

## Working amid crisis: The effect of COVID 19 Lockdown on the Sudanese EFL students' speaking fluency. A case study at Sudan University of Science and technology- Faculty of Education- English language department

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### Abstract

*COVID 19 Pandemic had a significant impact on the entire world, including the education sector. The purpose of this study is to shed light on the impact of the COVID 19 lockdown on EFL students' fluency in speaking skills. The main question seeks to ascertain the impact of the COVID 19 lockdown on the speaking fluency of EFL students. To put this to the test, the researchers use a two-group experimental data collection method. The first is a controlled group of students who took the course prior to the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown, and the second is an experimental group of students who took the*

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*course after the lockdown. When the researchers compared the grades of the students on a standardized test of the Speaking skills course before and after the lockdown, the results have shown that the experimental group scores were higher than the controlled group, indicating that the lockdown had no effect on the students' speaking fluency. The researchers can attribute this to the course's nature; unlike other academic courses, students can always practice speaking English inside and outside of the classroom. With the advancement of technology, students can now attend classes online and form friendships with native speakers through various social media applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook. Telegram and Twitter. (the author). Sudanese students were in a difficult situation.*

**Keywords:** Speaking fluency, COVID 19 pandemic, Lockdown, EFL students, Sudan

## **INTRODUCTION**

On Friday March 13<sup>th</sup> 2020, Sudan's Federal Minister of Health announced the first confirmed COVID-19 case in Sudan, a man in his fifties who recently came from the UAE and then passed away in Sudan. Since then, the Government of Sudan has declared a national state of health emergency, closed Sudan's borders, suspended flights in and out of the country, and ordered the closure of educational institutions for an initial period of one month and then was extended to the start of the new academic year in September. At the time of the closing of educational institutions, the academic year had ended apart from the final exams for Grades 8 and Grade 11 (grade 3 in secondary school). This lockdown has impacted the education of more than 653,000 tertiary level students.

Speaking, as an indispensable factor for language teaching and learning, can "facilitate language acquisition and development," and it can support learners' academic as well as professional success. English speaking, as an important aspect of language skills, should not be undervalued, but rather "developed in its own right." As a result, good speaking skills are essential for English learners, particularly those who major in English at higher institutions, as English teaching is likely to be their long-term career. (Wang, 2014).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW & PREVIOUS STUDIES**

Many studies were conducted to study the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on education in general and EFL teaching and learning in particular.

Hmedat, 2021 stated that Covid-19 has made a sudden change in higher educational institutions, the pandemic has forced a halt in the methods and techniques of learning. Students have been unable to engage in learning activities as a result of the situation. Higher educational institutions' activities were being disrupted, and it is unclear how long the situation will endure. Under the current circumstances, it is critical to transition to a distance learning platform via the online procedure. In a country like India, where learners are diverse and infrastructure obstacles abound, the benefits of online learning have long been debated. The current study focuses on the frequent challenges that higher education institutions confront, as well as possible solutions that might be implemented in the current circumstances to ensure uninterrupted learning. (Hmedat, 2021) Due to the existing circumstances, there is a significant chance to test the viability of using electronic programs in remote education. Many countries have come to rely on online learning while preserving traditional classes, to develop the educational process in all its stages. This development, which leads to the availability of learning throughout the day through various methods, to provide educational content with static and moving visual elements, and audio-visual effects, which makes education more exciting and enjoyable and with higher efficiency, effort and less time. (A. Ibrahim et al., 2021).

