

Integrating Technologies in Teaching English Literature to Sudanese Secondary School Students (A case study of some secondary schools in Khartoum State)

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Abstract:

This research aims at integrating technology into teaching English literature to facilitate language learning process in Sudanese secondary schools, as well as creating an interactive learning environment via an audio-visual learning supported technology. Modern trends in language teaching presuppose knowledge and high skills in using technologies in the classroom. Sudan is a part of the global community where the language teaching is supposed to have been affected by these modern techniques of language learning and language teaching. This literature learning App is an applicable proposed project according to the researcher's experience in the DT field; digital technology, (LiTech) as a proposed concept is ready to be turned into a Web-based application and android App, so long as it is simple to manage and demonstrate by teachers, parents and learners having so many accessible digital features. The importance of this literature learning proposed project lies in the area of enhancing learners' receptive language skill, providing digital interactive learning environment for the end-users (secondary school learners and university students, furthermore, it targets all the EFL learners. Since LiTech is a proposed project for teaching literature digitally, the researcher has used a

combination of multiple methods of data collection from different resources, it is an experimental study whose main expected might be a comprehensive understanding of literature, in particular, the short stories and novels, increasing the learners' communicative and receptive language skills, following the implementation of Li-Tech as literature learning proposed project. Finally, the researcher recommends the financial funding also the adoption of the project by ministry of Education or any scientific academy.

Keywords: ,Technologies, Interface,App , Digital content , LiTechApp

دمج التقنيات في تدريس الأدب الانجليزي لطلاب المدارس الثانوية في السودان (دراسة حالة بعض المدارس الثانوية بولاية الخرطوم)

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المستخلص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دمج التقنيات في تدريس الأدب الإنجليزي لتسهيل عملية تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الثانوية السودانية، وكذلك خلق بيئة تعليمية تفاعلية عبر تقنية الوسائل السمعية والبصرية المدعومة. تفترض الاتجاهات الحديثة في تدريس اللغة والمهارات العالية في استخدام التقنيات في الفصل الدراسي. السودان جزء من المجتمع العالمي حيث من المفترض أن يكون تعليم اللغة قد تأثر بهذه التقنيات الحديثة . تطبيق تدريس الأدب هو مشروع مقترح قابل للتطبيق وفقا لخبرة الباحث في مجال التقنيات الرقمية ، ان تطبيق تدريس الادب الانجليزي كمفهوم مقترح جاهزة للتحويل إلى تطبيق قائم على الويب وتطبيق الاندرويد الذي من السهل إدارته والتعامل معه من قبل المعلمين وأولياء الأمور والطلاب ، التطبيق لديهم العديد من الميزات الرقمية والواجهات وتبويب البيانات التي يمكن الوصول إليها بسهولة . تكمن أهمية هذا المشروع المقترح لتدريس الأدب الإنجليزي في تعزيز مهاره اللغة السمعية لدارسي اللغة الانجليزية وتوفير بيئة تعليمية تفاعلية رقمية للمستخدمين النهائيين (طلاب المدارس الثانوية وطلاب الجامعات)، علاوة على ذلك ، فإنه يستهدف جميع دارسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. بما ان تطبيق تدريس الادب الانجليزي الرقمي هو مشروع مقترح لتعلم اللغة فقد استخدم الباحث مزيجا من الأساليب المتعددة لجمع البيانات من مصادر مختلفة ، فهي دراسة تجريبية والتي قد تكون نتائجها المتوقعة الاستيعاب والفهم الشامل للأدب ، ولا سيما القصص القصيرة والروايات ، مما يزيد ويعزز من مهارات الخطابة والاستماع لدى دارسي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية ، بعد تنفيذ مشروع مقترح تدريس الأدب الانجليزي. وأخيرا يوصي الباحث بالتمويل المالي وأيضا تبني المشروع من قبل وزارة التربية والتعليم أو أي أكاديمية علمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تطبيق تقنية الادب الانجليزي، التقنيات، واجهة المستخدم، تطبيق، المحتوى الرقمي

LiTech



Rationale:

The world has been greatly affected by the pandemic of Corona 19. Most of the human activities were almost stopped or postponed. Great economic, social, and cultural, health and educational changes have taken place all over the world. But the economics of the third world countries in particular have been badly affected due to the poor infra-structure in these countries. According to Bundervoet, et.el. (2021)⁽¹⁾

“The past year has been one of the toughest in recent history, due to the harsh health, economic, and social impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. The impacts have been felt everywhere, with no country spared. Yet, they have not been felt the same way by everyone.”

