

The Effectiveness of an E-Training Program Based on the National Standards for Jordanian English Language Teachers in Developing their Specialized Competencies

Basela Mofleh Mahasneh*
Prof. Ahmad Hamad Al-Khawaldeh**

Received 15/9/2022

Accepted 12/11/2022

Abstract:

This study aimed at investigating the effect of an e-training program in developing Jordanian EFL teachers' competencies. The study used a quasi-experimental, pre- /post-test design. A convenient sample of 50 teachers, working in Wadi Al-Seir Directorate public schools, was divided into an experimental group (n=25) and a control group (n=25). An e-training program was applied on the experimental group using Microsoft Teams with the breakout rooms option, whereas the control group was trained by the conventional method. The results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group ($\alpha = 0.05$) in their specialized competencies. Additionally, a significant difference was found in favor of teaching and learning domain. The researchers recommend using e-training and conducting similar studies on a wider scope.

Keywords: E-training program, National Standards for teachers, EFL specialized competencies.

فاعلية برنامج تدريسي الكتروني مبني على المعايير الوطنية لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في الأردن في تطوير كفالياتهم التخصصية

باسلة مفلح محسنة*

أ.د. احمد حمد الخوالدة**

ملخص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف إلى أثر برنامج تدريسي الكتروني في تطوير كفاليات معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في الأردن. تم استخدام المنهج شبه التجريبي، إذ تكونت عينة الدراسة من 50 معلماً ومعلمة من مدارس وادي السير الحكومية تم اختيارهم بالطريقة الميسرة مقسماً إلى مجموعتين ضابطة وتجريبية. تم تطبيق برنامج الكتروني على المجموعة التجريبية باستخدام Microsoft Teams الذي يفعّل الغرف الفرعية (breakout rooms) بينما تدربت المجموعة الضابطة بالطريقة التقليدية. وأظهرت النتائج أن المجموعة التجريبية تفوقت على المجموعة الضابطة ($\alpha = 0.05$) في اختبار الكفاليات التخصصية البعدي، ووجدت فروق لصالح مجال التعلم والتعليم. في ضوء النتائج أوصى الباحثان باستخدام البرنامج التدريسي الإلكتروني وإجراء دراسات مماثلة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: برنامج التدريب الإلكتروني، المعايير الوطنية للمعلمين، الكفاليات التخصصية للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

* وزارة التربية والتعليم/الأردن/ mahasnehbasela@gmail.com

** كلية العلوم التربوية/جامعة الأردنية/الأردن/ alkhawaldeh2013@gmail.com

Introduction

The world witnesses a tremendous development that includes all aspects of the human life. New professional developments appear every day that need new experiences and skills to deal with them successfully. Since the educational process constitutes an essential element in the events of this development, EFL teachers need to be prepared and receive training to cope with new educational changes.

Teachers are the key element affecting the quality of education and influence the success or failure of the educational process (Al-Husban, 2018; Fredriksson, 2004; Mulford, 2003; Romlah & Latief, 2021; Umrzokova & Pardaeva, 2020;). Accordingly, world countries concentrate on the preparation of teachers, and exert efforts to raise their levels to promote their specialized competencies. Webster's dictionary defines competency as "the possession of sufficient knowledge or skill". Competencies can be seen as a set of skills related to a particular field or specialization that can be operationalized into actions (Røkenes, 2016: p.31). These skills are defined as a set of standards that could be translated into actions so that they could be explicitly assessed.

One way to raise teachers' competencies is to offer them pre-service and in-service training programs. Training programs are considered processes and practices that foster job-related knowledge, skills and values of school employees (Loucks-Horsley (1987). Consequently, scholars and governments, as well as the whole international community recommend promoting teachers and call for teachers' professional status (Agbedahin, 2019; Al-Husban, 2018; Alves, 2022; Jerset, Klette & Hamerness, 2018; Nousheen, Zai, Waseem & Khan, 2020).

Since high-quality education is linked to competent teachers, modern education has introduced higher standards for educational practitioners urging them to seek for professional growth. Meriam Webster dictionary defines standards as "something set up and established by authority as a rule for the measure of quantity, weight, extent, value, or quality"(Webster, p.1195). Korompot, Adnan & Ellis (2014) considered professional standards as the embodiment of knowledge, skills, and effective features required for careers as achieved by the professionals. Vanassche (2020) regarded professional standards in different areas as the language of teacher educator professionalism.

Concerning English language teachers, professional development stands as a challenge for teachers, teacher educators and decision makers to

accomplish better standards in education (Al-Husban & Akkari,2021; Al-Zughailat, 2015; Bani Younis, 2016; Hooks, 2015; Ibrahim & Kavlu ,2020; Khloud & Basil,2020; Slim 2020; Tawalbeh,2012). The development of teaching and learning standards is paramount to improve English language teaching worldwide. Large professional language teaching organizations such as the Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education in the United States (NCATE) generate standards of professional language teachers.

According to TESOL (2003), professional teaching standards of English language teachers consider five domains including language, culture, instruction, assessment and professionalism. NCATE (2008) identified four domains for setting standards including content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, learning environments, and professional knowledge. These domains, if grasped, are paramount to teacher professionalism.