The closure of schools and universities has in turn led to decline in classroom hours, challenges in international student enrolments and rising inequality in learning. The response phase has led to emergence of new trends across educational institutions. These range from rapid shift to online learning without essential training and development for teachers, increased reliance on EdTech startups and reduced learning transfer which has impacted the overall state of learning transfer negatively. Considering the outcomes of response phase and the existing challenges, the focus was on deriving realistic solutions ranging from adoption of blended learning solutions across remote and hybrid learning. Also, the discussions shed light on classifying learners based on the urgency to get back to traditional classes, adopting systems and process based on digital competence levels and most importantly in bringing about changes across educational policies and frameworks for a better tomorrow. (Hmedat, 2021). The following are the main factors that support the usage of e-learning system during COVID-19 pandemic and should be considered by universities in the future: technology factors, e-learning system quality factors, cultural aspects, self-efficacy factors, and trust factors. On the other hand, there are three major obstacles to using an e-learning system: change management concerns, e-learning system technical issues, and financial support issues. (Almaiah et al., 2020). In the Sudan the experience was different one of the studies done there is Gaily et al., 2021 who mainly explores the use of ICT to support EFL learning and how

traditional on campus language classrooms could possibly be replaced by cyber-classes particularly at the time of crisis. Consequently, the study scrutinizes some potential problems of online tutoring mainly from learners' perspective. Thus, it reflects the AOU learners' perceptions regarding various issues pertinent to implementation of virtual classrooms as a new educational instrument introduced in the place of regular face to face classes to achieve the goal of upgrading and enhancing students' level of language proficiency while being fully autonomous distance learners. Finally, the paper also examines the prospects of building more successful virtual learning environment within the context of Arab Open University in Sudan. The findings demonstrated that, despite some difficulties in accessing online programs, the Sudanese students still had good sentiments toward this sort of remote education. (Gaily et al., 2021)

Other factors have impacted the Sudanese students since the emergence of the novel coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19), many people were facing daily life changes that could predispose them to anxiety. For the Sudanese university students, the situation is even more complicated because of the limited availability of online learning and the difficult economic situation of the country. Results indicated that of the 75.1% participants, had a low anxiety level, 15.5% had a moderate anxiety level and 9.4% had a potentially concerning level of anxiety. Experiencing no symptoms during the past 14 days was associated with a low level of anxiety. (Abas et al., 2021)

Language is primarily a spoken, rather than a written, phenomenon. Before there was anything to read, people chatted and listened for a long time. This is why it is believed that the invention of writing was a recent occurrence in the lengthy history of humanity. Speaking is an important communication skill. The characteristic of culture is good pronunciation and fluency in speaking ability, and it is the teacher's responsibility to achieve this goal in a manner similar to that of an Englishman. Teachers and students must put up constant effort in this direction. Teachers should receive pronunciation instruction. The emphasis on speaking and pronunciation should be emphasized throughout the curriculum. Exams should also focus on the student's ability to communicate. There's no reason why students can't improve their speaking and pronunciation skills. (Hussain, 2017). Students had positive attitudes towards the importance of speaking English; appreciated the benefits that online learning offers, but felt it could not replace face-to-face learning. (Alzamil, 2021) understanding the 'combinatorial' nature of speech, which includes the linguistic and discourse features of speech, the core speaking skills that enable speakers to process and produce speech, and communication strategies for managing and maintaining spoken interactions, is necessary for being a competent teacher of speaking (Burns, 2019)

### ***Crisis in Sudan***

Sudan is affected by a combination of political and economic instability, conflict, climate change-related shocks including heavy flooding and severe drought, endemics, and an influx of refugees from neighboring countries. These factors have contributed to heightened poverty, increased population displacement, and food insecurity. In 2020, Sudan's economy – which had been in crisis since 2018 – suffered a sharp decline. The economic crisis, combined with unprecedented flooding and the depletion of state resources due to the economic crisis, resulted in an estimated 9.6 million people facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and above levels of food insecurity. (*SUDAN Humanitarian Impact of Multiple Protracted Crises, 2020*)

