

A STUDY OF YEMENI EFL INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF ICTS IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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Abstract: This paper aims at exploring Yemeni instructors' perceptions on the role that ICTs play in developing EFL students' communicative competence components. The study pursued a quantitative research design as a method for data collection. A closed-ended questionnaire was constructed, developed, and shared with 60 Yemeni EFL instructors using Google forms. The validity of the questionnaire was checked by referees whereas Cronbach's Alpha was run to measure the questionnaire reliability ($R=.86$). SPSS 21st edition was used to analyse the data. The study revealed that Yemeni EFL instructors have positive perceptions on the role of using ICTs in developing students' communicative competence. The findings also reported no statistically significant differences in the instructors' perceptions of ICTs that can be found across the four components of communicative competence. Moreover, it was revealed that there are no statistically significant differences in the instructors' perceptions that can be attributed to gender across the components. This study encourages EFL instructors to help their students to use the ICT tools in developing their communicative competence.

Keywords: *communicative competence; EFL instructors; ICTs; language learning; language teaching.*

INTRODUCTION

Language learners are usually oriented with some purposeful considerations in mind for language learning. Communicative competence is one of the considerations. At this juncture, it can be said that the major aim for any learner learning/studying English is generally to achieve a good communicative competence in English (Bin-Hady, 2016a). However, such a competence in communication is hardly achieved especially in countries where EFL instructors still use traditional teaching methods. In the Yemeni context, it has been found that teachers neglected sub-elements of communicative competence like discourse,

sociolinguistics, strategic competence, and taught the other elements traditionally (Bin-Hady, 2016a). EFL instructors have good perceptions about the importance of communicative competence to their students although a great mismatch has been found between what the instructors believed in with what they did in the classroom (Bin-Hady; 2016a, 2016b). Thus, for the lack of real practice in classroom and the instructors' defect in helping students to reach intelligible level of communication, this is the right time for activating ICT tools by which learners can compensate their ongoing learning of English as a foreign language

since these tools are regarded as useful aids for developing their communicative competence.

The prominence of what is called as communicative language teaching along with the orientation of language learning towards communication as a main goal has led communicative competence to emerge towards the forefront of research in applied linguistics. Prior to this is Chomsky's (1965) distinction between competence "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language" and performance "the actual use of competence in concrete situations" (p.4). In this respect, Chomsky unfolded what is called linguistic competence. Later on, it has been recorded that Hymes (1972) provided a systematic representation of what is called communicative competence where he advocated that language is not only related to acquiring what is termed as linguistic competence but also considered as a means for achieving communicative purposes. In effect, various models of communicative competence have been proposed. In Canale and Swain (1980) model, communicative competence has been conceptualized to include grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence whereas Canale's (1983) model involves discourse competence as fourth component of communicative competence in addition to the three ones. On the other hand, Bachman (1990) proposed a framework of communicative competence to include psychophysiological mechanisms in addition to language competence and strategic competence whereas Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrel (1995) made a further extension of the frameworks of communicative competence to involve five components represented by linguistic competence, strategic competence, sociocultural competence, discourse competence, and actional competence.

Taking the four language skills into account, communicative competence has been conceptualized to involve the literacy skills and the oral skills within the proposed frameworks. In this regard, Alcón, as cited in Belmonte and McCabe (2004), proposed a three-component model of communicative competence. In this model, the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are categorized under what is called psychomotor skills as a component of the communicative competence in addition to discourse competence

and strategic competence. Moreover, the communicative competence has witnessed several developments and presented in further frameworks depending on the conceptual reflections of some researchers and scholars in the field. For instance, Usó-Juan and Martíniz-Flor (2006) proposed a model of communicative competence integrating the four skills. They have also considered intercultural competence as one of the communicative competence components. Hence, their proposed framework conceptualizes communicative competence as a construction of discourse competence which is considered as the central component constructed by the functions of the four skills. The other components, according to their framework, serve to construct discourse competence. Thus, Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2006) model is composed of five components, namely: discourse competence, linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, strategic competence, and intercultural competence.