At the national level, several initiatives were taken by Jordanian Ministry of Education (MOE) such as the 1st National Standards Conference for Teacher Professional Development in Amman in 2006. The previous national standards for professional development of teachers were prepared by a committee consisting of (120) participants from faculty members in Jordanian universities, and specialists from the (MOE). The final set of the standards was then approved by the Education Council (Ministry of Education, 2006).

Within the framework of teachers' national standards, the MOE proposed a recent professional development model for English language teachers that aims to reach a significant number of teachers who can match their global counterparts and to boost the education system in Jordan (MOE, 2019). One of the significant standards of the Jordanian foreign language teachers is "the effective use of ICT and English language resources" (MOE, 2019).

Crises situations such as Covid-19 pandemic represent an impetus for change. Accordingly, distance learning has become a good alternative when face-to-face courses are no longer possible (Abdulmuhsin, 2021; Al-Battani & Al Bataineh, 2020; Al- Jbour, 2021; Al-Karaki, Ababneh & Gawanmeh 2021; Al Khwaldi & & Bamidele, 2021; Alodwan, 2021; Assaf & Rababeh, 2020; Slim, 2020; Yousif, 2019). Likewise, online training can bring a new atmosphere in various learning developments. Good use of e-learning can improve learning outcomes to the maximum.

Considering the researcher's experience as a language teacher trainer, training models using online approach are favoured by many training institutions. This is because technological development demands EFL teachers to be able to teach English using media to anticipate the shift of learning models from the traditional to the online learning model (Arifani, Khaja, Suryanti, & Wardhono, 2019; Canals & Al-Rawashdeh, 2019).

Statement of the problem

The literature suggested dissatisfaction with the conventional approach of professional development (Al-Dhafiri, 2019; Al-Hababbeh 2016; Al-Husban 2019). The conventional approach in Jordan used to be five training hours which started after teachers end their school day. The researcher, as a teacher trainer in the MOE, has noticed that some teachers are reluctant to seek face-to-face training sessions since teachers feel fatigued after a long working day.

There seems to be a consensus among researchers that e-learning synchronous technology enhances teachers' e-learning competencies in subject matter, pedagogical theories and information communication technology skills. (Almodaires, Almutairi & Almsaud, 2021; Bamidele, 2021; Konovalenko, Yivzhenko, Demianenko, Romanyshyn & Yemelyanova ,2021; Mirzoeva, 2021; Pareja, & Silke (2019) Philipsen, Tondeur, Roblin, Vanslambrouck& Zhu,2019; Savvidou & Alexander, 2021; Tharrington, 2017; Woodcock, Sisco & Eady, 2015).

Hence, the researcher designed an e-training program based on Jordanian teachers' standards of professional development. Microsoft teams' application was used for implementing the training sessions. The training program examined its effect on the Jordanian EFL teachers' specialized competencies. Specialized competencies refer to both knowledge of language teaching theories and strategies as well as teaching practices. The two domains and their sub-domains are clarified in Table (1).

Purpose of the Study and Research Question

The purpose of the present study is to examine the impact of the proposed training course on EFL teachers' competencies in light of the national standards of professional development. To achieve the purpose of this study, the following question is addressed:

Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in their specialized competencies ascribed to the effect of the training program?

Significance of the Study

This study adds value to the existing literature in the area of English language teacher training. The studies that have been done so far on teacher training in Jordan have mostly been in the area of the conventional approach. To the researchers' best knowledge, few research studies such as Al-Odwan (2021) and Al-Shorman, Alshawabkeh, Aldaihani, Aityassine& Al-Hawary (2021) have been conducted on the effect of e-training on EFL teachers' practices in Jordanian education institutions. This study is hoped to contribute to the research on the role of e-training in EFL teaching and learning in Jordan and similar contexts.

The findings of this study may be useful for EFL teachers to use online digital tools that foster independent learning among learners. In addition, supervisors are expected to use online training on a wider range to include large numbers of teachers at the country level. Furthermore, the department of teacher training may design training activities that align with the current trends of e-training.

Conceptual and Operational Definition of Terms

E-training program- refers to the proposed training program constructed by the researcher based on the EFL national standards of professional development to train English language teachers in Wadi Al-Seir public schools using Microsoft Teams Platform.

National Standards – refer to the criteria and principles identified by the Jordanian MOE for teachers' professional development path. They are documented in the national charter of the education profession (MOE, 2019).

EFL Specialized competencies- is knowledge of the theories and the strategies of FL teaching and learning and teaching practices based on the most effective strategies and theories of foreign language teachers in Wadi Al-Seir public schools need to grasp in order to be effective language teachers. It is a dependent variable which is measured by a competency test in this study.

Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

English language teachers' Competencies and Professional Standards

Shulman (1986) stressed that teachers' subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are inseparable. He argued that teacher education programs should integrate both types of knowledge. Equivalently, TESOL (2003) and NCATE (2008) identified similar domains for teachers' professional competence.