Bundervoet ⁽²⁾ believes that,

“Women, young and less-educated workers – groups that were likely at a disadvantage in the labor market even before the shock – were more likely to lose their job in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic.

This was the main finding of a recent study data collected at the onset of the crisis in 34 mostly low and middle-income countries around the world, which account for a combined population of almost 1.4 billion.

They continue to state that,

“Relative to men, women were 11 percentage points more likely to have lost their job ; a similar gap was found between tertiary-educated workers and those with primary education or less⁽³⁾

But the greatest effect of Corona Virus was on the education sector. According to a report from the World Bank by Donnelly, et. el (2021) (4)

“School closures due to COVID-19 have brought significant disruptions to education across Europe. At the peak of the pandemic, 45 countries in the Europe and Central Asia region closed their schools, affecting 185 million students. Given the abruptness of the situation, teachers and administrations were unprepared for this transition and were forced to build emergency remote learning systems almost immediately”.

But remote learning has the limitations of emergency. It is the lack of personal interaction between teacher and student. With broadcasts, this is simply not possible. The effect of Covid 19 on education was not the same. As Donnelly (2021) (5) adds by saying:

” However, several countries showed initiative by using other methods to improve the remote educational experience, including social media, email, telephone, and even the post office. But unfortunately, despite best efforts to set up a supportive remote learning experience, evidence is emerging to show that school closures have resulted in actual learning losses”. But by all means these countries were to some extent able to find some ways out to reach their children through the electronic learning.”

According to Abass, (2022)⁽⁶⁾,

”In Sudan, approximately 8.5 million children between 5 and 13 years of age should be in school. However, even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated 3 million children of them are already out of school and nearly 38 per cent of children in school are unable to read proficiently. Children in Sudan were already struggling with learning”.

Abass, (2022) (7) adds that,

“The 2018 National Learning Assessment (NLA) indicated that among grade three students many struggled to read simple familiar words and less than half could comprehend what they read. Additionally, less than half of them could solve level-one mathematics exercises”.

Sadly, this learning crisis was further exacerbated by school closures which spanned between 2019 and continued until 2022 due to COVID-19 pandemic and the volatile political situation, she adds. (ibid)

Abbas (2022)⁽⁷⁾ also reports that

“In Sudan, approximately 8.5 million children between 5 and 13 years of age should be in school. However, even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated 3 million children of them are already out of school and nearly 38 per cent of children in school are unable to read proficiently. COVID-19 school closures worsen pupils’ access to learning.”

So, based on this situation; a new educational measure should be taken in consideration. Covid 19 has betrayed our fragile educational system as well it has betrayed our poor access to electronic education, which was another option for many nations, through which they could afford teaching and learning, in their schools and universities. This study is an effort, a part of other attempts to integrate technology in our modern education. It is high time for our young people to be fluent to use these modern technologies, as part of their learning strategies. It is also a must for teachers to be equipped with such knowledge and skills to enable them cope with the latest advances in education and technologies, to contribute in such a fast modern global economy.

This study may help to improve Literacy and numeracy as to ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy as planned by Target 4.6: of the UNESCO in Sudan Education Policy Review for 2030.(8)

2.0 Introduction

LiTech is an Audio-visual English Literature Learning Supported Technology (LLST), It is an interactive learning-based program, being a Web-based and android application. It is an EduTech tool for making the learning of short stories more attractive, dynamic and enjoyable to the EFL learners, in particular, the basic and the intermediate school learners, having in mind the integration of a digital technology and the multimedia into the instruc-

tional method to fit the current learning requirements.

2.1 Objectives of the project

It is an interactive and motivating learning application, meeting the current learners' requirements. It integrates various features which focus and target the comprehension skill, in particular, the audio-visual characteristics. Each feature contributes in achieving the objective of the application. Most of the information received by the brain is done through visual mind register and limited amount is received via listening, as cognitive Psychology stated. So, the aims of this application are to:

- broaden the learners' understanding of the target language through this audio-visual-supported-learning -technology application.
- be accessible by the learners at any time.
- facilitate the process of teaching literature, making it attractive and motivating by changing the instructional environment.
- make learners adaptable to cope up with any upcoming changes required.

2.2 Features of the proposed project

2.2.1 The dictionary: It is a digital dictionary, encompassing all the words already used in the concerned short story book in the LitTech Application.

2.2.2 The audiobook: It is an audio script of the whole story or a novel in terms of chapters, being recorded in English language.

2.2.3 The Visual: It is the movie clip of the whole short story in chapters.

2.2.4 The Characters: This feature contains all the characters, being depicted or presented in the short story or the novel already in the application, their names, and roles, physical and psychological characteristics.