As a whole, communicative competence is conceptualized as a language knowledge and being used for communicative purposes with attention paid to its different components which are represented linguistically, socially, culturally, strategically, and so on. Though it has been represented in variety of frameworks, the above-mentioned models are considered of the prominent ones in the field. A salient remark among the reviewed models can be captured in that. The basic components of communicative competence are represented as linguistic competence, sociocultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Meanwhile, the other components represented in the frameworks can be interpreted as further extensions of these four main components, for instance, what has been considered as pragmatic competence, actional competence, and intercultural competence can be categorized under the sociocultural competence. Another remarkable issue is also recorded in that, with the development of these frameworks, intercultural competence has been highlighted as a component of communicative competence. Generally speaking, having such a brief account of communicative competence in this section is a very influential and helpful pathway towards embarking on the relational nature between ICT and communicative competence.

Research in the use of ICTs in language learning has explored the effectiveness of ICTs on enhancing communicative competence. Blake (2011) claimed that engaging in social networking leads to digital connection where language students feel comfortable to communicate with peers of the targeted culture. This, in turn, "would enhance their digital communicative competence at the very last" (p.30). In this regard, it can be understood that digital competence has become an important aspect of the students' communicative competence. For Gómez and Vicente (2011, p.87), "the acquisition of communicative competences must also include the achievement of technological competences." Research has found that using ICT is very influential to promote students' competence in English language and their quality of experience (Ramak & Ziabari, 2017). Thus, students' technological competence aligns with their competence of using English language. For the development of linguistic competence as one of the mainstreams of communicative competence, Kenning (2007) stated that electronic communication leads to the expansion of the linguistic competence since it brings people together from different backgrounds.

The inclusion of ICTs in learning has led researchers to investigate the use of its tools for enhancing students' communicative language. Li (2018) stated that CMC has become a tradition to promote learners' L2 communicative competence. Similarly, Peterson (2013) emphasized that technology provides opportunities for the development of communicative competence and Chapelle (2003, pp.66-67) highlighted the importance of a further extension of pedagogical computer-assisted language learning (CALL) for it leading to the enhancement of "pragmatic knowledge and strategic competence", in addition to the linguistic competence represented by the linguistic items such as vocabulary and syntax. This implies that the involvement of such a kind of learning, i.e. CALL promotes communicative competence in general and linguistic competence along with pragmatic and strategic competences in particular. However, Taillefer (2018, p.177) stipulated that online resources can be used as potentials to provide benefits if they are used carefully with thoughtful considerations to the way

they will enhance "language skills and communicative competences".

With a particular reference to intercultural competence, it can be stated that the use of ICT has effects to prompt and promote intercultural communication. This is in line with Nasser (2016, p.15), pointed out that the media "helps in promoting the intercultural competence of the interlocutors". Furthermore, ICTs have also been considered as potentials for developing intercultural communicative competence. Based on her teaching experience of intercultural competence, Chiper (2013) reported that some ICT resources can be used for teaching intercultural competence. Similarly, telecollaboration, as an application of ICT, has also highlighted its positive effects on promoting students' intercultural competence (Chapelle, 2017; Hauk, 2010; Kenning, 2007). It has been noted that the use of the internet, online resources, and technologies represent a major contribution to the development of students' intercultural competence by providing opportunities of "engagement in authentic communication with members of other cultures" (O'Dowd, 2008, p.1).

Many studies showed positive attitudes of EFL instructors on the role of ICTs in developing students' communicative competence. Zekiye (2018) investigated teachers' attitudes towards computer technology in foreign language teaching with the data gathered by using a questionnaire distributed to pre-service ELT teachers at a state university. The findings showed that the teachers have positive views about the use of computer in language teaching. In addition, it was found that there is no relationship between participants' attitudes with their gender. Prior to this, Sulaiman (2017) conducted a study to investigate attitudes of Iraqi English teachers toward educational technology in teaching English in Baghdad primary schools. The study targeted 327 male and female teachers. The results showed that teachers' attitudes towards using technology in language teaching were generally high with significant differences in the favour of male teachers. In the Iranian context, Mollaei and Riasati (2013) investigated EFL teachers' perceptions of the technology use in their classes and factors that affect technology implementation in Iranian language institutes. Using a mixed method

research design and collecting the data from questionnaire and interviews, the findings revealed that teachers have positive attitudes regarding the use of technology and computer in their classrooms with no significant differences in their perceptions. In the Yemeni context, Ahmed et al. (2020) investigated South Yemeni instructors' perceptions on the use of ICT in English language instruction. The study used a questionnaire for collecting the data which were analysed quantitatively. The findings showed that the instructors have positive perceptions towards ICT in language instruction as they believed in its effectiveness in language learning and there were no significant differences in teachers' perceptions that can be attributed to the gender. It was also found that the use of ICTs by the concerned instructors in reality was low.