There seems to be a consensus among researchers (e.g., Burns, 2011; Sulistiyo, 2016; Doğançay & Hardman, 2018; Coombe, 2020) that English language teachers need to attain competence in disciplinary content knowledge about the nature of language, language learning and language teaching, as well as pedagogical content knowledge regarding teaching strategies in order to achieve professionalism.

Concerning the Jordanian environment, the 1st National Teacher Professional Standards Conference developed an action plan and follow-up procedures to implement the standards at the MOE. The MOE established the teacher training center for the purpose of developing teachers' competencies starting from pre-service to in-service training and learning (MOE, 2006-B). Afterwards, the department of training and supervision in the MOE became responsible for teacher training for the purpose of developing teachers' competencies. The in-service training for novice teachers included some specialized training for the subject matter as well as pedagogical knowledge.

In 2016 Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) launched its Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD) as a pre-service teacher training. The Diploma combines theory and an extensive school practicum for teachers in General Pedagogies of Teaching and Learning or in Subject-Specific ones. In 2020, QRTA launched the TEPD online version in addition to the blended Diploma. A new training program based on the new framework of professional development for novice teachers in the MOE has started already at the outset of the school year, 2022/2023 (MOE, 2022).

In 2019, the Jordanian MOE adopted a new model for EFL teacher training based on standards of professional development. The document of the Jordanian national standards was completed with the support of the parties: the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Queen Raina Foundation for Education and Development (QRF), Queen Rania Award (QRA), Queen Rania Teacher Academy, for Education and development (QRTA), United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRAW), The Department for International Development (DFID) and the AMIDEAST/ Jordan. The Jordanian Professional Standards for Foreign Language Teachers are in alignment with the global accredited model. The standards include two main domains: Knowledge and Teaching and Learning as illustrated in table 1 (MOE, 2019).

Table 1. The main and subdomains of Jordanian English language teacher professional standards

	Main Domain	Subdomain
1.	Knowledge	1.1 Knowledge of students' linguistic competencies 1.2 knowledge of the assessment strategies of students' language learning progress 1.3 Linguistic Fluency 1.4 Knowledge of the content and how to teach it 1.5 Knowledge of the culture and the history of the foreign language (FL) 1.6 Knowledge of the theories and the strategies of FL teaching and learning 1.7 Knowledge of literary genres 1.8 Knowledge of supporting students with special needs.
2.	Teaching and learning	2.1 Transfer of the linguistic knowledge into real life situations (pragmatics) 2.2 Teaching based on the most effective strategies and theories of foreign language and literacy learning 2.3 The effective use of ICT and English language resources 2.4 The Integration of the language skills 2.5 Instilling and promoting positive values and attitudes

Related Studies

The purpose of the related studies is to introduce background knowledge and insights from pertinent literature as they relate to the impact of teacher training on teachers' competencies. Instances of professional learning network are mentioned, as well.

Al-Kathiry (2011) conducted a quasi-experimental study in Muscat to examine the effect of teacher training program on promoting learners' self-directed learning strategies. The sample consisted of 200 eleven graders. Three instruments were used to collect data: a self-directed learning strategies inventory, language achievement test and a semi-structured interview. One major finding was a significant difference favored to the experimental group who were taught by trained teachers.

Tawalbeh (2012) investigated the perspectives of supervisors and teachers of the previous MOE national teacher professional development standards adopted in 2006 in enhancing teachers' profession. The study sample consisted of 11 EFL supervisors and 357 teachers from Amman region. A questionnaire was used as research instrument. The findings revealed that the standards contribute to teachers' professional development from participants' perspectives. The researcher recommended holding training workshops that prioritize the national development standards.

In a similar study, Al-Zugailat (2015) investigated English language supervisors' perspectives towards the performance of English language teachers in Kerak governate in light of the professional standards. The researcher used a random sample consisted of 82 teachers and 8 supervisors. The study revealed dissatisfaction from the side of the supervisors concerning teachers' performance and their commitment to the MOE professional standards. The researcher recommended providing teachers with microteaching sessions and workshops to raise their awareness of performance standards.

Bani Younis (2016) examined the effect of a training program on Jordanian EFL teachers' writing instructional practices and their students' performance. A mixture of a quantitative and qualitative design was used. The quasi-experimental design was used for 96 students, and a one-shot design was used for 20 teachers. A pre-/ post- test for the students was used and an observation checklist and a reflection form were used for teachers. The study found out that the level of teachers' instructional practices and students' performance were high attributed to the proposed training program.

Similarly, Al-Badi (2017) examined the effect of a proposed training program on the development of teachers' knowledge and practices of critical thinking skills. The researcher used a quasi-experimental research design. The sample consisted of 5 teachers from government schools of Saham in the North Batinah Governorate in Oman. The researcher used a questionnaire to compare teachers' knowledge and an observation checklist to measure the frequencies of critical thinking practices to collect information. The study revealed that the training program positively affected teachers' knowledge and practice of critical thinking skills.