### ***Education during crisis***

At the start of 2020, an estimated three million students were not attending school. Because of floods and COVID-19-related school closures, education has faced severe disruption. More than 8.1 million students in Sudan have not been able to attend school as a result of COVID-19 lockdown measures that closed schools across the country on 15 March, 2020. COVID-19-related school closures follow extensive interruption to learning in 2019 because of civil and political unrest. On 13 September, 2020 secondary school exams for the past academic year that had been postponed from April were held across Sudan; however, a significant number of students were absent. The large number of absentees may be the result of lengthy school closures and an increase in poverty because of economic insecurity. (*SUDAN Humanitarian Impact of Multiple Protracted Crisis, 2020*)

## **IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION IN SUDAN**

Given that students were on school break, COVID-19, at this stage, has minimal effect on the delivery of the curriculum given that there were no classes that were missed. There was time for applications to University for students finalized secondary school and have not been able to conduct their exams as university starts in August/September. However, at the same time the students in Sudan were out of school for a period of six months with no formal learning. This is followed by previous year in which students missed up to 70 days of schooling due to the Sudan revolution. School closures, for example, is disrupting students' daily routines, creating additional stress on families, and exposing students to new protection risks. As they start hearing more messages on COVID-19, they become worried about their own safety as well as that of their loved ones. (*GUIDANCE NOTE FOR EDUCATION SECTOR DURING COVID-19 IN SUDAN, 2020*) Lockdown, which is applying physical distancing measures and restriction of movement, was

adopted by many countries to slow down the spread of the disease, however, this had unfavorable consequences for the communities and individuals, not only that it has affected the social and economic aspects of life, but also the psychological health (Abas et al., 2021)

## **E-learning in Sudan**

### **Current status of E-learning in Sudan:**

Private and public universities in Sudan were instructed to commence online learning and teaching, around four months after all higher education schools were closed on 14 March 2020, owing to the outbreak of Covid19. Experts were concerned about the readiness of staff and university students to handle the transition.

### **The major barriers of E-learning**

Many studies had dealt with the challenges and barriers of e-learning in developing countries, some of them can be shown as follows: categorized the barriers of e-learning into three areas namely: a. personal factors: these factors involve all barriers that are related to a person. Lack of time for preparation of online learning content is one of the personal barriers in E-learning, for the lecturers with fewer experiences in e-learning. In addition to that, instructors with less experience and skill with e-learning have doubts about their skills to deliver classes online and seem to be less self-confident. Another personal factor of online learning barrier is a lack of individual motivation; b. institutional and cultural factors: such as lack of support, lack of training centers of ICT utilization, and lack of recognition of online teaching. c. technical factors. These factors related to the usage of technology and infrastructure. Technical factors include lack of skills in using E-Learning tools, lack of infrastructure (no stable WIFI connection), and usability. Also, lack of equipment such as computers, laptops, and tablets. (Ibrahim, 2021)

### ***Potential Challenges of Online Classes***

Implementing ELearning within the context of the tertiary level. In this regard, it has been shown that administrative or institutional problems of using technology in the higher education institutes include lack of strategies, as well as lack of institutional policies and administrative costs. Pedagogically, there's still some common misperception in tutors' mind regarding online teaching practice. The majority of teachers still do believe that they could carry out their online sessions following the same procedures that they used to conduct in their face-to-face tutorials neglecting the fact that the practice of online delivery is totally distinguished from the face-to-

face mode in several ways. Thus, it is clearly evident that not all approaches and methodologies of face-to-face classes are applicable in case of online context and vice versa, accordingly, the EFL teachers should shoulder the responsibility of transforming their lessons into digital learning with some new different insights and perceptions. To sum up, while modern technology has revolutionized the ELT realm, the pedagogical practice seems to be less dynamic and thus there's still a growing demand for further research to modernize EL theories and practice in a way that could allow students to learn in more interesting digitalized environment. (Gaily et al., 2021)