Aside from that, some studies also focused on the role of ICTs in developing students' competences in the four language skills and systems. Gilakjani (2018) investigated teachers' views toward computer technology in teaching English pronunciation. He used a questionnaire to target 25 teachers and structured interviews with 15 teachers from two Islamic Azad Universities of Guilan, Iran. The study showed that teachers were interested in using computer technology as it helps them in improving the quality of their pronunciation instruction. Furthermore, Pham and Nguyen (2018) investigated teachers' perceptions of using PowerPoint ICT tool for vocabulary enhancement. They used mixed method study and targeted 60 teachers. Their findings revealed that teachers perceive PowerPoint as an effective instructional tool and there are no significant differences in their perceptions. With a reference to the four language skills, Al-Jarrah et al. (2019) explored the perceptions of ESL teachers regarding the use of educational mobile applications to help ESL elementary school students developing their language skills. Using interviews for collecting the data and depending on the qualitative analysis, the findings revealed that the participants have positive perceptions of using educational mobile applications to develop the students' language skills.

Research in the field of ICT use in language learning has emphasized the role of these technologies in enhancing students' communicative

competence. For instance, Strak'iené and Baziukaité (2009) studied the application of ICT in drama classes for the purpose of developing students' communicative competence. They carried out a case study on using ICT in primary school in Lithuania. The study found that ICT combined with drama and language has improved the students' communicative competence. Moreover, Ponguta (2018) explored the use of ICTs for fostering Colombian students' communicative competence. The study was conducted on a group of second level students in a public university in Sogamoso, Colombia. It adopted action research where the data were collected by using questionnaires, observations and field notes for the purpose of exploring the students' opinions after the activities they had taken. The study revealed that using ICTs in classes has positively contributed to the development of the students' communicative competence. Particularly, the results explored that ICTs has fostered the students' oral production, building vocabulary, and motivation to learn and interact in the target language.

On the other study, Modhish and Al-Kadi (2016) investigated the integration of internet in EFL college instruction at Taiz University. Using a survey questionnaire for collecting the data from 20 instructors, the findings showed that internet plays an important role in EFL teaching and learning. Moreover, the study emphasized the significance of integrating internet in EFL teaching and learning for it plays a vital role in enhancing learners' linguistic and communicative competences.

Gómez and Vicente (2011) conducted a study of relational perspective to investigate the correlation between the use of information and communication technologies with students' communicative competence. Adopting the quantitative approach using questionnaires for assessing the students' competencies, i.e. technological competence and communicative competence, they carried out the study on 20 students who are native speakers of German and studying Spanish as a second language. The findings revealed that a study for six months learning Spanish has increased students' competence in the use of ICT along with an increase in their communicative competence.

Kung (2016) studied whether the development of media literacies leads to promotion of second language (L2) learners' oral communicative competence. The study was conducted on four students enrolled in a conversation class at a university in Taipei, Taiwan. The data were collected in an online networking environment. It was found that the development of students' media literacies led to facilitating their second language (L2) oral communicative competence.

Having a close look at the review of these studies discussed above, it can be concluded that they have given central emphasis to the influential benefits of ICTs in the enhancement of communicative competence as a whole without any operationalization of these benefits in rapport with its segmental components. However, the current study utilizes an analytic approach to investigate instructors' perceptions of the ICT role in developing communicative competence across its different components as proposed in various frameworks.

In assisting language learning and developing learners' communicative competence, ICT plays an important role. Researches in this area have been recorded with some diversity of trends as they can be seen from previous studies which have approached the issue holistically. In short, they investigated the role of ICT in enhancing communicative competence as a whole (Gómez & Vicente, 2011). However, it seems that the role of ICT in developing the components of communicative competence in an analytical approach has not received the due attention of researchers in the field. Therefore, this study is oriented to investigate Yemeni instructors' perceptions of the role of ICT in developing EFL students' communicative competence across its different components.

With the rapid widespread of technology in the recent decades, EFL instructors and students begin paying attention to the uses of ICT tools and technology applications in their teaching and English learning. Numerous studies also showed that ICTs tools and technological applications play an effective role in developing language learning and make English learning more interesting and enjoyable (Ahmed, 2019; Al-Jarrah, Talafhah, & Al-Jarrah, 2019; Kung, 2016, Ponguta, 2018). Many studies also reported the positive attitudes of

EFL instructors on the role of ICTs in developing students' communicative competence (Ahmed, Qasem, & Pawar (2020); Mollaei & Riasati, 2013; Sulaiman, 2017; Zekiye 2018).

