

Possibility of Using Jamboard for Interactive Remote EFL Teaching and Learning: A Survey of Students' Perception

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***Abstract:** COVID-19 has forced the world to encounter a new experience which has also brought an unforeseen revolution in the world education system. Traditional norms and practices of classroom teaching are being challenged continually. Chalkboards and whiteboards are now being replaced by multiple technological tools, teachers are delivering class lectures via various video teleconferencing software programs, and study materials are being published as pre-recorded video clips or uploaded on different sites. In such an era, Google Jamboard can be utilized as a significant tool for transforming digital education into infotainment for the tertiary-level EFL learners of Bangladesh. The present study sought to investigate the possibility of using Google Jamboard to create an interactive virtual classroom environment for tertiary-level EFL students. All the data for this study were collected using an electronic questionnaire survey from various departments of a private university in Bangladesh. The study found that EFL learners hold a positive attitude toward the use of Jamboard for remote learning which can play a significant role in helping EFL learners to improve their English language skills. The study also recommends some of the best features of Jamboard for EFL teachers.*

***Keywords:** COVID-19, ELT, technology in education, digital board, tertiary education*

Introduction

In the time of the new normal, the progress of education requires learning tools which are convenient, available, free, and accessible to general people. Here, technology integration necessarily changes the traditional paradigm of

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the teacher providing knowledge and the student absorbing it. The use of technology allows teachers and students to become partners in an educational environment. In addition, an advanced tool for inspiring and empowering innovative teaching is becoming a vital part of post-COVID education. A worldwide survey conducted by a group of researchers (Marek et al., 2021) upon the higher education faculties, as they were transitioning from traditional to distance education in 2020, shows faculties' acknowledgment for a positive attitude toward adaptability and strategic planning for the digitalization of education.

However, among the many other tools, digital whiteboards are now being introduced and used by educators and learners for interactive virtual education at many educational institutions around the world. It offers multiple stimuli to the learners, allowing them to actively engage during the learning process without losing interest (Reguera & Lopez, 2021). Unfortunately, unlike in the West, there is hardly any traces of the use of interactive whiteboards in our country (Fatema & Sultana, 2020) and therefore, no adequate study is available on the impacts of using Jamboard in virtual learning environments as a supplementary tool for learning. Therefore, there lies a field of possibility in front of us to examine whether the application of Jamboard can be made feasible for the learners of Bangladesh to see the usefulness of Jamboard as a tool of teaching and learning that offers a positive impact upon learning. Thus, this study intends to trace the impacts of Jamboard as an interactive learning tool by exploring the attitudes of tertiary level EFL learners of Bangladesh by means of a survey study that was conducted using a questionnaire consisting both closed and open ended questions.

Research Questions

- i. To what extent students are familiar with Jamboard and its features?
- ii. Does Jamboard facilitate remote learning among the students, and how?
- iii. How to optimize the effective use of Jamboard for engaging more students in classroom interaction?

Literature review

The silent presence of learners in the learning environment where the educators deliver lessons via 'chalk and talk' is no longer in trend. An effective teaching-learning process must stimulate intellectual curiosity and offer a sense of enjoyment that will move the students from the passive role of recipients of information to the active role of builders of knowledge. However, engaging students in a remote learning environment, where they are physically absent and isolated from their peers and mentors, is not a child's play. Besides, this isolation often gives birth to a passive observer who once was an active participant in the physical classroom. It is hard to deny that learning greatly benefits from social contact, and also intelligence, to a great extent, flourishes within a social context, rather than in seclusion (Pea, 1993; Perkins, 1993). In remote learning, to tackle the challenge of keeping students interested and engaged, tools are of crucial importance to keep the environment in favor of active learning (Hoffman, et al., 2008). However, difficult procedures and accessibility often restrict learners to use technological tools without hesitation. However, according to prior educational technology studies, the use of technologies by the students is highly dependent on the technological proficiency of the teachers and the teacher's attitude toward the use of technology in the classroom (Gregoire, et al., 1996; John & Sutherland, 2004). Another important point is the overall acceptance of students on the online activities given by the teacher. Davis (1989) addressed two factors that determine whether participants and learners use an application or not. The very first factor is if they perceive that the usefulness of the tool assists them to complete their task flawlessly and efficiently. However, after growing reliance on its efficacy, the tendency to use the application or tool will be overshadowed if users discover its difficulty.