In the online context, Mohammed (2019) investigated the effectiveness of an online program in improving EFL pre-service teachers' visual literacy and self-appraisal. Quasi-experimental method was used with a sample of eighty teachers (experimental (n=40) and control (n=40). Online digital tools were used with the experimental group whereas their counterparts received their training through the conventional method. A language proficiency test, a teacher competency survey, a self-identification questionnaire, a visual literacy inventory and a self-appraisal scale were used to collect data. The findings revealed that the participants in the experimental group significantly outweighed their counterparts in the control group in visual literacy inventory and the self-appraisal scale.

The Jordanian Association for Educational Sciences, Jordanian Education Journal, Vol (9), No (4), Supplement (1) 2024
Access to a variety of resources was available. Web discussions enhanced teachers' beliefs and practices, as well.

El-Shazly (2020) investigated the impact of a WebQuest based training program on developing the teaching skills of in-service EFL Teachers. A quasi-experimental design was used with a voluntary twenty EFL in-service teachers. A knowledge test and a teacher performance assessment analytic rubric were used as study tools. The results revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the treatment group on the pre/post knowledge test and the analytic rubric in favor of the post ones which implied that the WebQuest-based training program effectively fostered teachers' knowledge and performance.

A correspondent study conducted by Al-Modaires, Al-Mutairi & Al-Msaud (2021) explored pre-service teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of Microsoft Teams for distance learning. The participants consisted of 215 undergraduate pre-service teachers from a female teacher training college in Kuwait. Results showed an overall positive perception of Microsoft Teams by all participants. The findings suggest that Microsoft Teams is an effective virtual leaning platform because of its quality, user friendliness and functionalities.

Equivalently, Mirzoeva (2021) examined the impact of using breakout rooms option in Microsoft Teams in developing learners' English language. Thirty-four participants were chosen as experimental and control groups. The experimental group was trained with the breakout rooms option, while it was not used with the control group. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The findings of this study revealed that students were pleased with using breakout rooms since they could brainstorm ideas, make discussions and reflect comfortably.

The previous studies do not integrate e-training based on the recent professional standards and its impact on teachers' competencies in Jordan. This has pushed this study to come into existence. This study will contribute to the previous studies the following:

1. Developing a training program for EFL teachers in Jordan to develop their specialized competencies based on the recent national standards for professional development that the MOE has embraced recently.
2. This review may help to identify research that is needed in future studies in the area of PD in light of professional standards as well as e-training.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The quasi-experimental design was used with an experimental group and a control group.

Participants of the study

The study population consisted of 237. A convenient sample of 50 (20 males and 30 females) EFL teachers, working in Wadi Al-Seir public schools in the second semester of the academic year 2021/2022 was used. The participants were divided into an experimental group (n=25) and a control group (n=25).

Instruments of the Study

Based on an extensive review of the literature, two instruments were developed, namely, an electronic training program based on the Jordanian national standards for English language teachers and a competency test.

The e-Training Program

The researcher developed the e-training program based on the aforementioned EFL national standards to be proposed to the MOE as part of innovative initiatives as an EFL supervisor in the MOE. The training program consisted of six topics distributed into six training days, a three-hour session per-day. The content of the training program highlights the principles of language acquisition, the instructional strategies of teaching English (mainly: the audio-lingual method, the communicative approach, task-based approach and project -based approach) and teaching the four skills. It is based on the social constructivist theory of Dewey (1963), Piaget (1976) and Vygotsky (1978) which stated that knowledge is constructed through interaction with others through reflection, dialogues, critical thinking, knowledge ownership, and understanding in context and within learning communities. Crotty (1997) considered constructivism as one of the best options among familiar approaches of learning by asserting collaborative work between educators, learner-based environment and reflection.

Based on the training program, the researcher designed a competency test to gauge potential effects of the two levels of the treatment. The test is comprised of 20 items under two domains: knowledge of the aforementioned theories and strategies of FL teaching (items 1-10) and FL teaching practices based on the most effective strategies of teaching (items

11-20). The test intended to measure knowledge of FL teaching strategies and approaches and some teaching situations. The test was implemented using google forms. The link was sent to the participants through WhatsApp and emails. The participants applied the test then the responses were collected via google forms.

The validity of the instruments was established by an expert jury of EFL university professors and EFL school supervisors. Some suggested deleting, substituting and reconsidering some items in matter of difficulty and appropriateness. Their recommendations were considered in amending the final version of the test.

The reliability of the test was also established by administering it to a sample of 15 EFL teachers who were excluded from the main sample of the study. The reliability coefficient amounted to 0.904 for the pre-/post-test. The pre-test was administered to the sample before the treatment began and the post-test immediately after the conclusion of the treatment.

The treatment: training the experimental and control groups

Both the control and experimental groups were trained by the researcher to ensure that they received the same training. The control group was trained using the conventional method while the experimental group was trained with the proposed e-training program using Microsoft Teams and the option of breakout rooms. With breakout rooms, the participants gather in small groups for lively conversations and brainstorming sessions. Only the meeting organizer (the researcher) can create and manage breakout rooms (Microsoft,2022).

The training was initiated in the main room. Introducing the topic, demonstrating related videos, pictures, quotations, brainstorming ideas with reference to examples from Action Pack series were performed in the main meeting room every session. Afterwards, participants were split into groups working together in breakout rooms to accomplish tasks using collaboration, critical thinking and reflection before they were pulled back to the main meeting. Teaching language skills was modelled in micro-lessons. Participants were assigned to plan similar micro-lessons in their breakout rooms before demonstrating these lessons in the main meeting. Refection was required at this stage. Teachers were advised to hold professional learning communities about the training within their school community, afterwards.