However, although previous research showed that EFL instructors perceived ICT positively in developing these aspects such as phonological competence (Gilakjani, 2018), lexical competence (Pham and Nguyen, 2018), and language skills (Al-Jarrah et al., 2019), there is still a gap in literature concerning how EFL instructors perceive ICTs in developing the four main components of the communicative competence; namely linguistic competence, sociocultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Therefore, this study is focused on filling the gap by providing a scientific study of how the Yemeni instructors perceive ICTs role in developing the various components of the communicative competence and aims at investigating the role of ICT in developing the communicative competence of EFL learners as perceived by Yemeni instructors. In line with this general aim, the study addresses the following questions:

1. Do EFL instructors have positive or negative perceptions on the role of ICT in developing students' communicative competence?
2. Are there any statistically significant differences in the role of ICT in developing EFL students' communicative competence elements as perceived by their instructors?
3. Are there any statistically significant differences in the role of ICT in developing EFL students' communicative competence across its components attributed to their instructors' gender?

METHOD

The sample of the study consisted of 60 Yemeni EFL instructors. Convenience sampling was followed due to different critical circumstances among which is the outbreak of Covid-19. In convenience sampling, according to Creswell (2012, p.145), "the researcher selects participants because they are willing and available to be studied". The sample included 40 males and 20 females. The distribution of the sample also showed a geographical diversity in terms of the universities where the instructors work. Thus, the

sample included respondents from all the different parts of Yemen as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1. *The distribution of participants amongst the Yemeni universities*

University	Frequency	Percentage
University of Aden	25	41.7
Hadhramout University	14	23.3
Seiyun University	9	15.0
University of Science and technology	2	3.3
Hodeidah University	2	3.3
Hajjah University	1	1.7
Abyan University	3	5.0
Ibb University	2	3.3
Sana'a University	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Aligned with the research questions of the study, a close-ended questionnaire was constructed to collect the data on the role of ICT in the development of EFL students' communicative competence as perceived by Yemeni instructors. Thus, a questionnaire for EFL instructors was designed by the researchers themselves and used for collecting the data. It consisted of five parts where the first one was devoted for collecting demographic data and the other four parts were constructed to survey the instructors' perceptions of the role of ICT in developing communicative competence. Thus, these four parts of the questionnaire comprised twenty-eight items of five-point Likert scale. These five points of the scale were formatted in a continuum of options (from 5 into 1) representing the respondent's degree of agreement or disagreement (5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree) pertaining to the role of ICT. The second part of the questionnaire, including five items, was constructed with the focus on the linguistic competence, whereas the third one, comprising eight items, was concerned with sociocultural competence. The fourth part, consisting of six items, was built to represent the discourse competence, while the fifth one, having nine items, was designed to involve strategic competence at its

central concern. All in all, the questionnaire was designed with due attention to the development of EFL students' communicative competence as a whole through all its synthesizing components.

The process of the questionnaire construction involved different stages. It was initiated by an extensive reading which the researchers made of the proposed models of the communicative competence in order to operationalize the core elements implied in each of the synthesizing competences. Then, an in-depth discussion was held among the researchers regarding the elements elicited through the primary reading. During these stages, the first draft of the questionnaire was brought to the forefront. The draft of the questionnaire was then given to four referees who are expert in applied linguistics to check its content validity and face validity. Their critical views and comments were taken into account regarding the construction of the questionnaire. It was through these stages that the questionnaire was constructed into its final draft.

Regarding the administration of the questionnaire, it was through the use of an online technology represented by the tool of Google Forms. Thus, it was accessed from this application and then electronically sent to the respondents. The rationale behind using this online tool is that through the use of Google Forms, the data can be collected from as many respondents as possible through sharing the questionnaire via many possible platforms such as Whatsapp, Facebook, E-mail, etc. With this respect, it was also borne in mind that it would be administered and distributed to Yemeni instructors across the whole country.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study applied quantitative research design with the descriptive analysis. It was particularly oriented towards analysing the numerical data collected by a questionnaire to investigate the perceptions of Yemeni EFL instructors regarding the role of ICT in developing EFL learners' communicative competence. As a starting point, the data were coded numerically and then processed through using SPSS application (version 21). Based on the coding scheme of the data, the analysis involved the use of statistical calculations including mean scores and standard deviations. Moreover, p-values were also calculated for the

purpose of measuring whether there are statistically differences at the significance level (.05) in the instructors' perceptions.

