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Adapting Instructional Materials for Distance Language Learning: Insights from Kazakh Higher Education after the Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The pandemic's onset necessitated the transition of conventional standard education to the remote format for almost all educational institutions, ensuring students continued learning with minimal disruption to their regular schedules and academic performance. This study explored distance language learners' satisfaction with adjusted traditional instructional materials for online delivery, their perceived effectiveness, and the correlation between these perceptions and language proficiency gains. It examined the process of adapting instructional materials for distance language learning, investigated learners' perceptions of the materials, and analyzed the outcomes of their engagement. This study employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating pre- and post-tests, Likert-scale questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews with 31 students from two leading Kazakh universities. The findings revealed that carefully adapted instructional materials for remote learning significantly improved language proficiency in the experimental group, particularly in speaking and writing skills, while boosting their satisfaction with the distance learning experience. However, technical difficulties and workload management emerged, offering valuable insights for future instructional designs. The research has practical implications for educators and policymakers, providing a framework for adjusting instructional materials to meet the needs of distance learners. By understanding the effectiveness and satisfaction levels of distance language learners with adapted instructional materials, this study offers actionable recommendations for policymakers and educators to create inclusive and effective online academic environments.

Keywords: Adjusting Instructional Materials; Academic Performance; Distance Language Learning; Teaching Strategies;

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Modification; Language Proficiency

1. Introduction

The pandemic's onset brought the transference of conventional standard education to the remote format for almost all educational institutions. The primary objective of that transformation was to keep students engaged in continued learning with minimal disruption to their regular school schedule and academic performance under uncertain circumstances [1, 2].

Governments and academic communities initiated several distance education (DE) solutions to these challenges. Although DE is not new, the unprecedented conditions caused by the pandemic brought significant challenges for policymakers, educators, and learners [2, 3]. According to the UN Policy Brief, researchers and other stakeholders adapted to DE relatively quickly without any preliminary plan to continue education [4]. They utilized online platforms for delivering instructions, presenting content, and exchanging knowledge, adapting their methods to keep students engaged amid pandemic restrictions.

Since the pandemic, the Kazakh educational system has undergone significant changes and reforms that have profoundly impacted the landscape of distance learning and the adaptation of instructional materials. One of the most notable developments is the accelerated digital transformation within educational institutions, driven by the need to continue learning during lockdowns and social distancing measures. Recognizing that many teachers were initially poorly versed in DE, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) launched several educational platforms, including Bilim Media Group, Daryn Online, iMektep, Kundelik, and the Balapan TV Channel, which provided video sessions for school children and educators. In addition to these resources, the MES organized online coaching webinars and established hotlines for teachers, students, and parents to support the transition to online learning [5]. Furthermore, the Kazakh government addressed the digital divide by providing personal computers and laptops to students and teachers who needed help to afford them due to financial constraints. These initiatives have significantly improved the effectiveness of distance learning.

Nevertheless, these initiatives required further refinement and a stronger focus on flexibility, innovation, and the continuous enhancement of digital learning resources to fully address the challenges of remote education and meet the diverse needs of educators and students. According to Orleu, National Center for Advanced Training survey, 83% of teachers did not consider themselves ready to teach remotely, 67% felt anxious about remote teaching, 46% did not know how to create audio and visual materials, and only 10% were happy or satisfied with the results of their remote work [6]. Nearly 71% of respondents needed to know how to apply traditional campus-based course materials to the DE environment successfully. Education First (EF) reported that Kazakhstan lagged behind other CIS countries in English proficiency [5] despite incorporating English into its national language policy [7]. A survey conducted by Ibadildin and his contributors on the impact of the pandemic on Kazakh university students found that one-third of respondents rated the quality of online courses as low; more than half experienced low motivation for distance education and preferred face-to-face classes. Additionally, a quarter of respondents reported a lack of social interaction with peers and the absence of peer feedback [8].

These facts demonstrate that, despite efforts to mitigate the pandemic's impact on education, the accelerated shifts in education delivery exposed significant gaps in ensuring equal access to quality education, leaving some students and teachers marginalized [5, 7, 8]. This case has strengthened the necessity to synthesize face-to-face instruction with Distance Learning (DL) opportunities to compensate for its deficiencies [1, 9]. Educational materials adapted to current needs are relevant and indispensable in this context, especially for language education. Hence, there is growing evidence that understanding the specificity of adjusting the existing instructional materials (IM) for a distance language learning (DLL) environment is crucial in creating engaging and inclusive learning experiences for all students. Therefore, *our study aims to explore distance language learners' satisfaction with adapted instructional materials, their perceived effectiveness, and their correlation with language proficiency gains*.

This paper does not discuss engineering perspectives on

DLL courseware. It discusses a didactic scenario for adapting and utilizing language IM to create dynamic, collaborative, and supportive online environments that are conducive to learning. The given study's findings are suggestions and comments rather than solutions based on our experience. Recent studies highlight the increasing dependence on virtual academic settings to address educational disruptions stemming from the pandemic [10–13]. These environments are essential for maintaining educational continuity, yet they reveal customized instructional strategies necessary to boost student engagement and learning effectiveness. The rising demand for motivation-based learning environments further underscores the importance of adapting educational materials to align with the changing needs of learners [13].

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Strategies for Adjusting Instructional Materials for Distance Language Learning

The concept of DL is undoubtedly not new. Numerous studies have defined DL as an instructional method that engages students in off-campus learning via computer technologies using the Internet at their own pace [10, 12, 13]. However, transitioning from on-campus learning to DL requires thoughtfully adapting IMs to align with the unique characteristics of online environments, ensuring optimal learning outcomes [14–16].