### **The context at Sudan University of Science and Technology**

As previously stated, Sudan University of Science and Technology, as a technological pioneer, was the only university to transition to remote learning as soon as the lockdown began. SUST decided to alternate face-to-face lectures with virtual ones as Covid 19 spread across the country, and the English Language Department as part of the University did the same, using the educational platform (Moodle) and a WhatsApp group for each subject to make communication with students easier. The researchers wish they could say the process went smoothly, but students faced numerous obstacles that prevented them from transitioning to online education, including weak networks in rural areas outside of Khartoum, Sudan's capital, and a lack of smartphones due to the poor economic situation and the pandemic, some students did not have access to smartphones and were unable to obtain one. Due to the nature of the course, it was impossible to teach Speaking skills or even record sessions. As a result, the teacher decided to postpone the commencement of the course until the end of the lockdown so that he could teach them in person. (The authors),

### ***Definition of Speaking***

Speaking, according to Longman Dictionary, is the utterance of intelligible speech or the appearance of being capable of speech. Speaking is the process of verbally expressing one's thoughts and feelings, reflecting on and shaping one's experience, and sharing information. Speaking is a complex process that involves both thinking and language skills, as well as social skills. The speaker combines words to form sentences and paragraphs and employs a socially appropriate language style. Speaking is development for the relationships between a speaker and her/his hearer. Speaking also entails deciding whether logical linguistic, psychological, and physical rules should be followed in a certain communicative circumstance.

Teachers should educate pupils the following procedures in order to make speaking proper and understandable: Speak clearly and expressively about their views. 2011 (Bin Tahir) Speaking is a highly complex and dynamic

talent that requires the simultaneous activation of numerous processes - cognitive, bodily, and socio-cultural - and the activation of a speaker's knowledge and skills in real-time. As a result, it is critical that speaking be explicitly taught in language schools — "doing" speaking through a sequence of activities is not the same as learning the knowledge, abilities, and techniques of speaking. (2019, Burns)

### **Micro-Skills of oral communication**

Speaking necessitates mastery of a variety of small skills known as micro-skills. These micro-skills can be used to evaluate speech production quality. Furthermore, English teachers must be aware of the following micro-skills in order to effectively plan their lessons. Brown (2001) defines oral communication micro-skills as the following tasks. Mastery of a variety of small skills known as micro-skills is required for speaking. These micro-skills can be used to evaluate speech production quality. Furthermore, English teachers must be aware of the following micro-skills in order to effectively plan their lessons. Language chunks of multiple lengths are rated. Oral production of differences in English phonemes and allophonic variants. Use patterns, stress in words and unstressed positions, rhythmic structure, and intonation. to use a large number of lexical units to achieve pragmatic goals, to create abbreviated forms of words and phrases □ To speak fluently at various levels of speaking. To monitor oral production using strategic devices such as pauses, fillers, and self-corrections to improve message clarity Using grammatical word classes (nouns, adjectives, and so on), systems (such as tense and pluralization), word order, patterns, and rules. To use proper phrases and sentences when speaking. To use several grammatical forms to communicate a given idea. In order to use coherent devices in one's speech, one must first learn how to use them. To fulfill communicative functions in a suitable manner for the occasion. Appropriate registers, pragmatic rules, and other sociolinguistic elements must be developed in order to engage with others. Using connections and links between events to connect situations like the main idea, supporting idea, new information, supplied information, generalization, and exemplification. Combining expressions, gestures, body language, and other nonverbal indicators with spoken language to convey the meaning of a speech. Developing and using speaking tactics such strengthening key words, rephrasing, offering context for comprehending word meanings, appealing for help, accurately measuring how well your listener understands the dialogue, generalization, and exemplification. (Masuram & Sripada, 2020)



### **Principals of teaching speaking skills**

According to Anuradha et al (2014), the following are the principles of teaching speaking skills: to encourage students to speak up right away. If not, be patient with students who simply repeat what they say as soon as possible and without having to wait until she teaches them a set of words, phrases, or sentences; if a student responds to a question with a single word, accept it for the time being; allow students to actively participate in the conversation using whatever English knowledge they have; and allow learners to make errors and mistakes at the beginning. Interruptions and corrections impede fluency and discourage learners from completing any task or topic without difficulty; propose structures/words and have students use them in a variety of situations; drill as much as possible; and encourage students to use the back-chaining or tail-forwarding approach to combine more than 10 sentences to construct lengthy sentences, organize role play and pair work as much as possible, and supervise the learners to correct the active learners and activate the passive ones, be well prepared in terms of lesson planning, activities, and tasks ahead of time, and allow learners to make mistakes and errors in the early stages. In addition, keep in mind that interruptions and corrections stifle learning and discourage students.