The data analysis targeted the role of ICT in the development of communicative competence as a whole and across its components represented by linguistic competence, sociocultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The representation of these four competences was manipulated on the basis of following an eclectic approach of the different models proposed by theorists in the field of communicative competence (Canale and Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Bachman, 1990; Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006). The rationale behind the focus on these competences was centred on the fact that these were regarded as the comprehensive components where the others shared some kind of overlap.

The questionnaire was sent to four EFL professors to check its validity to achieve the objectives of the study and the clarity of its items. Their comments and suggestions were taken into consideration in drafting the final version of the questionnaire. Reliability of the data collection tool was a major condition for reaching findings and conducting a successful study. For this reason, this questionnaire was checked by using Cronbach's Alpha for its reliability as it was calculated as 0.862 which was considered highly reliable.

The first question: In this section, the data analysis and the results are presented in line with the research questions. Starting with the first research question which was formulated to address whether the instructors have positive or negative perceptions regarding the role of ICT in

developing students' communicative competence across its components. Table 2 below represents the results that address its core requirements as follows:

Table 2. *The role of ICT in developing students' communicative competence*

The role of ICT in developing:	Mean	Standard Dev.
Linguistic competence	4.53	0.35
Sociocultural competence	4.63	0.10
Discourse competence	4.22	0.21
Strategic competence	4.57	0.25

Table 2 shows that EFL instructors have positive perceptions on the role of ICT in developing students' communicative competence. The instructors reflected very high perceptions in the role of ICT tools in enhancing their students' components of communicative competence. All the mean scores were rated as 4.63 for sociocultural competence, 4.57 for strategic competence, 4.53 for linguistic competence, and 4.22 for discourse competence.

The second question: As far as the second research question is concerned, Table 3 represents the results that address its requirements as it was formulated to search whether there are any statistically significant differences at the .05 level in instructors' perceptions of the ICT role in developing students' communicative competence across its components. These results are represented in table 3:

Table 3. *ANOVA F test*

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The role of ICT in developing EFL learners' linguistic competence	Between Groups	.086	2	.043	.156	.856
	Within Groups	15.648	57	.275		
	Total	15.733	59			
The role of ICT in developing EFL learners' sociocultural competence	Between Groups	.777	2	.388	1.524	.227
	Within Groups	14.531	57	.255		

	Total	15.308	59			
The role of ICT in developing EFL learners' discourse competence	Between Groups	3.581	2	1.791	2.690	.076
	Within Groups	37.936	57	.666		
	Total	41.517	59			
The role of ICT in developing EFL learners' strategic competence	Between Groups	.668	2	.334	1.316	.276
	Within Groups	14.472	57	.254		
	Total	15.140	59			

Table 3 shows that ANOVA F test was used to compare the mean squares of the four competences. The Sig. values are represented as .856 for linguistic competence, .227 for sociocultural competence, .076 for discourse competence, and .276 for strategic competence. All the Sig. values are higher than .05 which means there is no any statistically significant differences in the EFL instructors' perceptions on the role of ICT in developing students' communicative competence across its elements.

The third question: Regarding the third research question which was formulated to address whether there are statistically significant differences in the instructors' perceptions on the role of ICT in developing students' communicative competence across its components that can be attributed to gender. Levene's test for equality of variances was used to check the sample homogeneity. According to the Table 4, three components of communicative competence are represented homogeneously between the groups of males and females because the Sig. values are higher than .05. i.e., .448, .674, .431, except the third component which shows that the sample is not homogenous because Sig. value is .030, so the t value for equal variance which is not assumed is used instead which means no Sign value also .847.

Table 4. *Levene's test for equality of variances*

		F	Sig	T
The role of (ICT) in developing EFL	Equal variances	.582	.448	.07
	assumed			0

learners' linguistic competence	Equal variances not assumed				.063
The role of (ICT) in developing EFL learners' sociocultural competence	Equal variances assumed	.179	.674	.311	
	Equal variances not assumed				.325
The role of (ICT) in developing EFL learners' discourse competence	Equal variances assumed	4.941	.030	.759	
	Equal variances not assumed				.847
The role of (ICT) in developing EFL learners' strategic competence	Equal variances assumed	.630	.431	.437	
	Equal variances not assumed				.433

Table 5 shows that t-test for equality of means was used to calculate whether there are any statistically significant differences in the perceptions of EFL instructors on the role of ICT in developing students' communicative competence across its four components attributed to gender. The table shows that there are no any statistically significant differences between the opinions of males and females regarding the role of ICT in developing students' communicative competence components as the Sig. (2-tailed) values were .944, .757, .451, & .663 which were higher than .05.