Findings and Discussion

The research question is: Are there any statistically significant

differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the mean scores of the study groups in their specialized competencies ascribed to the effect of the training program?

To answer the research question, means and standard deviations of the pre/post-test scores for the study groups were extracted as shown in table 2.

Table 2: The Means and Standard Deviations of the Two Groups in the Pre-Post Test Per the Training Method

Skill	Group	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.
	Control	8.28	2.1	9.24	2.0
	Experimental	8.24	1.7	13.2	2.2
	Total	8.26	1.9	11.24	2.9

Table 2 reveals that there are observed differences between the means of the experimental and control groups in the post-test. Teachers' mean scores in the experimental and control groups were 13.2 and 9.24, respectively. The mean scores obtained from the post-test differ from those obtained from the pre-test in favor of the post test, which indicates that both types of training contributed to teachers' competencies but surpassing in the experimental group. Additionally, the difference between the means and standard deviations of the two groups reveals the effectiveness of the e-training program in enhancing teachers' competencies.

A One-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to investigate the statistically significant impact of the training program on the post-competency scores after controlling the effect of the pre-test scores. Table 3 illustrates the results:

Table 3: The Results of ANCOVA with regard to Teachers' Specialized Competencies

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pre-test	29.8	1	29.8	7.1	*0.01	0.13
Group	201.5	1	201.5	48.0	*0.00	0.51
Error	197.2	47	4.1			
Total	6744	50				
Corrected Total	427.1	49				

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level ($\alpha=.05$)

In Table 3, it is revealed that the mean scores of the experimental group is significantly higher than the those of the control group. The partial eta squared values of 0.51 indicated that the training program explained 51 % of the variance in teachers' specialized competencies. Thus, it can be noted

The Jordanian Association for Educational Sciences, Jordanian Education Journal, Vol (9), No (4), Supplement (1) 2024
 that using the e-training program promoted the teachers' specialized competencies.

Furthermore, adjusted and unadjusted means of the specialized competencies for both groups were extracted. Table 4 illustrates the means, standard errors, and standard deviations of the study groups in the specialized competencies before and after controlling the pre-test scores.

Table 4 The Adjusted and the Unadjusted Means of The Two Groups with Regard to their Specialized Competencies

Group	Adjusted Means		Unadjusted Means	
	Mean	S. E	Mean	STD
Control	9.24	0.45	9.24	2.0
Experimental	13.2	0.41	13.2	2.2

As displayed in Table 4, there is virtually a difference between the study groups in the specialized competencies after controlling the differences in the pre-test scores.

The means and standard deviations of the pre- and post-test of the two study groups in the two domains (knowledge and teaching and learning) of the specialized competencies were extracted as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: The Means and Standard Deviations of the Two Groups with regard to Competency Domains

Accuracy domain	Group	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Mean*	Std	Mean*	Std
knowledge domain	Control	4.4	1.47	4.8	1.3
	Experimental	4.4	1.1	6.6	1.3
	Total	4.4	1.3	5.7	1.5
Teaching and learning domain	Control	3.8	1.6	4.3	1.3
	Experimental	3.7	1.6	6.6	1.6
	Total	3.8	1.6	5.4	1.8

Table 5 shows that the mean scores of the experimental group is larger than that of the control group in the two domains. It can be observed that teachers' mean scores in the experimental group in both the knowledge domain and the teaching and learning domain was (6.6). Whereas, the mean scores of the teachers in the control group in the knowledge and teaching and learning domains were: (4.8), and (4.3), respectively. This indicates noticeable differences between the two groups in the two domains.

To investigate the statistically significant effect of the training method on a linear combination of the two specialized competency domains after controlling the effect of the pre-test scores, a One-way Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (One-way MANCOVA) using a Multivariate Test

(Hoteling's Trace test) was conducted. Table 6 illustrates MANCOVA results.

Table 6: The MANCOVA Results regarding the Effect of the Training Program on the Linear Combination of the Two Competency Domains

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Training method	0.51	23.4	2	45.0	*.000	0.51

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level ($\alpha=.05$)

As clarified in Table 6, the main impact of the training program was significant, Hoteling's Trace test is 0.51, F (2, 45) equals 23.4, p is <0.05 , Multivariate eta square is 0.51. This indicates that the linear combination of the two specialized competency domains (knowledge and teaching and learning) differs between the experimental and control groups. The partial eta square value of 0.51 indicates that 51% of the variance in the combination of the two domains could be attributed to the method of instruction.

In order to investigate significant differences over the two domains in both groups (Severally), a follow up Univariate Analysis (Tests of Between-Subjects Effects) was conducted. Table 7 illustrates the results.