IMs in language education (LE) cover various physical and digital resources carefully selected to support teaching delivery modes. These materials are designed for learners to acquire language by presenting linguistic input, encouraging interaction, and developing skills. They include textbooks, multimedia resources, online platforms, visual aids, and interactive software, and are essential tools for language educators to create engaging language learning experiences. Language learning entails building communication skills for practical or integrative purposes, such as pursuing future employment or immersing oneself in a new community while living abroad [7, 17]. Based on this review, we define *IMs as dynamic resources of tangible and digital assets meticulously selected and designed to cater to student's diverse needs and learning styles*.

Over the years, several studies in LE have provided insights into best practices for selecting and adapting instructional materials for DL environments. The studies emphasize the affordances of digital tools and platforms in promoting communicative competence and cultural awareness in DLL [2, 14, 15]; the need for engaging, interactive, and culturally relevant materials to enhance learner motivation and participation in DL [16, 17]; task design for synchronous settings that mentors students' engagement in developing skills, emotions, participation, and performance [17, 18]; integrating multimedia resources and interactive activities to create dynamic DL experiences [3, 10, 19]; technology suitability for the user's needs, abilities, and preferences for particular goals, actions, or projects with the expectation of personal gain [13]; the role of web-based platforms as assessment tools with engaging and interactive learning tasks, making assessments more effective and beneficial for both educators and students [11, 12]. Still, these studies also need to focus on adjusting teaching materials to a distance environment to engage students in active learning and increase their satisfaction with education. For instance, incorporating multimedia resources alongside task-based instructional methods has increased student engagement and motivation [12]. Additionally, Pham et al. indicated that the effectiveness of e-learning services plays a crucial role in shaping student satisfaction and loyalty, highlighting the need to adjust materials to fulfill these criteria [14]. Moreover, Uludag pointed out the significant impact of virtual academic settings in facilitating education during challenging times, illustrating their necessity in modifying instructional approaches for online learning contexts [10]. Based on our analysis of distance learning (DL) studies and pedagogical experience, we propose that the effectiveness of DL largely depends on well-informed decisions made during the design of tutorial tasks. Teachers must evolve their abilities to successfully teach at a distance as new in-demand skills enrich their pedagogical experience, empowering their students and themselves [1, 7].

Similarly, Garrels and Zemliansky state that carefully designed planning using a systematic model for adapting IMs to DL increases the value of online education and influences its effectiveness. Integrating multiple communication modes, including visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile, facilitates DLL [3]. Broadly, adjusting IMs to remote settings requires redesigning educational tools (oral, written, visual), including technologies, assessment instruments, learning activities, and other materials that enrich the distance teaching process,

involve students in a multidimensional learning process, and evolve their ability to apply the knowledge gained in real-life circumstances. These facts have highlighted the importance of adjusting instructional materials to suit the unique demands of online environments and creating a more inclusive academic setting by offering meaningful engagement, skill development, and knowledge acquisition opportunities for language learning and teaching effectiveness. The literature survey allows us to define the term 'adjustment' as adapting parts of available materials to students' interests to stimulate their motivation for learning [20].

The IM adjustment process includes several factors to make decisions on different aspects, such as the selection of materials, integration of multimedia resources, and instruction modes for learners' engagement and interaction. Within the DL, educators should also consider the accessibility, user-friendliness, and validity of adjusting IM to the virtual environment. Drawing from relevant literature and our pedagogical framework, we propose that the adaptation process maximizes the appropriateness and accessibility of instructional materials (IMs) to suit specific circumstances. It should also focus on providing interactive, high-quality learning support to effectively achieve desired course learning outcomes while ensuring that course components are interconnected coherently and cohesively (**Figure 1**).

Thus, to understand the adaptation stages of IMs for online settings, the first critical aspect involves selecting and modifying existing resources to align with course learning objectives and outcomes. Educators must carefully assess the materials' relevance, authenticity, and appropriateness for online use, considering language proficiency levels, learning objectives, and cultural sensitivity [10, 21]. Additionally, selected materials require adjustments to suit the asynchronous nature of online learning, emphasizing self-directed study and independent practice. Considering the unique opportunities and limitations of digital platforms improves the accessibility, interactivity, and flexibility of the materials, fosters students' interactive participation and collaboration, and facilitates ongoing feedback.

Another critical aspect of adequate DL is integrating IMs with multimedia resources, which enriches the learning experience and facilitates language acquisition. Utilizing interactive platforms that integrate instructional materials with multimedia resources provides authentic language practice and feedback [14, 16, 22], creates immersive learning experiences that mirror real-world language contexts, and enhances language comprehension and cultural awareness [15]; promotes language production, creativity, and cultural expression [23, 24]; creates collaborative learning spaces for peer interaction and cultural exchange [3, 21, 25]; offers flexibility and accessibility to engage learners anytime, anywhere [10, 12].

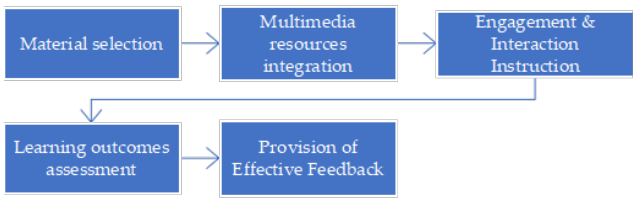


Figure 1. IMs adjustment process.

As DLL continues to be prominent in education, language educators should adapt IMs to suit the unique demands of online environments. By employing the strategies mentioned above (**Figure 1**), educators can create engaging and inclusive distance language learning experiences for their students [15]. **Table 1** demonstrates how language educators can meet the evolving needs of distance learners and foster their language proficiency and communication competence in the digital age through ongoing adaptation of teaching material instructions.

