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The Impact of a Training Program Based on CHICKERING and GAMSON'S Seven Principles on Developing EFL Instructors' Online Teaching Competencies at UCAS

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Abstract:

This research investigated the impact of a training program based on Chickering and Gamson's seven principles on the development of online teaching competencies for EFL instructors at UCAS. Employing a mixed methods approach, the study integrated an extensive literature review with data collection through sample surveys and focused group discussions involving 18 EFL instructors. The research identifies prevalent challenges encountered by EFL instructors in the realm of online teaching and to propose proactive strategies for addressing these challenges.

Commencing with a thorough literature review and previous studies, it underscored the importance of Chickering and Gamson's principles in the designing and evaluating of online teaching, particularly amidst challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and crises. Notable challenges, including fostering student engagement, mitigating technology disruptions, and refining curriculum design, are highlighted. The study formulated proactive approaches to tackle these issues and underscores the significance of continuous professional development for EFL instructors.

Utilizing classroom observation cards and interviews, the research evaluated the impact of a six-week training program. The subsequent statistical analysis underscored a statistically significant positive impact across various dimensions of online teaching competencies.

Derived from the study's findings, the research provided tailored recommendations for academic and professional institutions, and EFL instructors. These recommendations facilitate ongoing enhancements in online teaching while emphasizing the essential role of fostering instructors' professional development to address evolving challenges and capitalize on opportunities within online instruction.

Keywords: Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles, Online Teaching Competencies, EFL Instruction, and professional development.

أثر برنامج تدريبي مقترح مستند لنموذج المبادئ السبعة لـ CHICKERING & GAMSON في تطوير الكفايات التدريسية الإلكترونية لمحاضري اللغة الإنجليزية بالكلية الجامعية للعلوم التطبيقية بغزة

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الملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة أثر برنامج تدريبي مقترح قائم على المبادئ السبعة لـ (CHICKERING و GAMSON) في تطوير كفايات التدريس الإلكترونية لمحاضري اللغة الإنجليزية في الكلية الجامعية بغزة. حيث اعتمد الباحث في هذه الدراسة المنهج المختلط ذو التصميم القائم على المجموعة الواحدة، حيث تم جمع البيانات من خلال استطلاعات عينية، ومناقشات بؤرية مركزية اشتملت على ثمانية عشر محاضر بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية في الكلية الجامعية بهدف تحديد التحديات الشائعة التي تواجههم في سياق التدريس الإلكتروني، مع مقترحات لاستراتيجيات استباقية للتغلب عليها.

تعرض الدراسة الأدب التربوي، ومجموعة من الدراسات السابقة التي أكدت على أهمية المبادئ السبعة لـ (CHICKERING و GAMSON) في تصميم وتقييم التعليم الإلكتروني، وخاصة في سياق التحديات، نحو جائحة كوفيد-19 والأزمات الأخرى.

اعتمدت الدراسة مجموعة من الأدوات، وهي: (بطاقة الملاحظة، والمقابلات) كأدوات للدراسة للحصول على رؤى أشد عمقاً حول تأثير البرنامج التدريبي، مع تأكيدها على أهمية التطوير المهني المستمر لمحاضري اللغة الإنجليزية كلفةً أجنبية من خلال تقييم تأثير البرنامج التدريبي ومدته ستة أسابيع.

وقد أثبتت نتائج التحليل الإحصائي الأثر الإيجابي ذي الدلالة الإحصائية على مجموعة متنوعة من كفايات التدريس الإلكترونية، وهو ما يؤكد فعالية البرنامج في تعزيز الكفايات لدى محاضري اللغة الإنجليزية في بيئة التدريس الرقمي. وقد أكدت نتائج التحليل النوعي لاستجابات المشتركين في المقابلة على فاعلية البرنامج التدريبي المقترح المستند على المبادئ السبعة لـ (CHICKERING و GAMSON) في تطوير كفايات التدريس الإلكترونية لمحاضري اللغة الإنجليزية في الكلية الجامعية بغزة.

