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Last but not the least is the issue of technology access, cost, and availability. In line with previous research, teachers in this study highlighted the essence of technology access and affordable user cost for better teaching/learning experience with Shaad. It should not be forgotten that technology imposes some financial expenses on families. Hence, nation-wide successful distance language teaching/learning with Shaad calls for more systematic attentions to nation-wide technology availability. Similar issues are reported by different scholars in different parts of the world. In the investigation of the barriers for implementing ICT, English language teachers in Morocco counted some school-level barriers. These included limited access to the Internet, lack of computers, insufficient technical support, and limited access to ICT (Laabidi & Laabidi, 2016). The same issues (e.g., technical concerns and network sustainability) are reported as challenges in MALL research (Kukulska-Hulme & Sharples, 2016). The problems related to old equipment and lack of appropriate infrastructure within the school due to technology expenses and maintenances are similarly reported in Nova's (2017) study.

> We should not ignore the opportunities that a local application might bring into the Iranian educational context

Conclusion

Due to the sudden COVID-19 outbreak, face-to-face teaching shifted to online forums. The Ministry of Education developed and introduced a new platform for education and moved to Shaad mobile application. Drawing on a small group of English language teachers' experience in using Shaad, a number of implications are highlighted for a more productive teaching/learning experience with this mobile app. These include:
• offering more systematic CALL teacher education and professional development programs for in-and pre-service teachers to enhance their CALL/digital literacy,
• increasing the range of technical support and technological infrastructure and facilities,
• providing more economical facilities for educational institutions,
• offering a more extended and nation-wide service to include teachers and learners all across the country, especially those who are located in geographically dispersed areas with fewer facilities available, to address education justice,
• offering higher bandwidth and Internet services, and
• upgrading the technological features and interface quality of the app.

We should not ignore the opportunities that a local application might bring into the Iranian educational context.

test, and solving students' problems".

To make a complex definition simple, classroom management is defined as a "wide variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during class" (Abbot, 2014, as cited in Debreli & Ishanova, 2019, p. 2). This finding is in line with the results reported in Rashid (2017), in which teachers in Pakistan highlighted the importance of classroom management and timing issues (also Musmar, 2018).

> **Many studies have concentrated on the concepts of computer and digital literacies and/or competencies**

A number of respondents believed that effective Shaad app use was tightly related to teachers' and also learners' CALL /computer/technology literacy. In the absence of such knowledge-base, teacher and learners' productive interaction with technology might be impeded. A significant body of research indicates the positive effects of technology on boosting interaction among teachers and students (e.g., Ioannou, et al., 2015; Li & Kim, 2016). Neumann and McDonough (2015) affirm that "interaction plays an essential role in knowledge-building by creating opportunities for learners to elicit help from experts or simply articulate steps in the problem-solving process through internal or external speech" (p. 84). Given that learner engagement and active participation are substantial elements for learning (Berman, 2014), CALL should increase student engagement in both inside- and outside-of-the-classroom language activities (see Denker, 2013;

Mango, 2015).

Many studies have concentrated on the concepts of computer and digital literacies and/or competencies (Ilomäki, et al., 2014; Liu & Kleinssaser, 2015; Røkenes & Krumsvik, 2016; Tafazoli et al., 2017). Tafazoli (2017) defined CALL literacy as "the ability to use technology at an adequate level for teaching or learning a language" (n.p). Considering product end-users, developing teachers' CALL literacy should be one of the tasks of educational scholars and teacher educators. The more CALL literate students and teachers, the more appropriately CALL applications will be used.

In the same vein, the availability of technology-related facilities and infrastructure were two main factors that teachers believed must be addressed for a better experience. The absence of such qualities, they believed, largely restricts teacher/learner technology-enhanced language teaching/learning experience.