2.2.5. The lessons: It is a feature that has three characteristics (a written, audio and visual) it is a set of lessons to be ac-

cessed by the learners.

1.1.6 **The Comprehension:**

It is a feature being set out for each lesson, in term of multiple choice to track the understanding of the learners for the lessons they have read in the short story. It is a set of scores to be obtained by the learners in such way that he or she can only move ahead to the next question-based on the correct answers.

1.1.7 **The Spelling:** It is a feature that tackles the spelling of almost all the difficult words already stipulated in the short story to track the learners' correct spellings.

1.1.8 **The Phrasal Verbs:** This feature focuses on the phrasal verbs used in the short story or a novel, along with various examples to help learners understand the whole concept.

1.1.9 **The English Grammar:** It is a feature, addressing English structure used in the whole short story, like preposition, tenses, possessive adjective, noun and etc. along with clear illustrations and examples.

3.0 **Research Significance:**

The following are some of the Targeted groups who will be the beneficiaries/end-users of the LiTech. This programme is targeting all language learners in school in the General Education, as well as university students. It targets parents who are keen to help their daughters and sons to command the language with taste for literature in particular. The programme is also targeting teachers of English at both schools and tertiary levels.

LiTech is literature-learning-supported-technology (LLST), expected to achieve the following aims:

- comprehensive understanding of literature, in particular the short stories,
 - novels and drama of the concerned education school levels.
- enhancing the learners' receptive skills.
- improving the learners' spelling, English grammar and so on.

- creating an interactive digital learning environment for the basic school learners.
- making learning process more attractive and enjoyable.

Description of the technical features of the program

The LiTech contains 9 main icons with different functionalities, each of which has sub-interface with the accessibility for navigation and logging out at any time.

3.1 The LiTech Icon

This Icon will appear on the desktop of any android application or devices once the LiTech is installed from Play Story. By clicking on this Icon, you would be navigated to the log in menu. See Figure (3.2)



Figure (3.1) LiTech application Icon.

3.2 Log in interface: this would help the user navigate the main menu if he or she has an account, if not he could create a new account and then log in.



Figure (3.2) Log in or create a new account.

3.3 This figure below is the main menu: it has 9 Icons as follows Audio. Visual, Dictionary, Characters, Comprehension, text lessons, phrasal verbs, spelling, English Grammar. Each contains various learning options.

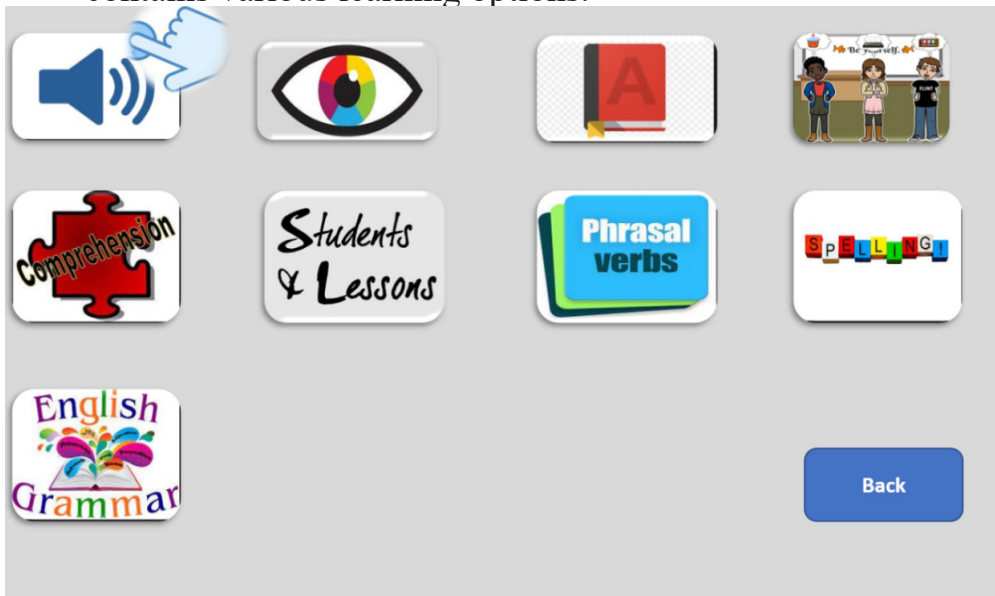


Figure (3.3) Main Menu

3.4 The figure below is one of the main interfaces that contains all the short stories already installed in the (LiTech App), each icon encompasses many learning features connected to the concerned short story like audio lessons, video of written text.