Table 7: Follow up Univariate Analysis (Between-Subjects Effects) on the Two Domains after Controlling the Effect of Pre-Test Scores

Source of Variance	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pre – knowledge domain	Knowledge domain	1.07	1	1.07	0.62	0.43	0.01
Pre – Teaching and learning domain	Teaching and learning domain	17.03	1	17.03	8.6	*0.00	0.15
Instruction method	Knowledge domain	38.7	1	38.7	22.1	*0.00	0.32
	Teaching and learning domain	63.9	1	63.9	32.6	*0.00	0.41
Error	Knowledge domain	80.5	46	1.75			
	Teaching and learning domain	90.0	46	1.9			
Total	Knowledge domain	1780	50				
	Teaching and learning domain	1674	50				

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level ($\alpha=.05$)

Table 7 shows that teachers in the two groups statistically and significantly differ in the domains of knowledge and Teaching and learning. The partial eta squared values of knowledge domain and Teaching and learning domain were 0.32, and 0.41, respectively. This means that the training program explained 32%, and 41% of knowledge domain and Teaching and learning domain, respectively. The difference was significant in favor of teaching and learning domain.

Furthermore, adjusted and unadjusted means in the two domains of competency for the two groups were extracted. Table 8 illustrates the means, standard errors, and standard deviations of the two groups in the two domains before and after controlling the pre-test scores.

Table 8: The Adjusted and unadjusted Means and Standard Errors of the Teachers with Regard to their Specialized Competencies

Conjunctions Aspects	Group	Unadjusted Means		Adjusted Means	
		Mean	Std	Mean	SE
Knowledge domain	Control	4.8	1.3	4.8	0.26
	Experimental	6.6	1.3	6.6	0.26
Teaching and learning domain	Control	4.3	1.5	4.3	0.27
	Experimental	6.6	1.3	6.6	0.33

Table (8) indicates that the adjusted mean scores of the experimental group are higher than those of the control group regarding the two domains of competency after the differences in the pre-test scores were controlled (i.e., knowledge $6.6 > 4.8$; teaching $6.6 > 4.3$).

Conclusion and recommendations

The findings of the research question revealed that the training programs were effective in improving teachers' competencies. These results are consistent with those reported by Al Badi (2017); Al Kuthairi (2011); Al-Modaires, Al-Mutairi & Al-Msaud (2021); Bani Younis (2016); Konovalenko, Yivzhenko, Demianenko Romanishyn & Yemelyanova, (2021); Mizoeva (2021); Philipsen, Tondeur, Pareja Roblin, & Silke (2019); Tharington (2017); Tawalbeh (2012); and Woodcock, Sisco & Eady (2015) which all report a positive effect for training on teachers' competencies.

Interestingly, the study concludes that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the study sample members in the specialized competency test due to the training program in favor of the electronic method. This finding confirms the findings of other researchers such as Carner (2011), Mohammed (2019) and Elshazly (2020). Likewise, it was found out that the mean scores in the teaching and learning domain exceeds those in the knowledge domain.

The researchers attribute this improvement in teachers' competencies to the theoretical material on the slides, the micro-teaching lessons implemented through the training sessions, open discussions and reflection, engagement, collaborative learning through lesson planning in the breakout rooms. This interpretation is compatible with Mirzoeva (2021) who found that using breakout rooms was appropriate to brainstorming, discussions and reflection. and the practical sessions the participants demonstrated throughout the treatment.

One possible explanation could be ascribed to the convenience in relation to training site, time and training duration. Neither traveling time nor money was consumed. There was sense of comfort since there was no learning pace constraint. Teachers could learn at their own pace and behave at their convenience (Kumar, 2010). This might be pivotal when it comes to adults' learning.

Another reason might be the availability of resources through the online-training. Teachers could access information easily and adequately participate in discussions. This explanation was consistent with Mohammed (2019) and Al-Modaires, Al-Mutairi & Al-Msaud (2021).

The researchers have experienced first-hand e-training in the Jordanian MOE, using Microsoft teams and the breakout rooms option which, albeit expected by the MOE, is hard to implement given the relatively heavy teaching loads, large classes, and lack of logistic support. Thus, it is recommended that the MOE consider teacher training a priority with reasonably advanced technological infrastructure. Otherwise, technology remains more a luxury than a stimulant and a need for better teaching achievement. This recommendation agrees with Al-Odwan (2021).

It is also recommended that similar researches be conducted on a wider scope, in both sampling and timing on teaching competencies to substantiate the present findings and expand their potential generalizability.

There are certain limitations of this study. The relatively small sample size may not be completely representative. Additionally, the treatment was conducted over a period of six weeks in the second semester of the academic year 2021/2022. A longer duration may provide a better data. So, the findings may only be generalizable to teachers in similar contexts.