Considering the present trends in research, more than ever scholars are looking into the assets and liabilities of distance teaching and learning since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Agarwal & Kaushik, 2020; Basilaia et al., 2020; Bao, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; Murphy, 2020; Naciri et al., 2020; Toquero, 2020). Distance learning can be described as a technology-based education where various technologies are used to connect learners with learners or learners with instructors to facilitate

their communication (Schlosser & Simonson, 2006). Many universities shift entirely from Face to Face to remote education during the time of the pandemic, making the situation challenging for both instructors and students as they require learning new technologies in a brief period and adopting new techniques. To make this transition smooth institutions are arranging numerous training sessions from the very beginning but the situation is still difficult for many academicians and learners. Sweeney, et al (2021) thought that for collaborative learning in the time of the pandemic, the requirement of affordable and accessible online tools is undeniable for the rapid evolution. They also opined that a new Jamboard may be quickly established and updated automatically in the user's Google Drive to demonstrate the digital board's multi-functionality. Because there are 20 slides, up to 50 editors can concurrently update and contribute information, photographs, google images, and thoughts. If someone teaches the same class again and over, they may copy the complete Jamboard and use it for another class. On the left side, it has a pen, highlighter, eraser, shape tool, and a text box. Images from Google and personal computers may be dragged and pasted here to build connectedness, and moving, reshaping, and rotating options allow anybody, both educator and student, to organize it suitably. Steven Hope, Head of Independent Learning, Leeds City College addresses that Jamboard gives every student a voice to find the answers, and presents them regardless of their level moving the student from a passive recipient to an active participant (Leeds City College, 2021). While describing the positive effects of Jamboard, Draucker (2021) reported, that under the severe circumstances of COVID-19, where students were burdened with the academic workload while being detached from their peers and physical presence at the schools, the chance to cover a canvas with colors and doodles offered a few minutes of much-needed happiness.

Looking into the Features of Jamboard

Based on Brenna Miles' (2021) "The 7 Best Google Jamboard Features You Can Use for Remote Learning", the best features of Jamboard can be outlined as follows:

1. **Facilitates brainstorming:** By using Jamboard students from different corners can come up with their own unique ideas with a sticky note. At the same time, observing peers' ideas unlock the opportunity to explore the same

idea differently. Learners can also participate in answering questions asked by the teacher or their peers, provide feedback or even ask questions by simply sharing a sticky note.

2. **Offers virtual laser pointer:** This feature helps reduce the absence of gestures and postures to put emphasis on any topic by taking over the screen and keeps students focused by grabbing their attention.

3. **Promotes group collaboration:** Participation and interaction are made easy as all participants can have access to editing, adding, and writing at the same time just by getting the link of the digital board from any convenient corner. According to Wendy Pothier (2021), by scrolling across the digital board students can simply perceive their classmates' work and exchange through the specimens. Therefore, by sharing ideas of their own and by checking out the concept of others, learners can easily participate in any collaborative group work. Using a digital whiteboard, Shannon Draucker (2021) comments that participants can be the primary contributor or creators where they embrace dynamic roles in the class and become more engaged members of their learning community.

4. **Provides visual learning aids:** The image tool offers using any visuals, i.e. photos, diagrams, posters, or infographics, available out there on Google as classroom materials.

5. **Permits direct access to Google Drive files:** Teachers, as well as students, can easily share materials from their respective Google Drives using Jamboard which helps them to be connected from distant

6. **Offers virtual highlighter tool:** This is another attention-grabbing tool, helping students keep anchored to the shore.

7. **Allows downloading the Jams as PDFs:** Learners' capability to "take-home" their mapping ideas is one of the best features of this tool because students only require the shared link or download it to view their collected jamming ideas after the meeting.