Figure (3.4) Menu of Short Stories

3.5 This interface below is an audio-based lessons, it has the accessibility to expose the learners to many audio scripts, just like the audio-book. Figure (3.5) gives an example of an audio script.



Figure 3.5 Example of Audio Scrip

3.6 This interface is a visual or video-based lesson. It is divided into many video clips, permitting the learners fully watch and understand the paralinguistic feature. See figure (3.6.1 – 3.6.2).

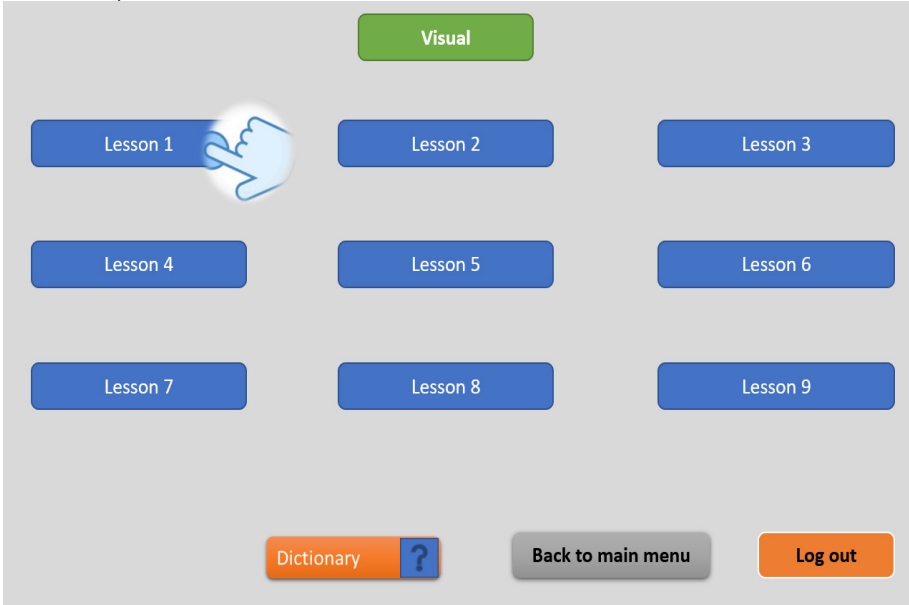


Figure (3.6.1) Video-based lesson.

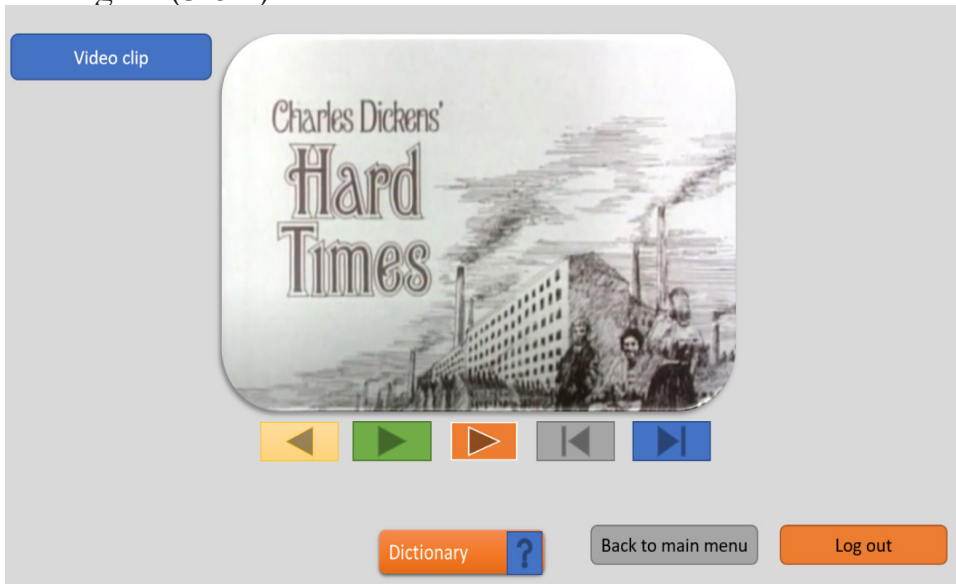


Figure (3.6.1) Video Demonstration

3.7 This interface exposes the learners to the various text lessons of the concerned short story already in the LiTech App. See figures (3.7.1 – 3.7.2).