DISCUSSION

As per the result of this study, the Yemen EFL instructors held positive perceptions of the ICTs role in developing students' communicative competence in English. It can be used as a support to those studies appealing for the use of ICTs in language learning for its effective role in developing students' communicative competence. These findings are in line with Gómez and Vicente (2011) in terms of ICT role in developing students' communicative competence, Ahmed et al. (2020) in terms of teachers' perceptions of ICTs role in enhancing English learning, Al-Jarrah, et al. (2019) in terms of developing language skills, Pham and Nguyen (2018) in terms of enhancing lexical competence, Gilakjani (2018) in terms of improving phonological competence. As previous studies dealt with teachers' perceptions of ICTs in developing language skills and some elements of the communicative competences, especially those

under linguistic competence, as well as making language learning more effective and enjoyable, this study has delved into the details of communicative competence, provided evidence from the Yemeni instructors' viewpoints and experience that ICTs play a crucial role in developing the various aspects of students' communicative competence in English. The study also revealed that no statistically significant differences in the instructors' perceptions of the role that ICTs play in developing each component of the communicative competence which means that the concerned instructors perceive ICTs role is crucial and effective in developing all the four major components of the communicative competence, namely: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences.

Table 5. *Independent sample test*

Gender		N	Mean.	Si g. (2 - tai le d)	Mean Differ ence	Std. Error Differ ence	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Low er	Upper
The role of (ICT) in developing EFL learners' linguistic competence	Male	40	4.5300	.9 44	- .010 00-	.142 63	- .295 50-	.275 50
	Femal e	20	4.5400	.9 51	- .010 00-	.159 84	- .337 00-	.317 00
The role of (ICT) in developing EFL learners' sociocultural competence	Male	40	4.6188	.7 57	- .043 75-	.140 58	- .325 15-	.237 65
	Femal e	20	4.6625	.7 46	- .043 75-	.134 45	- .314 90-	.227 40

The role of (ICT) in developing EFL learners' discourse competence	Male	40	4.1583	.451	-.17500-	.23056	-.63651-	.28651
	Female	20	4.3333	.401	-.17500-	.20668	-.59001-	.24001
The role of (ICT) in developing EFL learners' strategic competence	Male	40	4.5944	.663	.06111	.13969	-.21851-	.34073
	Female	20	4.5333	.667	.06111	.14098	-.22450-	.34672

As far as the instructors' perceptions of the role of ICTs in developing communicative competence in relation to their gender are concerned, the study shows no statistically significant differences that can be attributed to gender. This finding supports other studies conducted in this field such as Ahmed et al. (2020), Mollaei & Riasati (2013) and Zekiye (2018). On the other hand, it contrasts other studies that proved an influential role for gender in shaping instructors' perceptions of ICTs in language teaching such as Sulaiman's (2017).

CONCLUSION

This study delved into Yemeni instructors' perceptions on the role of ICTs in developing students' communicative competence, focusing on its major components: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences. The study revealed high positive perceptions of instructors on the role of ICTs in developing students' communicative competence and reported that there are no statistically significant differences in the instructors' perceptions on the role of ICTs across the components of communicative competence. Moreover, the study found that there are no any statistically significant differences in the role of ICTs in developing students' communicative competence attributed to gender. This study contributes to the communicative competence and ICTs literature and encourages upcoming

researchers to explore the implementation of ICTs in enhancing students' communicative competence.

This study has some limitations as it only pertained the Yemeni instructors and did not touch students' perceptions of ICTs role in developing their communicative competence. However, its results can be high value for both EFL teachers and students in Yemen and Arab. Moreover, the study used only the questionnaire as a data collection tool. The findings reported the instructors' perceptions on the effective role played by ICTs in developing students' communicative competence in English. It is hereby suggested for EFL instructors to operationalize their positive perceptions on helping their students on ways to use ICTs for developing students' communicative competence. Further studies are also recommended in Yemeni and Arab contexts to investigate students' perceptions of ICTs in developing their communicative competence. It is also strongly recommended to conduct experimental studies to assess the actual role that ICT tools play in developing the various aspects of the communicative competence.

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