voice-

recorder

Assessment

Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document.

Education Innovation			
Objective: Students will increase their vocabulary and be able to confidently engage in conversations highlighted in the curriculum. Students will read a variety of text and listen to various selections related to social justice. Students will be able to present, discuss and reflect about these issues. Students will work to explore different techniques to improve their intonation, stress and rhythm. Students will listen presentations and engage in discussions in class. Students will work to explore different writing styles. Students will revise portfolios. Students will read a multitude of text during the course and complete comprehension questions. In addition, students will reflect on these readings through short written or oral responses.			
Stage	Procedure	Materials	Time
Warm up	Teachers play music to relax the class and allow students time to prepare for their presentations. **Teaching Beliefs**: It is important to include periods of creative silence and allow students enough time to gather their thoughts and articulate them in a meaningful manner. Therefore, this will be a flipped classroom in which the students and teachers can review the details of the materials prior to meeting and spend their time reviewing, reflecting and discussing the suggested topics.	Virtual Whiteboard	5 minutes
Activity 1	Students will share their presentations and lead a short discussion. Teachers will record presentations. Teachers will ask questions at the end of the presentations and encourage students to ask questions as well. **Teaching Beliefs**: Students should have the opportunity to work together to explain and create in the target language. In order to design a course that allows students to explore the language in various ways, I will include a different group/pair project two times throughout the course. These projects will be completed over the course of several weeks and the final result will include a written and spoken presentation.	- Education Presentation Guidelines Document https://www.speakpipe.com/	5-10 minutes 5-10 minutes 5-10 minutes 5-10 minutes
Activity 2	Students will listen to their peers' presentations and provide written feedback. Teachers will model persuasive speech by discussing their views on education. **Teaching Beliefs**: The teacher will create a classroom in which students needs and feedback is addressed. The teacher will collect feedback from	-Presentation Feedback Document	15 minutes

	the students throughout the course. This feedback will be used to adjust the curriculum for the following term.		
Activity 3	Teachers will review the student portfolio guidelines. Students will revise written and speaking assignments in order to add them to the portfolio. **Teaching Beliefs**: It is important that there is a consistent theme throughout the entire curriculum. There should be a sense of connection and flow within the course as well as a mini theme within each lesson. There are many logistical issues which lead to inconsistencies between classes such as internet access and conflicting schedules. A sense of consistency and clear structural flow should be present throughout the course Thus students will complete a student portfolio which will include their language goals, an oral and written submission about a social justice topic and an essay.	-Student Portfolio Document	15 minutes
Assessment	Students will complete a speaking submission and a reflection document.		
Wrap up	The teacher will summarize the lesson and highlight the objective. Homework: read a portion of the health article.	Virtual whiteboard	5 minutes

The only thing left for you to do is …..