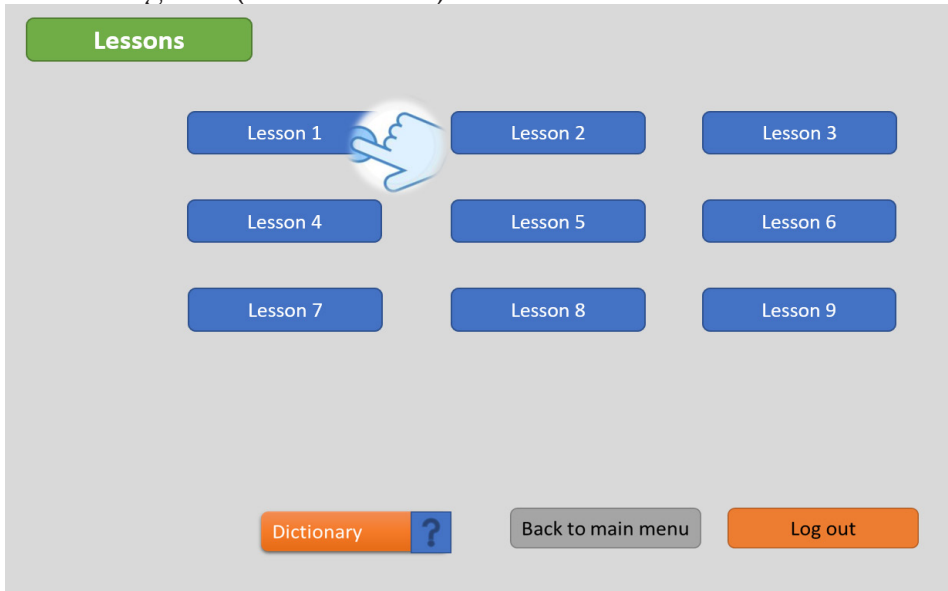
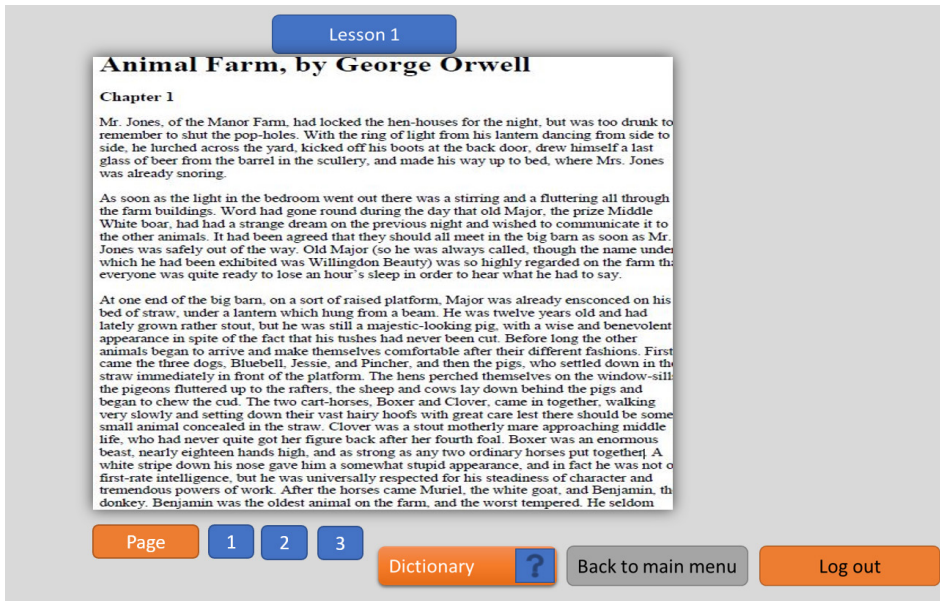


Figure (3.7.1) Text lessons menu



Figures (3.7.2) text lesson 1 demonstration.

3.8 This interface contains all the characters in the short story, each has an interface, consisting of the character’s physical, Psychological and mental description. See figures (3.8.1-3.8.2)