The updated *English for International Relations* course material instructions illustrate the application of these strategies, representing a significant shift from traditional activities to more interactive and collaborative online experiences. This modification aligns with the principles of engaging and inclusive distance learning by improving the relevance, accessibility, and interactivity of the learning process. For example, the *Online Grammar Exercises* enhance students' grasp of grammar and critical language structures necessary for effective written and spoken communication. The online format offers flexibility, allowing students to work at their own pace, making it a valuable tool for reinforcing grammar engagingly and interactively. It also provides immediate feedback, enabling students to promptly rectify errors and comprehend the underlying grammatical rules. Students internalize these structures through repeated practice, which is crucial for constructing coherent sentences in written and oral communication [23].

The *Virtual Vocabulary Flashcards* activities enhance students' vocabulary, particularly in specialized areas like

Table 1. Updated "English for International Relations" students course instructions samples.

Activities	Instructions (Topic: Weather Forecast)
Online Grammar Exercise	- Click on the link to access the online grammar exercise. - Read the instructions carefully before starting the exercise. - Complete each sentence with the correct form of the verb (f.e. Present Simple Tense). - Check your answers and review any incorrect responses. - Submit your completed exercise by clicking the 'Submit' button.
Virtual Vocabulary Flashcards	- Open the virtual flashcards application by clicking on the provided link. - Review the vocabulary flashcards for weather forecasts in the target language. Practice pronunciation of each word aloud. - Test your knowledge by flipping the flashcards and trying to recall the corresponding word. - Mix up the flashcards and challenge yourself further using the' shuffle' feature. - Repeat the process until you feel confident with the vocabulary.
Recorded Listening Comprehension	- Listen to the recorded weather forecast in the target language by clicking on the provided audio link. - Pay attention to the weather predictions and descriptions. - Take notes on essential information such as temperature, precipitation, and weather conditions. - Answer the comprehension questions based on the listening passage. - Replay the audio as needed to review specific details and improve comprehension. - Submit your answers along with any additional observations or questions.
Online Interactive Interview Practice	- Open the online dialogue simulation by clicking on the provided link. - Choose your role as either the guest or the interviewer. - Read the dialogue prompts and responses carefully. - Practice speaking by recording your responses to the interview prompts. - Listen to the pre-recorded responses of the other character. - Switch roles and repeat the interview practice from the opposite perspective. - Reflect on your speaking performance and identify areas for improvement.
Virtual Cultural Exploration Activity	- Explore the virtual tour of famous landmarks in a country where the target language is spoken. - Navigate through the interactive map or slideshow to visit different landmarks. - Read each landmark's descriptions and historical background in the target language. - Watch videos or view photos to get a closer look at the architecture and scenery. - Take notes on interesting facts, cultural significance, and vocabulary related to each landmark. - Share your impressions and reflections in a written reflection or discussion forum.

weather forecasts. Students engage with digital flashcards containing the target word and its pronunciation, encouraging active recall and pronunciation practice. The virtual format allows students to shuffle the flashcards and practice repeatedly, helping them retain new vocabulary. These activities are effective in assisting students to develop a strong vocabulary, which is crucial for precise and effective communication in both spoken and written forms. Incorporating pronunciation practice ensures that students confidently use these terms in conversation, making this activity a comprehensive tool for vocabulary acquisition [21].

The *Recorded Listening Comprehension* activities improve students' understanding of spoken language in real-world situations. During these tasks, students listen to a recorded weather forecast in the target language and focus on essential details such as temperature, precipitation, and weather conditions. They then answer comprehension questions based on the audio, which helps them practice extracting and processing information from spoken language. These activities enhance students' listening comprehension, an essential skill for effective communication in international settings. Additionally, replaying the audio allows students to refine their listening skills and catch subtle details and nuances in spoken language.

The *Online Interactive Interview* practices are engaging activities that improve students' oral communication skills through simulated interviews. Students act as either the interviewee or the interviewer, and they participate in a simulated dialogue by recording their responses to interview prompts. This interactive approach allows students to focus on fluency, coherence, and pronunciation and develop their ability to respond to questions spontaneously. By switching roles and reflecting on their performance, students better understand the questioning and answering processes, ultimately enhanc-

ing their ability to communicate effectively in oral settings. These activities are beneficial for preparing students for real-life interviews and diplomatic exchanges, where clear and coherent communication is crucial.

The *Virtual Cultural Exploration* activities combine language learning and cultural understanding, offering students an immersive experience of the target language's cultural context. It involves a virtual tour of famous landmarks in a country where the target language is spoken. Students explore various sites using an interactive map or slideshow, read descriptions and historical backgrounds in the target language, watch related videos, and take notes on critical facts and vocabulary. These activities enhance students' reading comprehension and vocabulary and deepen their cultural awareness, which is crucial for effective communication. Lastly, students complete the activity by writing a reflection or participating in a discussion forum to reinforce their written communication skills.

This updated set of instructions is intended to offer a holistic approach to language acquisition, emphasizing the essential skills necessary for achieving proficiency in English for International Relations. Through the integration of interactive resources, instantaneous feedback, and practical use, these activities aid students in cultivating the linguistic and cultural proficiencies vital for excelling in their field.

2.2. Study Design

This study utilized a mixed-methods research design that integrated quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the following research questions: (1) What are the perceived effectiveness and satisfaction levels of distance language learners regarding adapted instructional materials? (2) How do these perceptions relate to their language proficiency improvements? The design featured an experimental element with a control group (CG) and an experimental group (EG) alongside a qualitative aspect incorporating surveys and interviews. The quantitative part assessed pre- and post-test results, while the qualitative aspect investigated learner satisfaction and engagement through Likert-scale questionnaires and thematic analysis of interview feedback. Both groups followed the same curriculum, with the CG using traditional instructional methods and the EG receiving adapted materials. All participants gave informed consent.

This study employs a quantitative experimental design to assess the efficacy of adapting instructional materials online and their potential influence on students' language learning performance. A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect general data from participants. The questionnaire asked students to fill out a closed-question form on a five-point Likert scale, where '1—very effective,' '2—quite effective,' '3—somewhat effective,' '4—ineffective,' and '5—no difference' concerning DLL.