(Hussain, 2017)

### **Teaching-Speaking cycle**

Taking some of the previous ideas and expanding on them to plan a comprehensive and sequential series of speaking activities based on the teaching-speaking cycle (Goh and Burns, 2012, p. 153). The model's goal is to highlight a few key elements that teachers can use to help their students, such as developing fluency in meaning expression, using grammar flexibly to produce a diverse range of utterances that express meaning precisely, and so on. Using appropriate vocabulary and accurate language forms relevant to their speaking needs, understand and apply social and linguistic communication rules in a variety of contexts, manage and self-regulate their own speaking development, increase understanding of genre and genre structures, and increase metacognitive awareness of EFL speaking (Burns, 2019)

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Problem of the study**

The study compared students who took speaking classes before the COVID 19 Pandemic lockdown to those who took them after the lockdown. Speaking is regarded as one of the cornerstones of language acquisition. The abrupt shift to online learning has presented many universities with the challenge of

internet accessibility. Sudan University of Science and Technology was a pioneer in adopting Moodle and WhatsApp groups, but students encountered numerous difficulties connecting to the sessions and groups. Speaking, unlike other English language skills, has a distinct nature that is dependent on direct communication between the teacher and students as well as between the students themselves. As a result, the researchers would like to learn about the impact of the COVID 19 lockdown on Sudanese EFL students at Sudan University of Science and Technology's Faculty of Education, English Language Department, First Year.

### **Question of the study**

What is the impact of COVID 19 lockdown on the Sudanese EFL students' speaking fluency?

### **Hypothesis of the study**

COVID 19 lockdown has a negative effect on the Sudanese EFL students speaking skills.

### **Population of the study**

This study focuses on Sudanese EFL first-year students at Sudan University of Science and Technology's Faculty of Education's English Language Department. The study's sample size is 30 Sudanese EFL students. It is divided into two groups: those who completed the Speaking skills course prior to the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown in the academic year 2019/2020, and those who completed it after the lockdown in the academic year 2020/2021.

### **Data analysis**

#### **Cronbach's alpha method: -**

Where reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha equation shown below:

$$\text{Reliability coefficient} = \frac{n}{n-1} * \frac{1 - \text{Total variations questions}}{\text{variation total grades}}$$

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\frac{n}{n-1} * \frac{1 - \text{Total variations questions}}{\text{variation total grades}}}$$

Cronbach's alpha coefficient = (0.78), a reliability coefficient is high and it indicates the stability of the scale and the validity of the study.

Validity coefficient is the square root of the reliability coefficient is (0.88), and this shows that there is a high sincerity of the scale and that the benefit of the study.

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**Table (1) illustrates of the Cranbach's alpha method for the test**

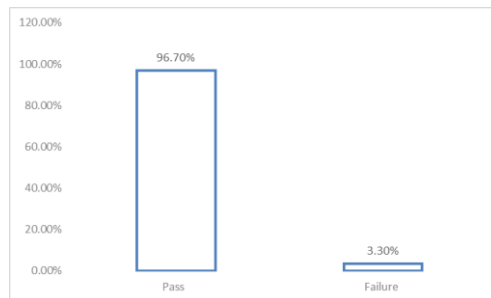
| No.          | Statement   | reliability | Validity    |
|--------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 1            | Pre-test grades for speaking skill before Corona Virus  | <b>0.70</b> | <b>0.83</b> |
| 2            | Post-test grades for speaking skill during Corona Virus | <b>0.79</b> | <b>0.89</b> |
| <b>Total</b> |   | <b>0.78</b> | <b>0.88</b> |