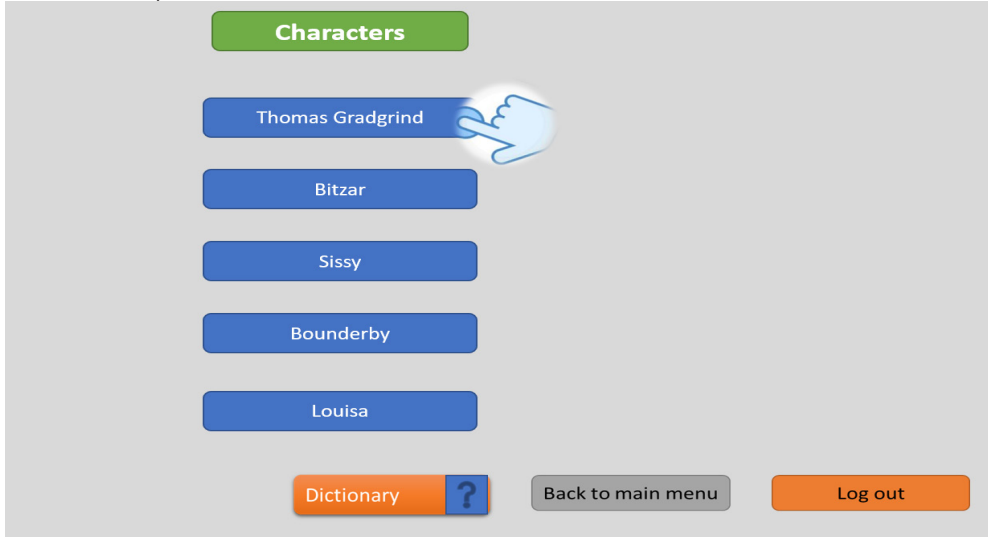
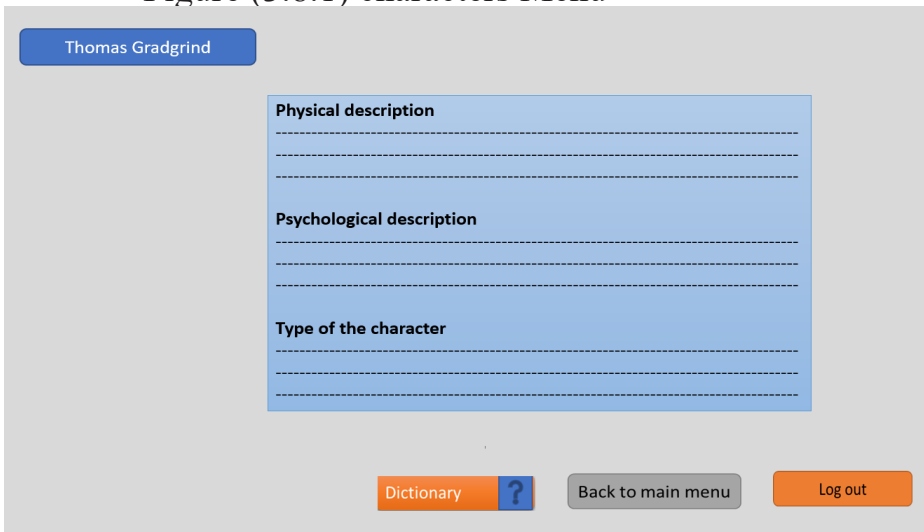
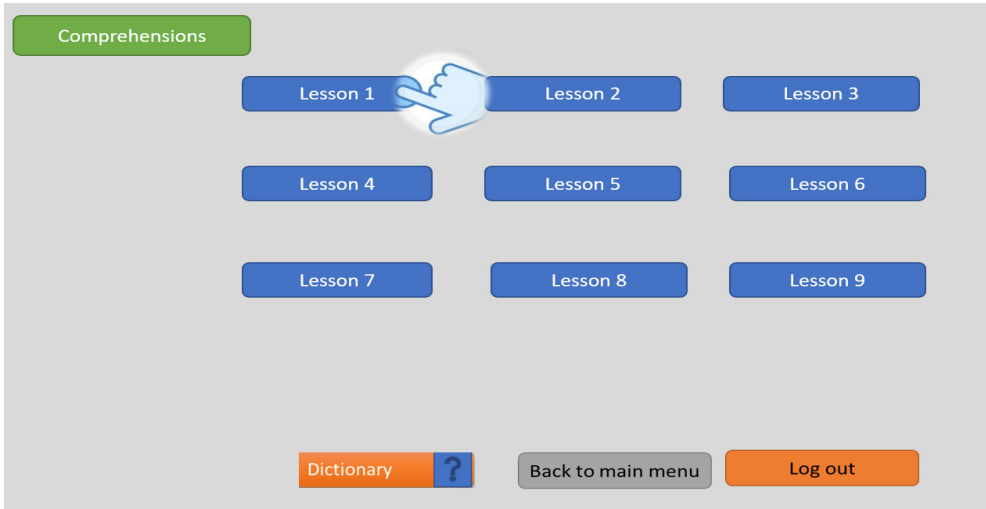