The pre-experiment tests were designed to assess the students' initial levels of English language proficiency in both written and oral communication. Since language proficiency refers to an individual's ability to effectively and appropriately use a language in real-world situations, in this study, language proficiency refers explicitly to students' abilities in written and oral communication. Written communication proficiency involves the capacity to produce precise, coherent, and well-structured written texts, while oral communication proficiency pertains to the ability to express ideas fluently and accurately in spoken language [16]. These two dimensions of language proficiency are crucial for students in the field of International Relations, where the ability to communicate effectively in both written and oral forms is essential for success [24, 26, 27]. Therefore, the study's focus on these two aspects of language proficiency is aligned to prepare students for the communicative demands of their future careers.

The written communication pre-test involved a timed essay task in which students wrote an argumentative essay on a topic relevant to international relations. This task was evaluated based on a standardized rubric that assessed task response, content and organization, coherence, syntax, and vocabulary. The oral communication pre-test consisted of structured discussions conducted by trained examiners, where students were required to discuss their opinions on global issues. Their responses were evaluated on fluency and coherence, lexical resources, pronunciation, grammar, and accuracy. These tests provided a comprehensive baseline for comparing the students' progress at the end of the experiment.

The written communication post-test mirrored the pre-test, with students again completing a timed argumentative essay. However, the topics were different to ensure any improvement was due to the course content rather than familiarity with the task. The oral communication post-test

involved a follow-up structured discussion, similar to the pre-test but with different topics to avoid bias.

At the end of the experiment study, thirty-one EG students participated in an interview to gain deeper insights into students' experiences with the adapted instructional materials for DLL. Each participant is coded as Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), and so on to ensure anonymity. The interview questions centered on three main themes related to the research objectives: (1) satisfaction with the modified instructional materials, (2) perceived effectiveness in enhancing language proficiency, and (3) the relationship between the materials and participants' progress in language skills. Each interview was conducted online via video conferencing and lasted 15–20 minutes. Responses were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed through thematic analysis to reveal recurring patterns and themes.

2.3. Data Collection

To analyze the data, the researchers employed a systematic approach to data collection and analysis, incorporating rigorous statistical methods and triangulation processes to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. Descriptive statistics summarised survey data, including participant demographics and response distributions, providing a clear overview of trends and patterns. The analysis applied the basic formula for calculating percentages:

$$\text{Percentage } (\%) - \left(\frac{\text{Frequency}}{2aTotal}\right) * 100$$

Where:

- ➢ **Frequency** = The number of occurrences for a specific category or response.
- ➢ **Total** = The total number of observations or respondents.

Interview responses were coded, transcribed, and analyzed for qualitative analysis to ensure comprehensive data exploration. A thematic analysis approach was adopted, identifying recurring challenges such as resource limitations, curriculum inflexibility, and gaps in professional development.

The following scale was used as a reference to interpret the respondents' pretest and posttest results. This standardized performance measure evaluates the effectiveness of adjusting instructional materials for DLL and how it could enhance student academic performance.

90 –100 = Advanced 75 – 79 = Developing
85 – 89 = Proficient 69% & Below = Beginning
80 – 84 = Approaching Proficient

The treatment was administered using Moodle learning management systems (LMS). Microsoft Teams plugin supported the creation of meetings/webinars, synchronization, evaluation, and backup/restoration directly from Moodle courses. We utilized Moodle to turn in-class activities into more active forms for (1) students' engagement and interactions with their peers, teachers, and administrations, (2) providing diversified learning support, (3) updating the IM, and (4) improved assessment of student's academic success. For instance, the course used interactive tools like discussion forums, quizzes, and polls to promote peer interaction and collaborative learning. Moodle's communication features also helped facilitate regular and transparent interactions between students, teachers, and administrators, creating a more supportive learning environment. These improvements in course delivery through Moodle played a crucial role in enhancing the engagement, learning outcomes, and overall satisfaction of the EG students with the course [10, 11].

2.4. Participants

Our study employed one hundred and twenty-six second-year undergraduate students willing to do their elective vocational English course remotely. The classes included in the study were selected due to their direct connection to the researchers. The participants majoring in International Relations represented Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages (Ablai Khan University) and al-Farabi Kazakh National University (al-Farabi University). **Table 2** provides demographic information about participants. Al-Farabi University students were assigned as CG with 65 participants to establish causality by isolating the effect of an independent variable. Ablai Khan University students were assigned as an EG with 61 students. The average age of all participants was twenty-one years old. Students varied in language proficiency, motivation, engagement, and comfort with the remote classrooms.

We informed all students that their participation was voluntary and that they could opt out anytime. Before the treatment, the participants were asked to give informed consent and were informed about the importance of their feedback for the study. Most participants quickly agreed to join the treatment, while others hesitated initially but eventually agreed. The survey ensured that the participants' identities

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of participants.

Groups	Universities	Participants				Total
		Male		Female		
EG	**Ablai Khan**	35	28%	26	21%	61 (48%)
CG	**al-Farabi**	37	29%	28	22%	65 (52%)
Total		72	57%	54	43%	126 (100%)

remained anonymous. However, they were asked to indicate their geographical origin (**Table 3**). We use non-probability sampling to select individuals based on predefined criteria, including (1) geographic origin, ensuring participants were drawn from all 14 regions of Kazakhstan, (2) gender to provide equal access to the interview, and (3) areas to define whether the participants are from an urban or rural area. The findings revealed that nine international students were involved in the study.

Table 3. Geographical characteristics of participants.