There were teachers who suggested to increase the attractiveness of the interface to make it more engaging for the learners. The loading speed of the app was addressed by one of the teachers who suggested improvements in Internet connection qualities for better future experiences. A number of teachers suggested using tools and platforms like Adobe Connect and Skyroom alongside Shaad. For this group of teachers, Shaad was more productive as social software app whose primary mission was asynchronous communication and notification generation. Another concern which was highlighted by the teachers participating in this study was the essence of providing them with relevant preparation and training to enable them have a better experience in using technology.
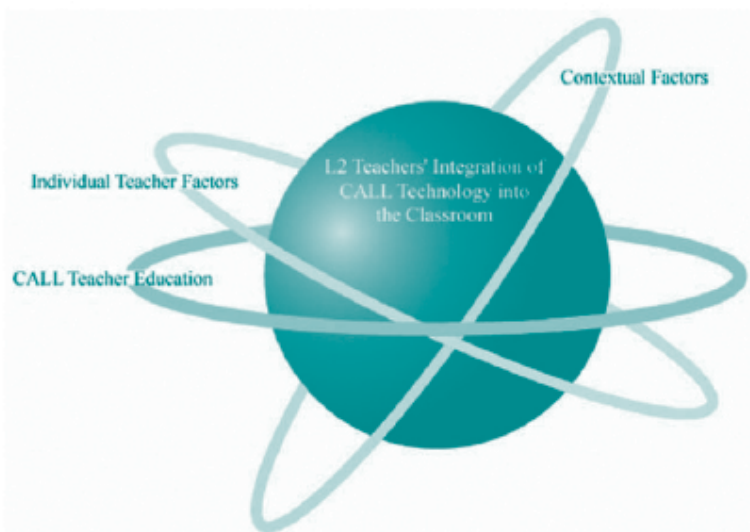
Figure 1. The spherical model of L2 teachers' integration of CALL technology into the classroom (Hong, 2010, p. 61)

Methodology

To address the above-mentioned research objective, a qualitative content analysis design was applied. The directed content analysis acts as the predictor of the variables of interest to discover the de/merits of technological tools based on the collected data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). An online 9-item survey, which was designed and developed using Google Forms, was administered. A panel of experts in different fields of CALL, curriculum design, teacher education, and English language teaching from Australia, Iran, Spain, and New Zealand commented on the first and second drafts of the questionnaire until a consensus was reached about the content of the instrument. The final survey contained five demographic questions regarding the age, education level, gender, teaching level, and teaching experience of the participants and nine open-ended questions.

A total of 12 (i.e., 11 females and 1 male) English language teachers with the experience of using Shaad mobile application were selected for the study following criterion-referenced (purposive) sampling techniques (see Mertens, 2014). Participants took part in the study on a voluntary basis. Four participants were Bachelor of Art (BA) level students, five were Master of Art (MA) level students, and three were Ph.D. students in English language-related fields. As far as age was concerned, the majority of the participants were 42 and above, two participants fell within the age range of 36 to 41, and only one participant was below 29 years. Teachers are referred to using a code in brackets to protect their confidentiality.

> In response to this emergency, in February 2020, Iranian government announced schools' shut down to limit the spread of COVID-19

Results and discussion

carefully looking into teachers' experiences (as mentioned in their survey responses), it was observed that three teachers considered Shaad app productive for classroom management and notifying learners. [T1] stated: "Shaad application is a good device for informing others. Also, it's useful for roll-calling". Likewise, [T2] declared that: "It is effective for classroom management". The same point was highlighted by [T3]: "I use Shaad app only for checking the homework, final
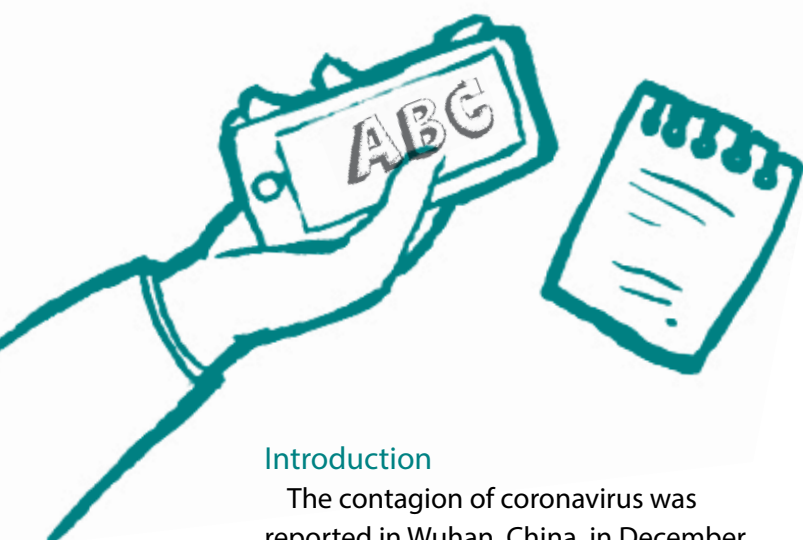
Introduction