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

**Table (2) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Pre-test grades for speaking skill before Corona Virus**

| Valid   | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Pass    | 29        | 96.7%   |
| Failure | 1         | 3.3%    |
| Total   | 30        | 100.0%  |

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package



Source: prepared by the researcher of the excel 2016

Table (2) illustrates the views of the distribution of the Before COVID 19 sample by the statement as follows before pass by (96.7%) and failure by (3.3%).

**Table (3) t-test result showing group means of the Pre-test grades for speaking skill before Corona Virus**

| N  | Mean  | Std. deviation | T – test | Df | Sig. | Scale |
|----|-------|----------------|----------|----|------|-------|
| 30 | 22.17 | 3.91           | 10.030   | 29 | 0.00 | Pass  |

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

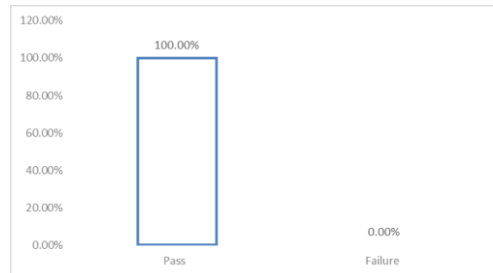
The value of (T) test calculated to signify the differences between the numbers of individuals of the study for the hypothesis was (10.030) with signify value (0.000) which is less than the level of significant value (0.05) These refer to the existence of differences statistically for the Pass

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**Table (4) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Post-test grades for speaking skill during Corona Virus**

| Valid   | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Pass    | 30        | 100.0%  |
| Failure | 0         | 0.0%    |
| Total   | 30        | 100.0%  |

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package



Source: prepared by the researcher of the excel 2016

Table (4) illustrates the views of the distribution of the BEFORE COVID 19 sample by the statement as follows before pass by (100.0%) and failure by (0.0%).

**Table (5) t-test result showing group means of the Post-test grades for speaking skill during Corona Virus**

| N  | Mean  | Std. deviation | T – test | Df | Sig. | Scale |
|----|-------|----------------|----------|----|------|-------|
| 30 | 22.17 | 3.39           | 11.564   | 29 | 0.00 | Pass  |

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

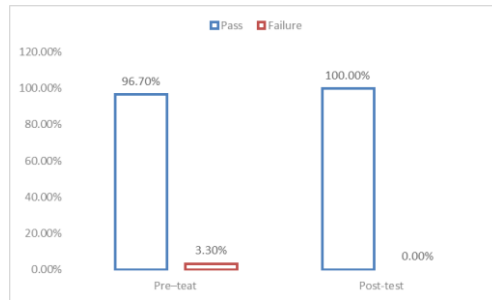
The value of (T) test calculated to signify the differences between the numbers of individuals of the study for the hypothesis was (11.564) with signify value (0.000) which is less than the level of significant value (0.05) These refer to the existence of differences statistically for the pass.

**Table (6) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the pre-test ad post-test**

| Valid   | Pre–teat  |         | Post-test |         |
|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
|         | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Pass    | 29        | 96.7%   | 30        | 100.0%  |
| Failure | 1         | 3.3%    | 0         | 0.0%    |
| Total   | 30        | 100.0%  | 30        | 100.0%  |

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

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Source: prepared by the researcher of the excel 2016

Table (6) illustrates the views of the distribution of the Before COVID 19 sample by the statement as follows pre-test pass by (96.7%) and failure by (3.3%) and **post-test** pass by (100.0%) and failure by (0.00%).