Methodology

The study includes a survey research design, with both closed-ended and open-ended questions, in order to explore students' perceptions and attitudes toward the possibility of using Jamboard for remote interactive EFL teaching and learning.

Sample

160 EFL learners from 5 different departments (Department of Computer Science and Engineering=59, Department of English=73, Department of Business Administration=1, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering=24, Department of Civil Engineering= 3) of Daffodil International University were considered as the sample participants of this study. All the participants were selected using random sampling.

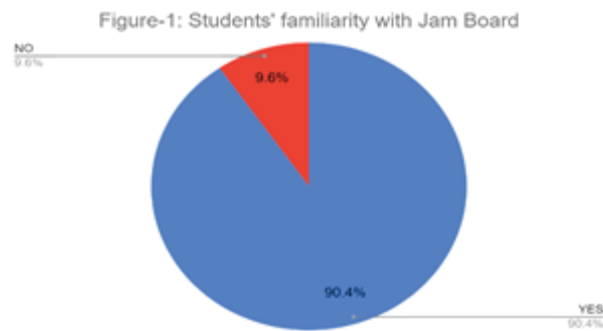
Tools

To conduct this study a Google Form that included both close-ended and open-ended questions was circulated among the participants to know their perceptions and opinions regarding Jamboard as an educational tool. The data from close-ended questions were then analyzed using Microsoft Excel and presented as descriptive statistics, and the data from open-ended questions were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

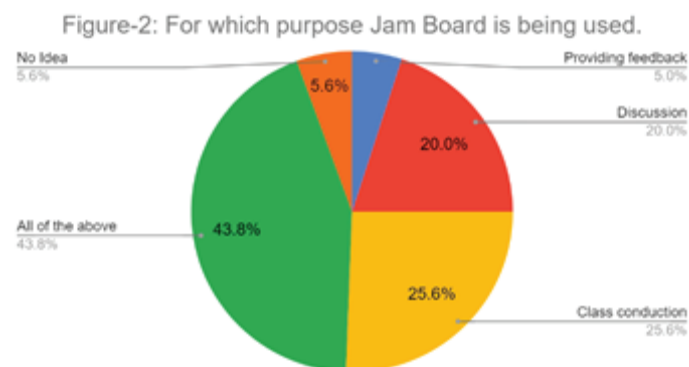
Data Collection and Analysis

The data for the study were collected from 160 EFL learners from Daffodil International University, and all of them willingly participated in this study after reading the purpose of the study mentioned in the respective survey form. The analyses of their responses are as follows:

Results of close-ended questions

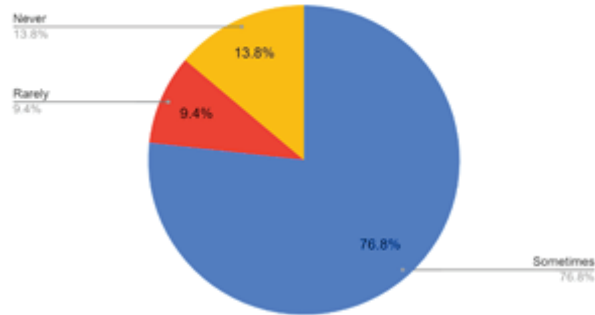


90.4% of students have a close acquaintance with the functions of Google Jamboard as Daffodil International University has a tech-friendly environment for its learners and educators. On the contrary, Only 9.6% opined they are not aware of the role of this digital whiteboard.