References

- Agbedahin, A. V. (2019). Sustainable development, education for sustainable development, and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development: emergence, efficacy, eminence, and future. **Sustainable**

- Development**, 27(4), 669-680.
- AL-Badi, F. S. A. (2017). **The impact of a training program on EFL post-basic education female teachers' knowledge and practice of critical thinking skills in Oman**. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman.
- Albashtawi, A., & Al Bataineh, K. (2020). The effectiveness of google classroom among EFL students in Jordan: An innovative teaching and learning online platform. **International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET)**, 15(11), 78-88.
- Aldhafiri, N., & Aldhafiri, N. R. (2020). **Evaluation of in-service female EFL Teacher Professional Development (TPD) in Saudi Arabia**. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Exeter, UK.
- Al-Khwaldi, A. F., & Abdulmuhsin, A. A. (2021). Crisis-centric distance learning model in Jordanian higher education sector: factors influencing the continuous use of distance learning platforms during COVID-19 pandemic. **Journal of International Education in Business**, 15(2), 250-272.
- Alhababha, M. M., Pandian, A., & Mahfoodh, O. H. A. (2016). English language education in Jordan: Some recent trends and challenges. **Cogent Education**, 26(3), 387-406.
- Al-Husban, N. (2018). The effect of a training program based on proven instructional strategies on english as foreign language teachers' attitudes in the educational directorate of Zarqa 1. **Dirasat, Educational Sciences**, Volume 45(4)433-444.
- Al-Husban, N. (2019). EFL teachers' practices while teaching reading comprehension in Jordan: Teacher development implications. **Journal on English as a Foreign Language**, 9(2), 127-145.
- Al-Jarrah, J. M., Talafhah, R. H., & Al-Jarrah, T. M. (2019). Social networking sites and english language learning: jordanian efl learners'practices and experiences. **European Journal of English Language Teaching**, 4.(3), 1-11.
- Al-Karaki, J. N., Ababneh, N., Hamid, Y., & Gawanmeh, A. (2021). Evaluating the effectiveness of distance learning in higher education during covid-19 global crisis: UAE Educators' Perspectives. **Contemporary Educational Technology**, 13(3).
- Al-Modaires, A. A., Al-Mutairi, F. M., & Al-Msaud, T. E. (2021). Pre-service teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of Microsoft Teams for remote learning. **International Education Studies**, 14(9), 108-121.
- Al-Odwan, T. A. A. (2021). The reality of the training courses provided to

- english teachers using electronic distance learning instruments during corona pandemic, from their point of view. **Multicultural Education**, 7(6).
- Al-Shorman, H., Alshawabkeh, R., Aldaihani, F., Aityassine, F., Mohammad, A., & Al-Hawary, S. (2021). Drivers of e-training intention to use in the private universities in Jordan. **International Journal of Data and Network Science**, 5(4), 831-836.
- Alves, S. D. C. (2022). **The importance of training EFL teachers for affect teaching strategies**. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Lisbon, Portugal.
- Al-Zughailat, S.F. (2015). **The Performance of English Language Teachers in Light of the Application of Professional Standards in AL-Karak Governorate**. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Mu'ta University, Al-Karak, Jordan.
- Arifani, Y., Khaja, F. N. M., Suryanti, S., & Wardhono, A. (2019). The influence of blended in-service teacher professional training on efl teacher creativity and teaching effectiveness. **3L: Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies**, 25.(3)
- Assaf, M. M., Al-Jamal, D. A., & Rababeh, E. Q. (2020). The effect of an electronic collocation- based instructional program on enhancing jordanian efl tenth grade students' reading comprehension. **IUG Journal of Educational and Psychology Sciences**, 28(4), 869 - 888.
- Bani Younis, R. A. M. (2016). **The Effect of a Teacher Training program Based on Dictogloss on Improving Jordanian EFL Learner's Writing Performance**. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan.
- Canals, L., & Al-Rawashdeh, A. (2019). Teacher training and teachers' attitudes towards educational technology in the deployment of online English language courses in Jordan. **Computer Assisted Language Learning**, 32(7), 639-664.
- Caner, M. (2011). **A Study on Blended Learning Model for Teaching Practice Course in Pre-Service English Language Teacher Training Program** (Doctoral dissertation, Anadolu University, Turkey).
- Coombe, C. (2014). 10 characteristics of highly effective EF/SL teachers. Society of Pakistan English language teachers: **Quarterly Journal**, 28(4), 2-11.
- Dewey, J. (1963). **Liberalism and social action** (Vol. 74). New York:

Capricorn Books.

- Elshazly, M. A. (2020). **The Impact of a WebQuest-Based Training Program on Developing the Teaching Skills of In-service Preparatory EFL Teachers** (Doctoral dissertation, Mansoura University).
- Hooks, L. S. (2015). **Towards more effective teacher professional development initiatives**. Doctoral Dissertation, Walden University, United States.
- <https://qrta.edu.jo/en/programs/teacher-education-professional-diploma>.
Retrieved on 20/8/2022.
- <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-breakout-rooms-in-teams-meetings>, retrieved 1/8/2022.
- Ibrahim, M., & Kavlu, A. (2020). Professional development needs of private and public high schools EFL teachers in Erbil-Kurdistan. **International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies**, 7(3), 191-207.
- Jenset, I. S., Klette, K., & Hammerness, K. (2018). Grounding teacher education in practice around the world: An examination of teacher education coursework in teacher education programs in Finland, Norway, and the United States. **Journal of Teacher Education**, 69(2), 184-197.
- Khloud, A. B., & Basil, A. (2020). The challenges facing female english language teachers in secondary schools in Jordan. **Journal of Language and Education**, 6(3), 7-21.
- Konovalenko, T. V., Yivzhenko, Y. V., Demianenko, N. B., Romanyshyn, I. M., & Yemelyanova, Y. S. (2021). The possibilities of using distance learning in the professional training of a future foreign language teacher. **Linguistics and Culture Review**, 5(S2), 817-830.
- Korompot, C. A., Adnan, Z., & Ellis, E. (2014). **Giving Teachers Their Voices: Indonesian EFL Teachers' Perspectives on Professional Teaching Standards in the Context of Teacher Certification Programs in Indonesia**. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of New England, United States.
- Kumar, D. (2010). **Pros and cons of online education**. Manuscript, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, USA.
- Loucks-Horsley, S. (1987). **Continuing to learn: A guidebook for teacher development**. Andover MA: National Staff Development Council.
- Meriam Webster. (1994). **Meriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary** (Tenth edition, p. 1195).
- Ministry of Education. (2019). **National charter of the education**