**Table (7) t-test result showing group means of the pre-test ad post-test**

| N         | Mean  | Std. deviation | T – test | Df | Sig. | Significant |
|-----------|-------|----------------|----------|----|------|-------------|
| Pre-test  | 22.17 | 3.914          | 0.000    | 29 | 1.00 | Significant |
| Post-test | 22.17 | 3.395          |          |    |      |             |

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

The value of (T) test calculated to signify the differences between the numbers of individuals of the study for the hypothesis was (0.00) with signify value (1.00) which is great than the level of significant value (0.05) These refer to no existence statistically differences between pre-test and post-test.

## DISCUSSION

COVID 19 Pandemic had a significant impact on the entire world, including the education sector. The purpose of this study is to shed light on the impact of the COVID 19 lockdown on EFL students' fluency in speaking skills. The main question seeks to ascertain the impact of the COVID 19 lockdown on the speaking fluency of EFL students.

Sudan has been undergoing a number of conflicts, including political crises since the beginning of the revolution in 2019, environmental crises such as the flood in 2020, and health issues such as the COVID 19 pandemic, which has lasted since March 2020. In contrast to other countries due to the Coronavirus pandemic, many schools and universities adopted eLearning techniques as an alternative to offline and face-to-face classes; however, this did not occur in Sudan. Except for one university, Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST) (A. H. Ibrahim, 2021), which is the place of this study, SUST, as a pioneer in the field of technology, was the sole university to switch

to remote learning as soon as the lockdown began, as previously reported. When Covid 19 spread across the country, SUST decided to alternate face-to-face lecturing with virtual ones, and English Language Department as part of the University did the same, using the educational platform (Moodle) and a WhatsApp group for each subject to make communication with students easier. The researchers wish they could say the procedure went smoothly, but students experienced numerous challenges that hindered them from transitioning to online education, such as weak networks in rural areas outside of Khartoum, Sudan's capital. Due to the poor economic situation and the pandemic, some students lacked smartphones and were unable to get one. It was impossible to teach Speaking skills or even record sessions. As a result, the teacher postponed the course until the end of the lockdown so that he could teach them face to face. On the other hand, Sudan has around 36 governmental universities that have not been delivering online learning in the era of the covid19 pandemic. and it offers only for master students. and it is only available to master's students. There is a need to introduce online learning through Blackboard on a regular and proper basis in order to overcome all deficiencies and create a more motivated and effective online learning environment. (Almekhlafy, S.2020). As English teachers, the researchers advocate for more research into the impact of the lockdown on other aspects and skills of English language teaching and learning.

## **FINDINGS**

When comparing the results of the controlled group and the experimental group test, the researchers found that the experimental group scores were higher than the controlled group scores, who studied after the lockdown. Thus, the hypothesis stating that the COVID 19 lockdown has a negative impact on the Sudanese speaking fluency is disapproved. The researchers can attribute this to the course's nature; unlike other academic courses, students can always practice speaking English inside and outside of the classroom. With the advancement of technology, students can now attend classes online and form friendships with native speakers through various social media applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook. Telegram and Twitter.

## **Recommendations of the study**

More research, on the other hand, is required to determine the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic on English learners' performance in terms of Reading, Writing, and Listening main and subskills, as well as other aspects of English as a foreign language learning and teaching. One of the study's limitations is that it only examined a small sample of Sudanese EFL students at Sudan

University of Science and Technology's Faculty of Education; a larger sample could be drawn from other Sudanese universities. More efforts should be made by the ministry of general and higher education to develop Sudan's infrastructure and educational technology.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, the researchers attempted to answer a main question. aim is to see the impact of lockdown on the performance of the Sudanese EFL students in Speaking fluency. Researchers suggest that the lockdown has affected negatively on the students speaking fluency. The researchers can determine that the speaking scores on the experimental test are greater than those on the controlled test. Researchers can tell that. because of the structure of the course, the psychological impact of the lockdown, and the fear of the COVID 19 Pandemic. There were also technological challenges and student demotivation, in addition to a lack of instructor preparation.

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