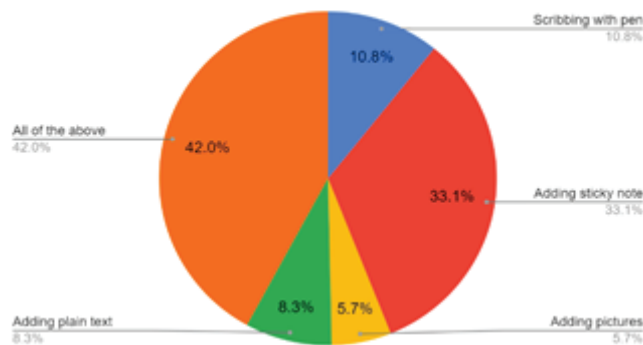
25.6% opine it may only help us to conduct classes where 20.0% said discussion is the main purpose of using it. The least number of learners 5.0% think it can be the option of providing feedback and 5.6% said “no idea” as they had zero concepts of using a jam board. Surprisingly, the highest number of students 43.8% said Jamboard can be used as a multipurpose way of providing feedback to class conduction.

Figure-3: How often teachers use Jam Board in class.



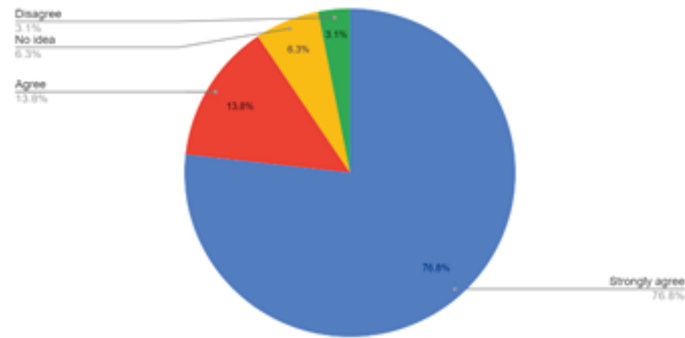
If we analyze this pie chart, 76.8% say that their educator uses a Jamboard sometimes for class conduction, 9.4% said rarely, whereas 13.8% mentioned never.

Figure-4: Useful Jam Board activities during class.



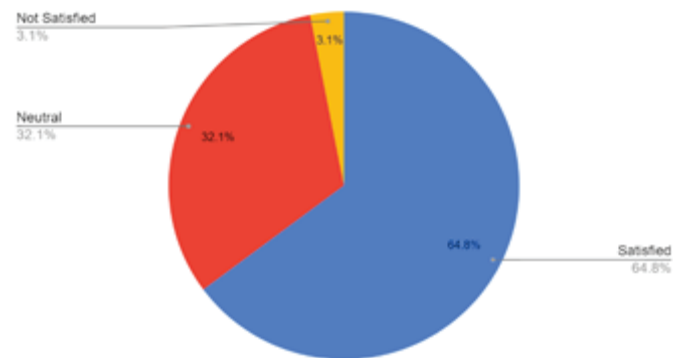
10.8% mentioned their preference to scribble with pens, 33.1% prefer sticky notes, 5.7% love the idea of adding pictures from google or pc, 8.3% think it's fine to add plain text but the highest number of partakers, 42.0% find it great to use all options.

Figure-5: Students' perception on the positive usefulness of using Jam Board

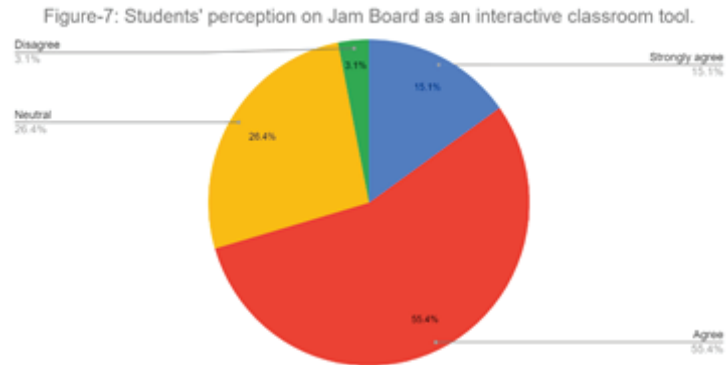


When participants were asked whether the Jamboard has any positive usefulness, 76.8% of them agreed and 14.3% of them strongly agreed; which indicates their positive attitude toward using this tool as an excellent teaching-learning tool. A small portion of students showed their negativity about using this tool, whereas 6.3% were unaware of its usefulness.