وبناءً على ما توصلت إليه هذه الدراسة، تقدم الرسالة توصيات موجهة للمؤسسات الأكاديمية والمؤسسات المهنية ومحاضري اللغة الإنجليزية كلفةً أجنبية، إذ يرى الباحث أن هذه التوصيات تساهم في التحسين المستمر للتعليم الإلكتروني مع التأكيد على الدور الأساسي لتنمية المهنية لتعزيز التعامل مع التحديات المتطورة، والاستفادة من الفرص في التعليم الإلكتروني، علاوة على ذلك إمكانيات بحثية مستقبلية، تهدف استكشاف قابلية واستدامة برامج التدريب المستندة على المبادئ السبعة في سياقات تعليمية متنوعة حيث تساهم هذه الجهود بشكل مشترك في التطور المستمر للتعليم الإلكتروني.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المبادئ السبعة لـ CHICKERING و GAMSON، الكفايات التعليمية الإلكترونية، تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلفةً أجنبية، التطوير المهني.

Introduction:

The research examined the integration of technology in teaching and learning, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. The growing demand for updated online teaching competencies among EFL teachers has become essential to meet the needs of modern education. The research explored how the principles of good practice outlined by Chickering and Gamson can be applied to develop effective online teaching competencies for EFL instructors at the University College of Applied Sciences (UCAS). The research also considered the impact of Education in Emergencies (EiE) programs on the implementation of online education in challenging situations like conflicts and natural disasters.

Statement of the problem:

The research identified significant challenges faced by EFL instructors at UCAS in adopting online teaching competencies. These challenges include engaging and motivating students, managing technology-related disruptions, balancing professional commitments, designing effective grading strategies, creating inclusive learning environments, and continuously developing online teaching skills through professional development opportunities. The research aimed to address these issues by providing a training program based on Chickering and Gamson's seven principles to enhance EFL instructors' online teaching competencies.

Research questions:

The main research question is: **How can Chickering and Gamson's seven principles be effectively applied to enhance the online teaching competencies of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors' at UCAS?"**

The sub-questions of the research are:

1. What are the seven principles of good practice teaching competencies?
2. What are the EFL instructors' online teaching competencies?
3. Is there a statistically significant effect at a significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ for implementing Chickering and Gamson's seven principles on developing EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS?
4. What factors might enhance or hinder EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS?

Hypothesis:

1. There are statistically significant **differences** at a significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ for implementing Chickering and Gamson's seven principles on developing EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS before and after the experiment.
2. There is a statistically significant **impact** at a significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ for implementing Chickering and Gamson's seven principles on developing EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS.

Objectives of the research:

The importance of this research came from the growth of high-quality education demands. It sought to find out and develop EFL instructors' online teaching competencies. The main research objectives are:

1. To identify and describe Chickering and Gamson's seven principles for effective teaching, establishing a framework for online education.
2. To assess and document EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS, exploring technological skills, pedagogical knowledge, communication, and student engagement.
3. To determine if implementing Chickering and Gamson's principles significantly affects EFL instructors' online teaching competencies ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).
4. To explore factors influencing EFL instructors' online teaching competencies, including institutional support, technological resources, and professional development opportunities.

Significance of the research:

The significance of this research lied in its contribution to the field of EFL education, as it aimed to develop the online teaching competencies of EFL instructors based on Chickering and Gamson's seven principles of effective teaching. The main research significances are:

1. Providing a comprehensive framework of Chickering and Gamson's seven principles for effective online teaching, benefiting educational institutions and instructors in designing successful online education strategies.
2. Assessing the current online teaching competencies of EFL instructors at UCAS, identifying areas for targeted professional development.
3. Determining the potential impact of implementing Chickering and Gamson's principles on EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS, informing evidence-based faculty training.
4. Exploring influential factors that enhance or hinder EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS, guiding decision-making for a conducive virtual teaching environment.

Limitations of the research

While Chickering and Gamson's seven principles of effective teaching provide a valuable framework for enhancing online EFL education, there are several limitations that the research may encounter in this research, including:

1. **Time limitations:** Conducting a mixed-methods research design, including a quasi-experimental approach, interviews, and observations, proved time-consuming. The research coincided with external changes possibly influencing the results. Limited time for data collection and the training program may have impacted the research's outcomes.
2. **Place limitations:** Focusing exclusively on EFL instructors at UCAS restricts the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings. Variations in teaching methods, resources, and cultural factors in different contexts or countries might yield different outcomes.