	Location	Participants	
Regions	Abay	5	4%
	Akmola	17	13.5%
	Aktobe	5	4%
	Almaty	27	21%
	Atyrau	10	8%
	East Kazakhstan	4	3%
	Karaganda	7	5.5%
	Kostanay	2	1.5%
	Kyzylorda	4	3%
	Pavlodar	4	3%
	Turkestan	13	10%
	West Kazakhstan	6	5%
	Zhambyl	9	7%
	Zhetisu	4	3%
	Afghanistan	4	3%
	Russia	3	2%
	Tajikistan	2	1.5%
Area	Rural	79	63%
	Urban	47	37%

3. Results and Data Analysis

The study findings on assessing learners' perceptions of the effectiveness and satisfaction with adjusted IMs were presented in two stages. First, a questionnaire survey (pre-experimental treatment) was used to review students' satisfaction with DLL. The recipients' answers were mixed. The survey revealed that 43% of the participants felt unsatisfied with DL, finding it ineffective, whereas 19% thought it was very effective. Almost 13% said it was quite effective, 16% thought there was no difference, and 9% said it was somewhat effective (**Figure 2**). 100% (n = 126) of participants joined the questionnaire.

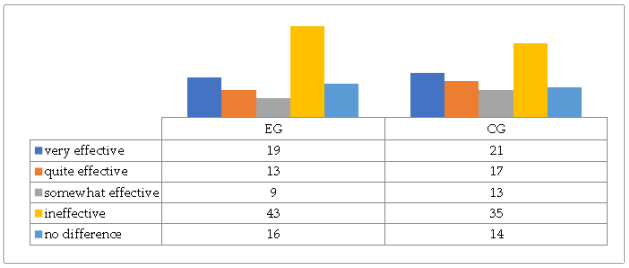


Figure 2. Students' satisfaction with DLL.

The second (experimental treatment) stage employed EG students with modified IMs during their vocational English sessions in the spring semester of the 2022–2023 academic year. First, we ran pre-experiment tests to measure their communication skills with EG and CG students. **Table 4** demonstrates the test results.

Table 4. Pre-experiment language proficiency test results.

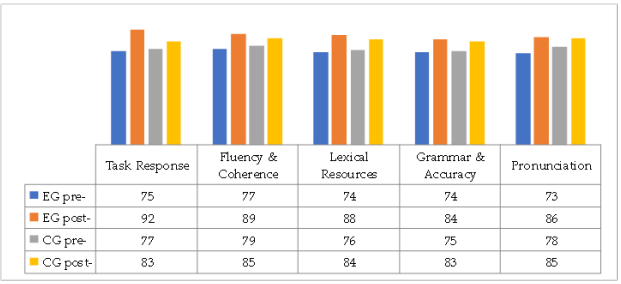
Participants/ Average Points	Writing (max.*100)	Speaking (max.*100)	Total
EG	72.8	74.6 +	73.7
CG	73.6 +	79	76.1

*Maximum

After undergoing the experimental treatment, both groups were given final language proficiency tests to assess their written and oral communication skills progress. The written communication post-test mirrored the pre-test, with students again completing a timed argumentative essay. However, the topics were different to ensure any improvement was due to the course content rather than familiarity with the task. The oral communication post-test involved a follow-up structured interview, similar to the pre-test but with different discussion topics to avoid bias. The same evaluation criteria rubric used in the pre-test was applied to

assess the final tests, ensuring consistency in evaluation.

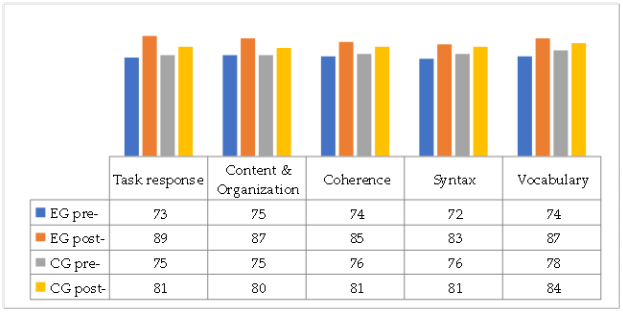
Further, we discuss the results of EG. **Figure 3** compares pre- and post-test speaking scores between the EG and CG. The results show significant improvement in the EG, while the CG shows minimal changes, emphasizing the effectiveness of adapted instructional materials. The statistical analysis of the pre-and post-experiment test results for speaking in EG revealed students' overall improvements (+13). At the same time, task accomplishment skills were fostered by 92 (+17 scores) after the treatment intervention. This is due to carefully adjusting students' assignments to Moodle facilities, which provide diversified learning support and enhanced interaction evaluation of student progress. We also believe improved pronunciation (+13 scores) results from tasks focused on constant multimodal media and interactive applications with authentic resources in their learning to speak clearly and confidently. In addition to learning the right ways to pronounce different words, students learn useful vocabulary and work on their grammar. Interactive online English grammar and vocabulary applications enhance students' accuracy by 84 (+10) and enrich their vocabulary range (+14). These applications enable teachers and students to create interactive exercises with multiple choice, short answers, mixed sentences, crosswords, matching/ordering, filling in gaps and evaluating their progress, developing their fluency and consistency skills (+12).



	Task Response	Fluency & Coherence	Lexical Resources	Grammar & Accuracy	Pronunciation
EG pre-	75	77	74	74	73
EG post-	92	89	88	84	86
CG pre-	77	79	76	75	78
CG post-	83	85	84	83	85

Figure 3. Pre- and post-test results for speaking skills in EG and CG.

For the writing part, students reproduced their findings as an argumentative essay. **Figure 4** illustrates the pre-and post-test writing scores for the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG). According to **Figure 4**, the EG exhibited a notable increase in writing proficiency compared to the CG, highlighting the impact of the experimental instructional approach (+13 scores). Despite minor irrelevance in task response, students accomplished the given task by introducing well-developed positions supported by solid arguments (+16). Students' writings were contextually and structurally correct, with smooth transitions between ideas (+12). They presented exciting and creative responses due to a wide variety of vocabulary that expands the topic (+13) and grammar structures with complete flexibility and accuracy (+11). There were still minor errors (mainly in spelling and punctuation) that did not impede communication.