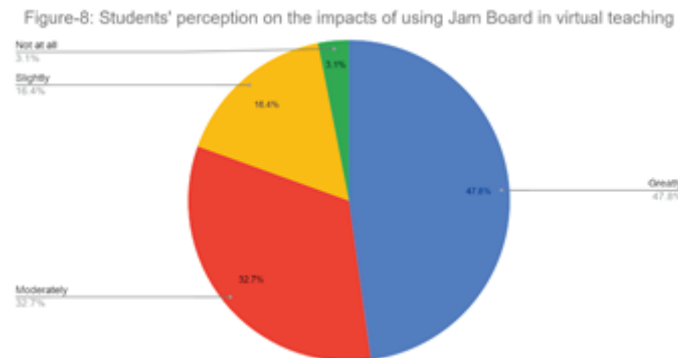
Figure-6: Students' satisfaction regarding the use of Jam Board



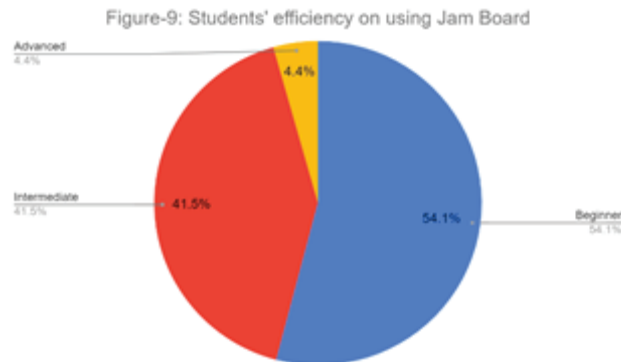
The present study was affirmative about the satisfactory level of learners. 3.1% said that they are not satisfied with a Jamboard lecture, 66.7% said they were satisfied and 33.3% were neutral about using a Jamboard to conduct a lecture.



59.5% agreed that Jamboard can be the best tool for interaction and keep them engaged. 19% agreed strongly whereas only 2.4% disagreed about the idea of using a Jamboard as an interactive tool. A negative answer can be summarized as their lack of knowledge to use the tool properly.



Among 169 students from three different Departments, 47.9% acknowledged its great impact on online learning whereas 32.7% believed its moderate impact. 16.4% of learners said its slight effect on the learning process. There were hardly any people who perceived this whiteboard had no effect on virtual teaching.



According to their competence level, the largest number of students consider themselves as beginners who were 54.1% of the total population, and the second-highest was 41.5% of the population who holds themselves at an intermediate level in terms of their efficiency. The least number of participants, 4.4%, think that they have advanced skills in using a Jamboard.

Results of open-ended questions

There were two open-ended as well to know students' interest in using a Jam Board. A brief content summary of the answers to both of these questions is stated below:

1. To answer the reason for their preference of using a Jam Board, the majority of the participants mentioned that the use of a digital board helps them to get ideas clear on any topic. According to participants, comprehending the topic clearly and easily is the main purpose of showing their interest. Another issue mentioned by some learners is its unique features as they found it interesting. In addition, this board can engage them almost like a physical classroom where they do not feel disconnected. Most of them prefer the idea of using a Jamboard because it is great for brainstorming, gathering ideas, sorting them by color, organizing them on different frames, moving them together, drawing lines to connect important ideas, etc. which is helpful for them to understand their lessons from a distance arena . It also

helps some to understand the class topic nicely and review the topic as well. It's easy to remember the things that they learn in class as mentioned by some. Viewing different opinions, sequencing and summarizing thoughts were some other reasons for choosing this google platform.

2. The second question was on how Jam Board can be used to create an interactive environment in the classroom. Most of the students' opinions were very much affirmative towards the use of Jamboard to create an impactful teaching-learning environment. According to them, it increases the engagement of students through an in-depth discussion by carrying them under one platform. By using this digital whiteboard learners can actively participate in their online lessons, rather than just being a passive receiver. Whereas, students feel nervous to express themselves in front of others and step back from participation, Jamboard offers those students a safe space to come up front with their voices. A number of participants also opined, whenever a teacher came up with Jamboard, almost every student starts responding without hesitation, even if the students are in any remote place. Few of them also mentioned Jamboard as an interesting and attractive tool that keeps them connected with the learning environment.