3. **Topic limitations:** The research exclusively examines the impact of a Chickering and Gamson-based training program on EFL instructors' online teaching competencies. Other influential factors on online teaching might not be fully explored, limiting the research's scope.
4. **Targeted group:** The research's narrow focus on EFL instructors at UCAS during the second semester of 2022-2023 may hinder generalization to other semesters or academic years. The small sample size of 18 instructors further limits the research's broader applicability.

Definitions of terms:

❖ Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education:

They are a set of supportive, engaging, and effective guidelines that are designed to promote effective teaching and learning in higher education. Chickering & Gamson (1989), The seven Principles are:

1. Encourage contact between students and faculty.
2. Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students.
3. Encourage active learning.
4. Give prompt feedback.
5. Emphasize time on task.
6. Communicate high expectations.
7. Respect diverse talents and ways of learning.

❖ Online teaching competencies:

Online teaching competencies encompass essential skills, knowledge, and abilities needed for effective virtual learning. They include understanding online tools, designing engaging activities, expertise in pedagogy, technology, communication, and reflection.

❖ Education in emergencies:

Education in emergencies refers to the provision of education and learning opportunities in crisis situations, such as natural disasters, conflicts, or pandemics; including ensuring access to education for all.

Literature Review:

This research investigated the applicability of Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education as a framework to enrich EFL instructors' online teaching competencies. Widely acknowledged in higher education, these principles have been adapted to the realm of online EFL teaching, revealing favorable impacts on student engagement, learning outcomes, and teaching efficacy.

Noteworthy, Bagriacik & Banyard (2019) emphasized on the significance of enhancing student engagement across diverse educational settings, both traditional and distance. Expanding on this, Aziz (2021) highlighted how principles-based instruction augmented student-teacher interactions, ultimately elevating online learning engagement and achievement.

The foundational recognition of these principles as evaluative benchmarks for effective classrooms was concurred by Chickering & Gamson (1999). Their adaptability to the online learning

sphere has spurred discourse. Dreon (2013) proposed adaptations to suit virtual contexts, while Selwyn (2018) introduced principle-based strategies to address challenges in higher education evaluations. Uğraş and Asiltürk (2018) delved into teachers' perspectives, affirming their positive influence on engagement and academic attainment.

Integral to fostering conducive learning environments, cultivating student-faculty contact and nurturing reciprocity among peers has been underscored by scholars like Journell (2023) and Yan (2022). Their emphasis on support, protective factors, and blended teaching's role in nurturing teacher resilience and fostering productive student interactions resonates. Ren (2020) expounded upon effective online teaching strategies, such as computer conferencing and clear communication, highlighting their sway on motivation, persistence, and holistic development. Moreover, active learning practices, fostering meaningful activities and critical thinking, seamlessly align with Chickering and Gamson's model, enriching higher-order thinking and metacognition.

Integration of active learning strategies into digital learning realms hinges upon digital fluency, as underscored by Cabrera et al. (2020). Aji & Khan (2019) and Munna & Kalam (2021) extended insights on the limitations of traditional lecturing and factors shaping student engagement, respectively. Effective feedback practices, inclusive of rubrics and technological tools, surfaced as pivotal for nurturing student growth, as highlighted by Chang (2018). Additionally, technology alignment and upholding high standards were explored by Paoletta (2020), delving into ICT's influence on pedagogical practices and faculty engagement.

Zoom, Google Docs, Edulastic, and Kahoot! have emerged as facilitators of active learning, offering vibrant and interactive learning experiences. Gerasimiak (2022) and Giannamore (2020) addressed gaps in comprehending online teaching's impact, while also extending practical recommendations. The amalgamation of insights spanning EFL instruction, technological alignment, active learning, and focused time allocation illuminates the pathway to effective practices in the realm of online EFL instruction.