	Task response	Content & Organization	Coherence	Syntax	Vocabulary
EG pre-	73	75	74	72	74
EG post-	89	87	85	83	87
CG pre-	75	75	76	76	78
CG post-	81	80	81	81	84

Figure 4. Pre- and post-test results for writing skills in EG and CG.

The post-experiment test results showed that the average student's evaluation score for language proficiency test results in EG increased by 13 points, while in CG, it increased by 4 (**Figure 5**). According to **Figure 5**, the EG demonstrated statistically significant improvement in speaking and writing skills (+13) after the experiment compared to the CG, whose progress was insignificant (+4). This indicates that the adapted teaching materials had a significant positive impact on language proficiency.

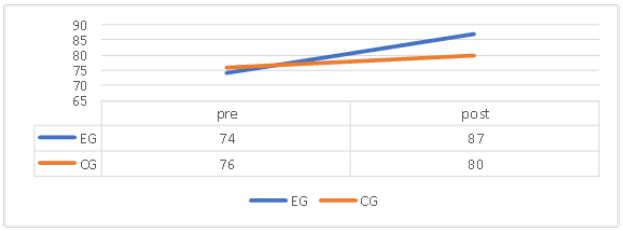
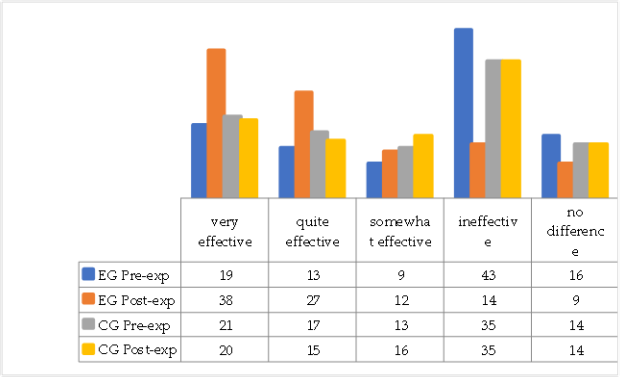


Figure 5. Comparative pre- and post-test language proficiency results in EG and CG.

Next, measuring students' satisfaction with the new language learning approach was essential. For this, we asked students to rate the new learning environment using the same questionnaire from Stage 1 (**Figure 3**).

We compared both (before and after the experience) questionnaire results on students' satisfaction levels with DLL practice in EG and CG (**Figure 6**). This figure presents questionnaire responses that revealed a marked increase in

student satisfaction within the EG, rising from an average score of 41% to 77%. In contrast, the CG showed no significant change in satisfaction levels, remaining at an average score of 51%. The results in EG revealed that the number of unsatisfied DL participants decreased almost five times to 9%, while the number of those who found DLL in the new format increased about two times (34%). 37 % of respondents found the updated course materials quite effective as they were satisfied with their academic performance, whereas the number of those who said it was somewhat effective almost remained unchanged. Also, it is worth noting that the number of participants with neutral positions on DLL decreased to 2 points each (**Figure 4**). **Table 5** demonstrates the indicators of **Figure 6** series from 1 to 5.



	very effective	quite effective	somewhat effective	ineffective	no difference
EG Pre-exp	19	13	9	43	16
EG Post-exp	38	27	12	14	9
CG Pre-exp	21	17	13	35	14
CG Post-exp	20	15	16	35	14

Figure 6. Pre- and post-experiment questionnaire results on student satisfaction with DLL practice in EG and CG.

To gather qualitative insights on the effectiveness of adapted IM in DLL, semi-structured interviews were held with 31 participants from the EG. These participants were chosen because they had completed the course utilizing the adapted IM and could provide in-depth reflections on their experiences. The interview questions addressed the following questions:

1) How satisfied were you with the adapted instructional materials used in the distance learning course?

2) In your experience, how did the adapted instructional materials help you improve your language proficiency in speaking or writing?

3) Do you think there is a connection between the modified materials and your progress in language proficiency? If yes, how would you describe this connection?

In response to *Question One* regarding student satisfaction with adapted IM, most respondents (e.g., P2, P5, P12, P17, P21, P24, etc.) reported high satisfaction levels, highlighting the engaging aspects of multimedia resources and interactive activities. Key features such as clear task instructions, interactive quizzes, and multimedia elements were noted as factors that enriched their learning experience.

However, some participants (e.g., P7, P18, P25, etc.) pointed out areas needing improvement, including insufficient real-time interaction and sporadic technical glitches. For instance, P7 stated, "*Though I valued the tasks, I occasionally felt disconnected without immediate assistance*." These insights indicate that while the materials were predominantly well-received, incorporating opportunities for synchronous interaction could further boost overall satisfaction.

In *Question Two* regarding the effectiveness of adapted instructional materials, participants largely agreed that these resources notably enhanced their language skills, especially in speaking. Several participants (e.g., P3, P9, P15, etc.) emphasized improving their speaking abilities through role plays and audio drills. P15 shared, "*The writing tasks increased my awareness of grammar and vocabulary, which in turn improved my confidence*." Meanwhile, a smaller subset (e.g., P6, P20, etc.) observed that the organized tasks and rubrics were instrumental in honing their writing skills.

Moreover, respondents emphasized a boost in confidence and motivation. For instance, P11 claimed, "*The speaking exercises were practical and helped me feel more assured using English in real-life situations*." These results correspond with quantitative data, confirming the materials' success in improving language proficiency.