Discussion

The analysis of the above responses indicates that Jamboard

1. **Works as a stress reliever:** Jamboard helps decrease the anxiety level of students while attending virtual classes. Most of the students of DIU procrastinate to participate in any discussion and find it intimidating to interact both in online and offline classes but shifting from offline to virtual class makes the situation worse than before. This whiteboard creates ample opportunities for students to participate anonymously and easily collaborate in group discussions or tasks.

2. **Makes classroom interactive:** Jamboard makes communication or interaction among teachers and students feasible without creating any additional chaos.

3. **Ensures students' participation:** Due to a lack of actual physical interaction, sometimes students feel bored and unmotivated to participate in class tasks. Jam Board works as a great interactive tool here. Features of Jamboard motivate students to be expressive during the virtual class

4. **Makes giving feedback easy:** Giving and getting feedback is very important in teaching-learning practice. Especially learning a foreign language requires continuous feedback from the mentor and peers in order to trace learning progress. Through Jam Board teachers as well as students can provide feedback on the understanding of teaching-learning activities. students can share their own opinion as well as receive corrective feedback upon the mistakes from their peers or their general opinions as well.

5. **Offers easy accessibility:** Google products are known for their easy accessibility and familiarity among laymen. Bangladeshi people have a phobia to get access to and be familiar with new products because of their difficulty and a training program or workshop is needed before starting. Sometimes these tools fail their appeal due to their complications. When most of the DIU students were introduced to this digital board they did not need much time to get used to it and faced almost zero problems regarding how to use it properly.

6. **Offers edutainment:** This digital board can be the best option for students to learn with entertainment. Colorful sticky notes, eraser, laser, and google images boost the energy level of most DIU students who were enthusiastic and feel energetic when they discover color and pictures at the same time.

Overall Findings

After going through the analysis of the collected data, and the above mentioned discussions, we may present the overall findings of this study as follows:

1. First of all, according to the figure number 1, 2, 7, and 9 in the data analysis section, a large number of students are already familiar with the tool, and also very much known to some of the common features of it. They have also admitted that it is, indeed, a very interactive classroom tool. but,

unfortunately, the study found that most of the students are not much efficient in availing all the features of Jamboard yet.

2. Secondly, the results accumulated from the figure number 3, 4, 6, and 8 show that a majority number of teachers are already using Jamboard for their class conduction, and features like, sticky notes, scribbling with pen, adding text and pictures have been being used to facilitate learning among students. Also, learners were found acknowledging the impacts of Jamboard upon their effective remote learning.

3. Finally, the thematic analysis of the two open-ended questions show that teachers, while dealing with any lesson that demands advanced comprehensive discussion and interaction among learners, may utilize Jamboard as an tool to engage maximum number of students both the physical and virtual class where learners feel comfortable, heard and empowered.

Limitations

The key limitation of the study is that only one private university was focused on exploring the effectiveness of Jamboard. Also, teachers were not interviewed about whether they are using this tool. Again, this present study excludes the usage of Jamboard in flipped-classroom, hybrid learning, or blended learning scenario.

Conclusion

The findings of this study mirror the possibility of using google Jamboard for an engaging and interactive EFL classroom. Making the classroom a comfort zone may create collaboration, creation, participation, and so on. As Daffodil International University is using this tool elaborately, the learners show a very positive attitude towards this tool, ensuring their equal participation anonymously, keeping pace with their fellow mates by enhancing their education with entertainment. To perceive its possibility and effectiveness, only one or two days' workshop is needed. After knowing about digital educational tools, we may not be able to utilize them because of their difficult function. That is why an easily accessible tool like Jamboard can eradicate fear and encourage us to keep pace with the digital era.

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