Teaching competencies play a pivotal role in effective instruction, both within traditional and online contexts. Evidenced by researchers like Giannamore (2020), Wire (2023), Ally (2019), and Thompson (2023), these studies collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of these competencies. They span pedagogical prowess, technological acumen, adept communication, and more. The research accentuates the importance of instructional design, community building, and adapting pedagogical approaches. As education evolves, continuous professional development emerges as imperative, as highlighted by various scholars.

Albrahim (2020) focused on online teaching skills and Competencies, presenting a categorization of key competencies required for effective online teaching. The research offers insights into the multifaceted skill set educators need to navigate the complexities of online instruction, as in the following table:

Table (1): Categorization of Online Teaching Competencies

Researcher(s)	Communication	Pedagogy	Technology	Design	Management	Instructional	Social	Assessment	Orienting students	Institutional	CM S/LMS	Personal	Content	Professional
ISTE (2001)		X	X	X	X	X			X			X		X
Salmon (2003)	X	X	X								X		X	
Smith (2008)	X	X	X	X	X									
Dubins and Graham (2009)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Guasch et al. (2010)		X	X	X	X		X							
Abdous (2011)	X	X	X	X	X									
Palloff and Pratt (2011)		X	X									X	X	
Bigatel et al. (2012)		X	X		X					X		X		
Baran and Correia (2014)		X	X											
COAT (2014)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X			X

Albrahim (2020) Online Teaching Skills and Competencies.

The collection of studies on teaching competencies in the online environment underscores the multifaceted skill set required for effective online instruction. Albrahim (2020) categorizes competencies into pedagogical, content, design, technological, management, institutional, and social and communication skills. Koehler, Mishra & Cain (2013) introduced the TPACK framework, amalgamating content, pedagogy, and technology knowledge. Ní Shé et al. (2021) outlined roles aligned with competencies such as managerial, pedagogical, social, technical, assessor, facilitator, content expert, instructional designer, researcher, and evaluator. However, discrepancies and overlaps among the identified competencies are evident, necessitating a standardized framework. The studies emphasize a holistic skill set encompassing instructional design, communication, management, and subject matter expertise. Future research should delve into comparative analysis and explore the correlation between competencies and learning outcomes to inform tailored training for online educators.

The studies collectively emphasize the importance of Pedagogical, Management, and Technological online competencies for effective online teaching. Simsek et al. (2021), and Pulham (2018) highlight pedagogical competencies like designing learner-centered courses, facilitating collaboration, and efficient course management. Ní et al. (2021) stress managerial skills, such as time management and leadership. Gulbahar and Kalelioglu (2015) and González-Sanmamed et al. (2014) emphasize staying technologically adept and continuous professional development.

Reflective practice emerges as pivotal for teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. Slade et al. (2019) highlight its impact on teacher candidates' competencies, Shandomo (2010) underscores its role in connecting with diverse students, and Degife Gudeta (2022) calls for its promotion in teacher education. Pang's (2022) research shows reflective practices foster a continuous improvement cycle. Reflection online competencies empower educators for inclusive and effective online environments, facilitating professional growth and quality education.

In conclusion, Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles demonstrate adaptability in the realm of online EFL instruction, enhancing engagement, outcomes, and teaching quality. Through

effective feedback, technological integration, and alignment with high standards, they enrich the educational landscape, promoting enduring positive change. Ongoing research continues to refine implementation, fostering a sustained and impactful transformation in education. On the other hand, the studies reviewed highlighted the importance of various competencies for successful online instruction. However, there is a need for more comparative analysis and research on the effectiveness of different teaching strategies in the online environment. By further exploring these areas, educators and institutions can better understand the skills and knowledge required for effective online teaching and develop comprehensive frameworks and support systems to enhance online instruction. After conducting a thorough literature review and consulting with experts, the current research identifies six essential online teaching competencies:

1. Pedagogical online competencies
2. Management online competencies
3. Design and content online competencies
4. Technological online competencies
5. Communication online competencies
6. Reflection online competencies

Methodology:

The research employed a mixed methods approach with quantitative and qualitative strands. Quantitative aspects feature a quasi-experimental design using pre- and post-experiment classroom observation cards. Qualitative aspects involve the suggested program along with interviews with EFL instructors, capturing the impact of Chickering and Gamson's principles on teaching. This covers challenges, strategies, teaching and student outcome changes, benefits, and recommendations for better online teaching. The program uses a one-group pre- and post-design, utilizing statistical analysis for comprehensive evaluation.