Figure (3.8.1) characters Menu

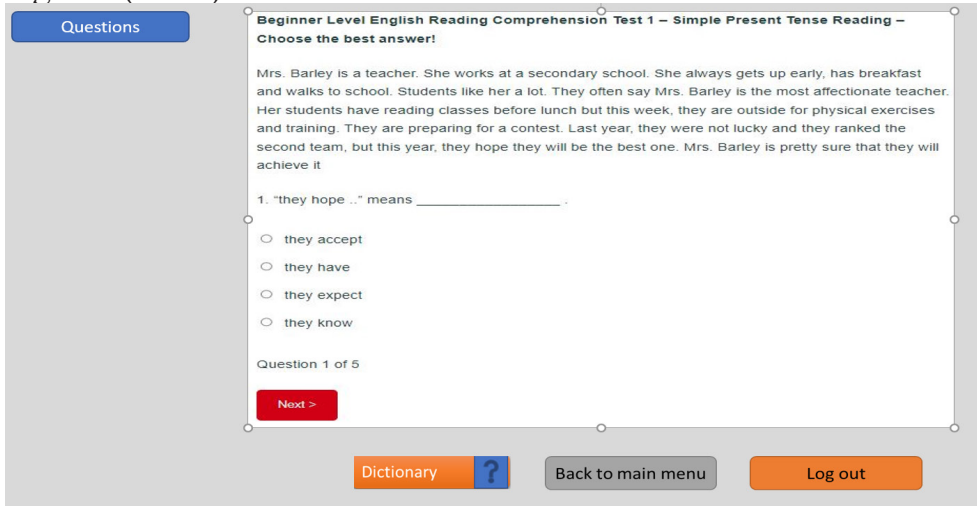


Figures (3.8.2) character’s description.

3.9 This interface is divided into various comprehensions text lessons to check the learners’ comprehension ability on different lessons. See Figures (3.9.1-3.9.2)



Figures (3.9.1) texts lessons menu



Figures: (3.9.2) text comprehension

3.10 This phrasal verb interface feature is to help learners understand the non-literal meaning of certain words in the short story.

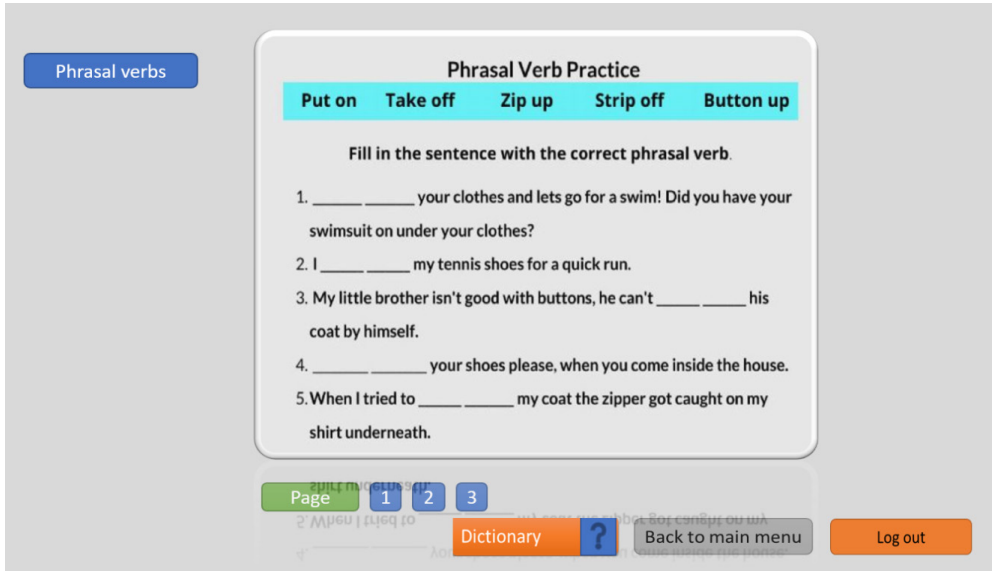


Figure (3.10) phrasal verbs lesson interface.

3.11 This interface is a set of spelling exercises, helping the learners know the correct spelling of the difficult words in the short story and English words in general. See figure (3.11)