- profession: national standards of the foreign language teacher:** Amman, Jordan.
- Ministry of Education. (2017). **The training guide for teaching English:** Amman, Jordan.
- Ministry of Education. (2006-B). **National Teacher Professional Standards: SJE support Jordan's Education:** Amman, Jordan.
- Mirzoeva, L. Y. (2021). Using breakout rooms in online language teaching: Advantages and disadvantages. **International Journal of Innovative Research in Education**, 8(2), 94-101.
- Mohammed, D. A. M. A. (2019). Using an On-line Digital Tools-Based Program for Fostering EFL Preservice Teachers' Visual Literacy and Self-appraisal. **Journal of Research in Education and Psychology** 34(3), 576-, 619.
- Mulford, B. (2003). School leaders: changing roles and impact on teacher and school effectiveness. **A Paper Commissioned by the Education and Training Policy Division**.
- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). (2008). **Professional standards for the accreditation of teacher preparation institutions**, Washington, U.S.A.
- National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2008). **"What do we mean by professional development in the early childhood field?"**. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute. Files/caep/accreditation-resources/ncate-standards-2008.pdf?la=en
- Nousheen, A., Zai, S. A. Y., Waseem, M., & Khan, S. A. (2020). Education for sustainable development (ESD): Effects of sustainability education on pre-service teachers' attitude towards sustainable development (SD). **Journal of Cleaner Production**, 250, 119537.
- Philipsen, B., Tondeur, J., Pareja Roblin, N., Vanslambrouck, S., & Zhu, C. (2019). Improving teacher professional development for online and blended learning: A systematic meta-aggregative review. **Educational Technology Research and Development**, 67(5), 1145-1174.
- Piaget, J. (1976). **Piaget's theory**. In **Piaget and his school** (pp. 11-23). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.
- Røkenes, F. M. (2016). **Preparing future teachers to teach with ICT: An investigation of digital competence development in ESL student teachers in a Norwegian teacher education program**. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Norwegian University of Science and

- Technology, Norway.
- Romlah, O. Y., & Latief, S. (2021). Empowering the quality of school resources in improving the quality of education. **Bulletin of Science Education**, 1(1), 37-41.
- Savvidou, C., & Alexander, K. (2021). Exploring university students' experiences and perceptions of breakout rooms in synchronous online classrooms during covid-19. In **ICERI2021 Proceedings** (pp. 2119-2127). IATED Publications.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). **Those who understand: A conception of teacher knowledge.** American Educator, 10.(1) 9-15.
- Slim, S. A. (2020). The willingness of jordanian efl teachers to endure taking online professional development programs rather than face to face: **IUG Journal of Educational and Psychology Sciences**, (48)4, 192-211.
- Speck, M., & Knipe, C. (Eds.). (2005). **Why can't we get it right? designing high-quality professional development for standards-based schools.** Corwin Press.
- Tawalbeh, T. E. I. (2018). Teachers' and supervisors' perspectives of the ministry of education national teacher professional development standards in enhancing jordanian efl teachers' professional development: **Journal of Al-Quds Open University**, (26)2, 409-417.
- Townsend, T., & Bates, R. (2007). **Handbook of teacher education: Globalisation, standards and professionalism in times of change.** Springer.
- Vanassche, E. (2020). Success or failure in teacher education: moving beyond standards and the idea of (in) competent individual teacher educators. In **IDPA International Conference**, Date: 2020/11/27-2020/11/28, Location: Birmingham, UK (Online event).
- Umrzokova, G., & Pardaeva, S. (2020). Developing Teachers professional Competence and Critical Thinking Is a Key Factor of Increasing the Quality of Education. **Mental Enlightenment Scientific-Methodological Journal**, 2020(2), 66-75.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Socio-cultural theory. **Mind in Society**, 6, 52-58.
- Woodcock, S., Sisco, A., & Eady, M. J. (2015). The learning experience: training teachers using online synchronous environments. **Journal of Educational Research and Practice**, 5 (1), 21-34.
- Yousif, M.R.A. (2019) The use of youtube and whatsapp in english teacher training blended programs in Iraq. **Dirasat, Human and Social Sciences**, 46, No. 2. 823-832.