Population and Sampling:

The research encompassed EFL instructors teaching in UCAS' second semester of 2022-2023. Through non-probability sampling, 18 qualified and experienced EFL instructors were selected as participants. Although a limited sample size, these English department instructors are representative and offer insights into instructional effectiveness.

Instruments:

The research tools comprise:

1. Classroom observation cards; and
2. Instructor interviews.

A Classroom Observation Card:

A Classroom observation is a systematic method of collecting and analysing data by observing teaching practices and student actions during classroom sessions. It provides insights into instructional methods, student behaviours, and overall classroom dynamics, facilitating discussions and improving teaching and learning experiences. (Yusrina & Bima (2020).

The procedures for designing the observation card involved:

1. Reviewing literature to construct the tool, define domains, and formulate items.
2. Identifying key dimensions: instructional delivery, engagement, management, and assessment.
3. Selecting specific indicators for each dimension.
4. Creating the card's layout and structure for systematic recording.
5. Consulting experts to refine the tool for Chickering and Gamson's principles alignment.
6. Adapting the card based on feedback, yielding the final version of the card.

The observation card is designed with six categories: pedagogical, management, design & content, technological, communication, and reflection. Each category consists of five corresponding indicators, resulting in a total of 30 indicators. A Likert five-point scale is used to ask instructors to rate their level of agreement with each statement.

Validity of the observation card:

1. Face validity:

To validate the classroom observation card, the research sought input from a diverse group of specialists, including university professors, English supervisors, methodology experts, and EFL instructors. Their valuable feedback was carefully considered to refine the tool, identifying appropriate domains and indicators for accurate assessment of EFL instructors' teaching competencies in online teaching.

2. Validity of Internal Consistency:

To assess internal consistency validity, a sample of (10) responses was subjected to the observation card method. Pearson correlation coefficients were computed between individual item scores and the corresponding domain's total score. The results of calculated domains were as follows:

- **Pedagogical Online Competencies:** Correlation coefficients between the first domain's items and its total score demonstrated statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) across all domain items. Coefficients ranged from 0.66 to 0.97, confirming the intended construct measurement.
- **Management Online Competencies:** In the domain of management online competencies, all items exhibited statistically significant correlation coefficients ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) with the total domain score. The coefficients ranged from 0.61 to 0.95, affirming the intended construct's effective measurement.
- **Design and Content Online Competencies:** Correlation coefficients within the design and content domain established statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for all items in relation to the total domain score. Ranging from 0.69 to 0.91, these coefficients underscored the domain's accurate construct measurement.
- **Technological Online Competencies:** Within the technological domain, items displayed statistically significant correlation coefficients ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) with the total domain score. Ranging from 0.68 to 0.93, these coefficients validated the effective measurement of the intended constructs.

- **Communication Online Competencies:** Correlation coefficients in the communication domain were statistically significant ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for all items in relation to the total domain score. Coefficients ranged from 0.62 to 0.89, confirming precise measurement of intended constructs.
- **Reflection Online Competencies:** Correlation coefficients within the reflection domain demonstrated statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for all items relative to the total domain score. Ranging from 0.62 to 0.86, these coefficients established the domain's apt measurement of intended constructs.

Reliability of the classroom observation card:

The researcher employed the Cronbach's alpha method, a widely utilized approach for assessing instrument reliability. This method elucidates the extent of variability in respondents' scores. The calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficients for evaluating the reliability of the domains within the classroom observation card surpassed 0.57. This outcome signifies a strong level of reliability across all domains, as well as for the instrument in its entirety.

To conclude and after ensuring the validity and reliability of the classroom observation card, and after making the necessary adjustments, the instrument was finalized as presented in the research's appendix (1). This gives the researcher confidence in applying it to the research sample in order to achieve the research's objectives.