In response to *Question Three* regarding the link between materials and language proficiency improvements, many participants (e.g., P4, P13, P19, etc.) indicated a strong relationship between the customized materials and their language development. The well-structured tasks and prompt feedback were highlighted as vital to their progress. P19 noted, "*The materials specifically targeted my weak areas. Their structured and focused approach enabled me to improve rapidly*." Several participants (e.g., P7, P14) pointed out the real-world relevance of the materials, which incentivized them to participate more actively in their learning. Nevertheless, a few participants (e.g., P9, P13, P26, etc.) recommended that a better balance between speaking and writing exercises could further improve the effectiveness of

Table 5. Indicators of Figure 6 series 1–5.

Series	Indicators	Pre-Exp (%)		Post-Exp (%)		Difference	
		EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG
1	very effective	19	21	38	20	+19	−1
2	quite effective	13	17	27	15	+24	−2
3	somewhat effective	9	13	12	16	+3	+4
Overall satisfaction level		*41*	*51*	*77*	*51*	*+36*	*0*
4	ineffective	43	35	14	35	−29	0
5	no difference	16	14	9	14	−5	0
Overall unsatisfaction level		59	49	23	48	−36	0

the materials.

Overall, students found their treatment sessions enjoyable, claiming that modified distance learning impacted the development of their receptive and productive skills. They reported higher reading, listening, and writing scores than before experimental learning. The new approach helped them communicate their ideas and opinions confidently and meaningfully in real-life situations beyond the campus classroom.

4. Discussion

This study evaluated the perceived effectiveness and satisfaction levels of adapted instructional materials for DLL and their correlation with language proficiency gains. The results provide valuable insights into the advantages of these adaptations and their broader relevance for distance language education. The survey revealed that recipients emphasized the most influential factor influencing their satisfaction with new DLL support strategies: the learning environment created by modified IMs. For instance, the questionnaire results indicated a significant difference in satisfaction levels between the CG and EG. The EG showed a rise in satisfaction with DLL, increasing from 19% to 34% for those rating it as 'very effective,' while the CG's satisfaction remained constant. This indicates that the adapted materials' interactive and contextually appropriate qualities significantly enhanced student experiences, as highlighted by Uludag [10]. Similar research findings have been reported in studies of higher education contexts [1, 12–16, 28]; this study found that the adjusted instructions seemed to support students' engagement – while some students benefit from interactive language learning platforms, others enjoy working with multimedia narratives using images, audio, and video clips and oral activities. The recipients pointed out the significance of transforming paper-based teaching materials into multimedia applications, providing practice opportunities and feedback on grammar rules, vocabulary expansion, and pronunciation practice. This allows them to build fluency, accuracy, and confidence in language use in various communicative contexts. This finding aligns with global research on the efficacy of virtual academic environments in enhancing student satisfaction and academic success [10]. Likewise, Pan emphasized that learning strategies centered on motivation are essential for promoting learner engagement, as reflected in the responses from students in our experimental group [12].

The discussion also revealed some barriers holding students from fully endorsing DL. Despite their teachers' support, students still needed help to improve their DL experience. For instance, some students missed having a structured schedule with their teachers to support them. Without it, they procrastinated more on their assignments, knowing they could work on them anytime. Over a third of all students surveyed complained of DL-related stress, although they experienced less stress this year than a year earlier. They reported headaches, insomnia, loss of energy, and other stress-related illnesses. According to Song et al., the complexity of navigating online platforms, processing digital content, and managing multiple tasks increases cognitive load, leading to mental fatigue and stress. The authors found that students often feel overwhelmed by the volume of online assignments and the expectation to be constantly available [28].

We agree with previous studies that uncertainty about course assessment criteria, expectations, and grading standards increases students' stress levels [18], and the standard language model used in schools is ineffective because it is often semi-authentic [21]. This model does not encourage learners to improve their language skills through real-life communication and lacks diverse learning activities due to its limited genre style variety. As a solution, Garrels and Zemliansky suggest creating meaningful social interactions,

such as group assignments, to build student cohesion and accomplish tasks[3]. These opportunities can replicate the sense of being in the same physical space a classroom provides in an online course. Thus, we assume that ensuring a balanced workload by carefully designing assignments and assessments, encouraging instructors to have regular check-ins with students to monitor their well-being, providing a platform for students to express their concerns, and providing clear communication and transparent evaluation methods to develop strategies to mitigate stress and create more supportive online learning environments.

Overall, the quantitative analysis reported significantly higher levels of perceived effectiveness of EG learners who engaged with adapted instructional materials than those who did not. Survey responses indicate high satisfaction among online learners with the quality, relevance, and accessibility of adapted instructional materials, with the majority expressing positive attitudes toward their learning experiences. The data demonstrated a positive correlation between engagement with adapted instructional materials and language proficiency gains, suggesting that exposure to tailored learning resources contributes to improved language skills.

The statistical analysis of the EG and CG post-test scores shows that the adapted instructional materials significantly improved language proficiency after the intervention among the EG students (**Figure 5**). The EG demonstrated statistically significant improvements in speaking and writing skills, with post-test scores showing a +13-point increase in overall language proficiency. These findings align with prior studies emphasizing the role of task-based and multimedia-enriched instructional methods in enhancing learner engagement and outcomes[12, 13]. In contrast, the CG exhibited minimal improvement, further highlighting the effectiveness of the adapted materials. Specifically, the paired samples t-tests showed a t-statistic of 3.45 with a p-value of 0.011, indicating a statistically significant increase in both the written and oral communication scores for the EG ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the instructional interventions were not only practical but also essential in enhancing the students' language skills in a distance learning environment. These findings suggest that carefully tailored instructional materials for remote learners can effectively bridge the gap between traditional and distance education, ensuring that students achieve comparable, if not superior, outcomes.