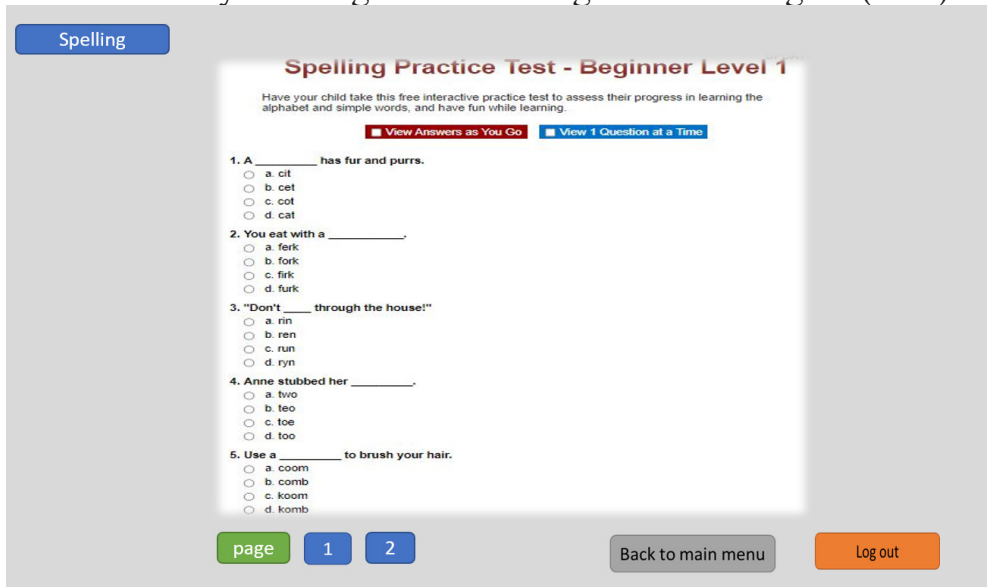


Figure (3.11) Spelling Exercises

3.12 This interface is one of the most important in the Latch

App. it consists of all the Grammar units already used in the concerned short story.

The screenshot shows an app interface for English Grammar. At the top left, there is a blue button labeled 'English Grammar'. The main content area is titled 'Present Simple Tense' and contains two sections of exercises:

1. Click on the correct option.

- Bob always *drink / drinks* tea in the morning.
- What *do / does* she like / likes?
- My sister *don't / doesn't* play tennis.
- They often *visit / visits* their grandparents at weekends.
- We sometimes *go / goes* to the ice rink.
- Where *do / does* your parents *come / comes* from?
- Do / Does* you *want / wants* to go home?
- I *don't / doesn't* watch television after school.

2. Complete. Use the Present Simple.

- Who _____ Sally _____ in Spain? (*visit*)
She _____ her aunt and uncle. (*visit*)
- _____ Tom _____ to school by bus? (*go*)
No, he doesn't. He _____ to school on foot. (*go*)
- What _____ she _____ on TV? (*watch*)
She _____ the news but she _____ soap operas.
(*watch*) (not *watch*)
- _____ they _____ swimming? (*like*)
Yes, they do, but they _____ running. (*not like*)
- When _____ you _____ to a football match? (*go*)
I _____ to a football match on Sundays. (*go*)

At the bottom of the interface, there is a navigation bar with several buttons: 'Page' (orange), '1', '2', '3' (blue), 'Dictionary' (orange), a question mark icon (blue), 'Back to main menu' (grey), and 'Log out' (orange).

Figure (3.12) Grammatical Units

3.13 This interface makes the learners access the correct pronunciation of words in two accents (British and American) in addition to the meanings, stress and illustration.

The screenshot shows a dictionary app interface. At the top left, there is a blue button labeled 'Dictionary'. Below it is a search bar with a white input field and an orange 'Search' button. Underneath the search bar are two buttons for accents: 'British' (blue) and 'American' (yellow). At the bottom right, there are two buttons: 'Back to main menu' (grey) and 'Log out' (orange).

Figure (3.13): Pronunciation of Words

4.0 Conclusion::

Integration of technology and teaching is no more an option. In fact, it is a must, as the digital development has made a great change in our world today. Many communities in the world are turning into digital communities, where the digital technology plays major role in their daily and routine lives. Technology is used in office and home. Some people can do their office work at home now. Technology is widely used in the virtual classes today, where millions of students do not need to physically attend school, as they can have access to education at home, with easy and great convenience. This programme is an attempt to digitalize our education especially language Education, where English as a major language is needed all over the world. English is the language of politics, economics, science, arts and technology as well as tourism. An 80% of the Digital Content is written in English. Our young learners are in practical need for such kind of learning to facilitate language acquisition and to be able to participate in this fast and vast growing global economy.

5.1 Educational impaction: This programme as we have shown can be easily used by students in the general education in elementary or secondary schools as well as university students. It is designed to be easily accessed and managed. Parents can also find good resource in it to help their sons and daughters at home.

4.2 Recommendations:

So to make this programme applicable it will need:

- An Android application programmer.
- Web-pages programmer.
- Two to three English language teachers to design MCQs, Multiple Choice Questions and the spelling which are built-in features in the application to meet the requirements, these MCQs and the spelling should cover all the short stories already in the application.
- Three to four data entry technicians.
- Financial support

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