Interviews of Instructors:

Interviews serve as a qualitative research tool, fostering purposeful conversations to gather essential information. At UCAS, EFL instructors engage in interviews, sharing their experiences with a training program grounded in Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles for online teaching competencies. Employing open-ended questions, this qualitative approach delves into their perspectives and practices. This systematic analysis yields insights into the program's effectiveness and potential improvements.

Six participants were selected, and to ensure interview quality, a sample interview is conducted with two instructors to collect qualitative data. Interview questions are constructed by referencing relevant literature on interview processes, such as Abu Zina et al. (2007). These main topics served as a basis for formulating in-depth interview questions, which are:

1. What is your overall opinion of the suggested program based on Chickering and Gamson's seven principles on developing EFL instructors' online teaching competencies?
2. How has the suggested program influenced your teaching practices in the online environment? Can you provide specific examples?
3. In your experience, which specific principles from Chickering and Gamson's model have been most beneficial in improving EFL teaching instruction? Why?
4. Have you encountered any challenges or difficulties in implementing the principles from the suggested program? If so, how did you overcome them?
5. What recommendations or suggestions do you have for enhancing the effectiveness of the suggested program in supporting EFL instructors in online teaching?

Validity and Reliability of the Interview Tool:

Validity and Reliability of Interview Tool: Topics aligned with impact, ease of use, motivation, online teaching attitudes, and program benefits establish validity. Content validity, construct validity, and face validity ensure credibility. Expert feedback refines the tool. A pilot interview assures reliability. Structured main interviews with six participants, using five open-ended questions, explore program experiences and opinions.

Interviews Data Analysis: Thematic analysis is employed, involving transcription, familiarization, initial coding, theme generation, review, refinement, interpretation, and integration with quantitative data. MAXQDA 2022 software assists in coding and developing themes. A total of 337 initial codes are identified, contributing to the theoretical framework.