The statistical analysis of the EG and CG pre-test scores revealed no significant difference between the two groups before the intervention, with a t-statistic of 0.56 and a p-value of 0.60 ($p > 0.05$). This confirms that both groups started at a comparable level of language proficiency, further reinforcing the validity of the observed post-intervention improvements in the EG. This finding is consistent with existing literature on the benefits of interactive and multimedia-enriched materials in online learning environments[29, 30]. The consistency of these results across various language proficiency measures validates the effectiveness of the adapted materials in promoting academic success. As a result, these findings can be applied to similar educational settings, especially where students and educators need help with the shift to or maintenance of effective distance learning practices.

The interview results indicate that the modified IM successfully enhanced student satisfaction and improved language proficiency. Participants especially appreciated the interactive and multimedia components, which made the learning experience more engaging and applicable. The results also emphasize the need to tackle challenges, such as technical issues and the absence of real-time interaction, to leverage the materials' effectiveness fully.

The qualitative feedback from the interviews enriches the quantitative results of the study, illustrating the crucial impact of well-crafted instructional materials on improving the DLL experience. These findings provide important insights for future instructional design and the broader application of adapted materials in online language learning environments.

The observation of LL in remote situations showed the importance of the instructor's role as a designer. Despite the high-quality digital learning platforms available at schools, the success or failure of these platforms primarily lies in the teachers' ability to adapt IMs to language learners' needs. Thus, adapting conventional language teaching materials to online settings requires careful consideration of various factors such as engagement, interactivity, accessibility, and effectiveness. Based on the study findings, the following key *challenges* were identified, along with practical recommendations to address them:

1) Technical difficulties (unreliable internet connections and initial difficulties navigating the digital platform);

2) Lack of real-time interaction (a sense of isolation caused by the absence of immediate instructor feedback or

real-time communication);

3) Overwhelming workload (disbalance in DLL tasks with other responsibilities);

4) Imbalance between speaking and writing activities (speaking skills were emphasized more than writing);

5) Initial learning curve with adapted materials (difficulties understanding how to effectively use the adapted materials during the initial weeks of the course).

To address these challenges, several *recommendations* are proposed.

To overcome technical difficulties:

- prioritizing quality over quantity by focusing on fewer, high-impact tasks that align directly with learning objectives;

- providing a well-structured schedule with deadlines for each task, allowing students to plan their workload effectively; and

- allowing students to choose from various optional assignments based on their interests and strengths can help learners navigate the platform more effectively.

To address the lack of real-time interaction:

- adding scheduled live sessions, such as Q&A webinars or group discussions, to create opportunities for real-time interaction;

- integrating collaborative tools like discussion boards, peer feedback platforms, or group projects to foster a sense of community; and

- allowing students to schedule virtual one-on-one meetings with instructors for personalized support can help learners mitigate isolation.

To deal with an overwhelming workload:

- prioritizing quality over quantity by focusing on fewer, high-impact tasks that align directly with learning objectives;

- providing a well-structured schedule with deadlines for each task, allowing students to plan their workload effectively; and

- allowing students to choose from various optional assignments based on their interests and strengths can help learners balance DLL tasks with other responsibilities.

To tackle the imbalance between speaking and writing activities:

- ensuring that an equal number of tasks target speaking and writing skills, using varied formats such as role plays, video recordings, and reflective writing;

- designing activities that simultaneously develop speaking and writing, such as group discussions followed by collaborative written summaries; and

- including AI-driven speaking tools (e.g., automated pronunciation feedback) to provide personalized practice opportunities can help learners balance speaking and writing activities.

Finally, to overcome challenges regarding the initial learning curve with adapted materials:

- including a detailed user guide or short video tutorial explaining how to navigate the adapted materials and maximize their benefits;

- implementing low-stakes tasks in the first two weeks to help students familiarize themselves with the platform and receive early feedback; and

- pairing students with peers or instructors who can guide them through the course's initial stages can help learners understand how to use the adapted materials effectively during the course's initial weeks.

Together, these recommendations aim to enhance the DLL experience, address key challenges, and maximize the effectiveness of the instructional materials.

5. Conclusions

This paper has focused on adjusting IM for remote DLL, considering available educational resources to meet unprecedented pandemic challenges. It has concentrated on providing a framework for selecting materials, integrating multimedia resources, promoting learner engagement and interaction, assessing learning outcomes, and providing effective feedback for rethinking conventional IM design for remote delivery. It has also examined the effectiveness of this framework in practice and students' satisfaction with new learning approaches.

The survey results revealed that adapting IM to the online environment enhances students' academic success and satisfaction with learning. As some form of DL is likely to remain, guidance to provide instructors with practical recommendations on modifying teaching materials and instructional strategies to maintain students' involvement, motivation, and inspiration in distance learning is needed.

Our research carries significant implications. Firstly, it highlights online teachers' challenges and underscores the critical need for their readiness in fully online teaching,

particularly in resource-constrained environments. Comparable higher education institutions could leverage these findings to significantly enhance their efforts in establishing a more diverse online learning environment. Additionally, this study could provide valuable information to policymakers, school administrators, and teacher trainers to develop professional development programs that help teachers overcome these challenges and equip them with necessary content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and technological competence. Lastly, the findings offer a robust understanding of the interconnected factors shaping teachers' navigation strategies and challenges in constructing teaching materials, emphasizing the need for a systemic approach to address these issues.

Finally, we call on stakeholders to keep improving the perceived usefulness of online learning through education, media publicity, and empirical data to change the perception of online learning as ineffective and inferior.

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Conceptualization, A.D. and P.Y.; methodology, P.Y.; software, A.D.; validation, A.D., P.Y. and K.K.; formal analysis, P.Y. and K.K.; investigation, A.D.; resources, A.D.; data curation, P.Y., and K.K.; writing—original draft preparation, P.Y.; writing—review and editing, P.Y. and A.D; visualization, A.D.; supervision, P.Y.; project administration, P.Y.; funding acquisition, K.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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