The contagion of coronavirus was reported in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the epidemic led to COVID-19 pandemic all around the world. On February 19, 2020, the Iranian government reported the first cases of COVID-19 in Iran. To date (by September 16, 2020) over 407,353 confirmed cases and over 23,000 confirmed deaths have been reported in Iran (WHO, 2020).

In response to this emergency, in February 2020, Iranian government announced schools' shut down to limit the spread of COVID-19. The rapid and sudden closure of schools required an appropriate reaction by the Iranian Ministry of Education (MoE). Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) started to broadcast some educational programs based on the school curriculum. Mohsen Haji-Mirzaei, the Minister of Education, noted that:

It was necessary to devise a method to enable the students to have an experience of an atmosphere like the classroom in the virtual space, and to enable the teachers to have [a] two-way interaction with their students in the platform of virtual space and handle the question and answer

process and the exams just like how they did in the classroom. (IFP Editorial Staff, 2020, para. 4; brackets added)

Therefore, the MoE showed an initiative by developing and running a national mobile application called Shaad (meaning happy in English) to assist school teachers and students to change the situation effectively. Shaad app is an acronym for the term 'Student Education Network' in Persian. Now, based on the MoE's report, "more than 60 percent of students and 94 percent of teachers have so far attended 64 percent of classes through the Shaad app" (IFP Editorial Staff, 2020, para. 5).

Given that one of the main elements of successful integration of technology in language learning and teaching is addressing teachers' considerations and exploring the applicability of the tools from their lens (see Tafazoli, 2017; Tafazoli et al., 2018, 2020), the present small-scale study focuses on the reflections of Iranian school teachers for improving the productivity of teaching language with a mobile application.

Research is abundant on teachers' attitudes towards computer assisted language learning (CALL) tools and programs such as online informal learning of English (e.g., Toffoli & Sockett, 2015), flipped classroom (e.g., Basal, 2015), Web 2.0 tools (e.g., Sadaf et al., 2015), information and communication technologies (ICTs) (e.g., Laabidi & Laabidi, 2016), mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) (e.g., Tayan, 2017), and social networking services (SNSs) (e.g., Habibi et al., 2018).

Hong's (2010) spherical model of second language teachers' integration of technology in classroom informed the design of this study.

English Languge Teaching with Shaad:

Suggestions for a Better Experience

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چکیده

پژوهش کیفی حاضر تجربه گروه کوچکی از دبیران زبان انگلیسی در استفاده از اپلیکیشن شاد در دوران همه‌گیری کرونا را گزارش کرده و پیشنهادهای آن‌ها را برای ارتقای کیفیت آموزش زبان با استفاده از این اپ برجسته می‌کند. شرکت‌کنندگان ۱۲ آموزگار زبان انگلیسی بودند. با استفاده از داده‌های به‌دست‌آمده از پرسش‌نامه، مشخص گردید که شرکت‌کنندگان عوامل گوناگون فردی و محیطی را در بهبود بهره‌وری آموزش با شاد مهم می‌دانند.

کلیدواژه‌ها: پژوهش کیفی، اپلیکیشن تلفن همراه شاد، آموزگارهای زبان انگلیسی ایران، کووید ۱۹

Abstract

This qualitative research reports the experience of a small group of Iranian English language teachers in using Shaad application during COVID-19 pandemic and highlights their suggestions for improving the quality of language teaching in this app. The participants were 12 English language teachers. Drawing on self-report data, it was observed that teachers considered different individual and contextual factors important in enhancing the productiveness of teaching with Shaad.

Keywords: qualitative study, Shaad mobile application, Iranian English language teachers, COVID-19