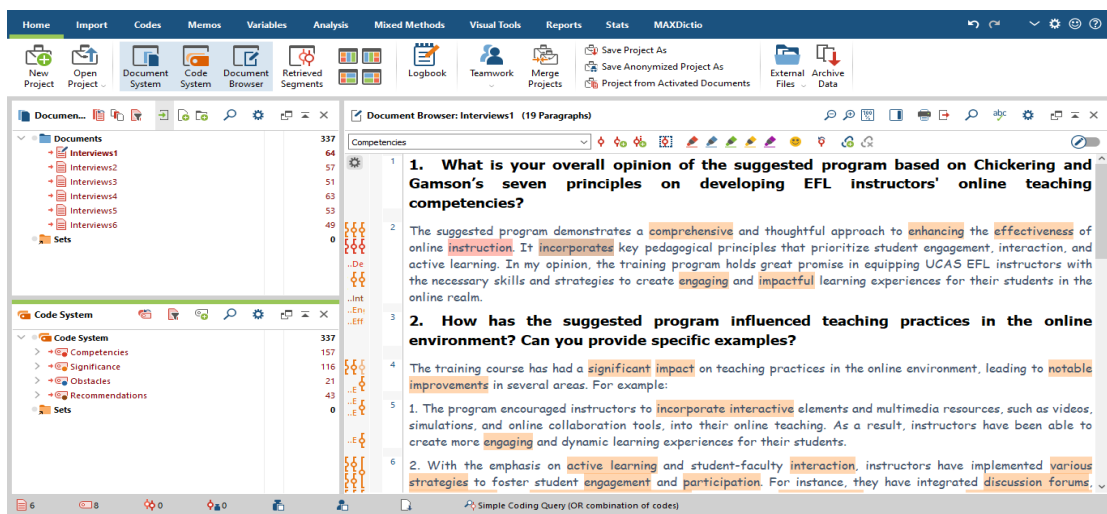


Figure (1): Open coding stage

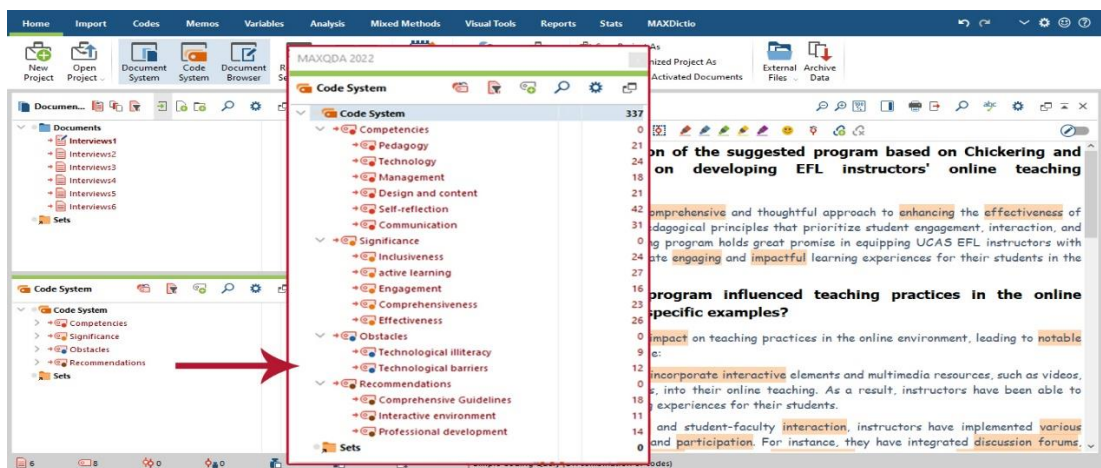


Figure (2): illustration of the open coding stage and code system

Thematic identification:

It involves searching for relevant themes and initiating the analysis of potential codes to form long-range themes in the data. The researcher reevaluates code segments, ensuring correct coding, and explores relationships between codes. These themes are closely connected to research questions: competencies, significance, obstacles, and recommendations.

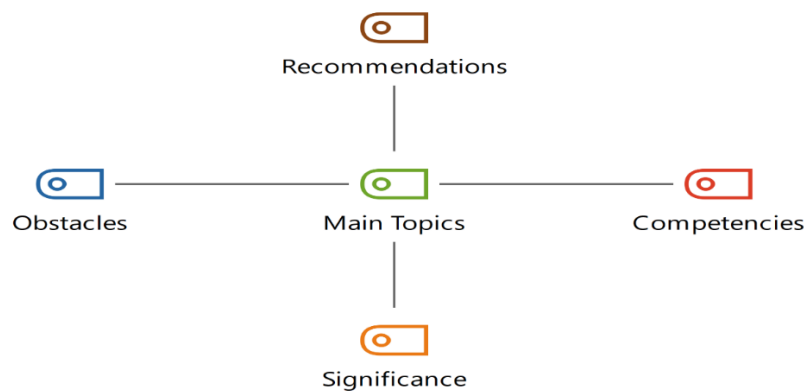


Figure (3): Thematic Main Topics Coding

The (MAXQDA 2022) has contributed to preparing a final report on the qualitative analysis of in-depth interview data. It excels in efficiently sorting, organizing, and analysing large quantities of texts, facilitating the management of interpretations and results.

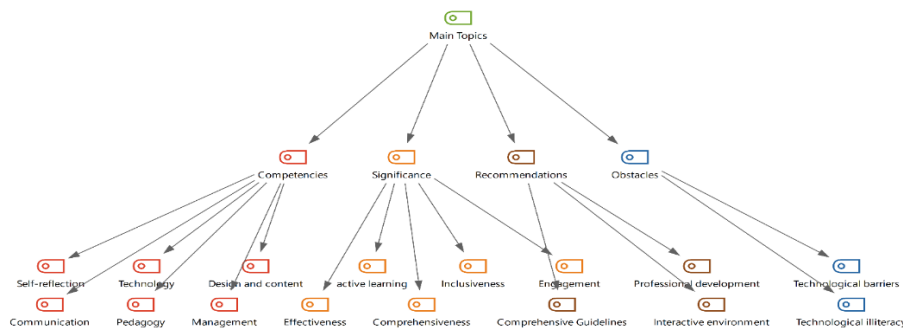


Figure (4): Thematic Main and sub-topics Coding

Statistical Methods Used in the research:

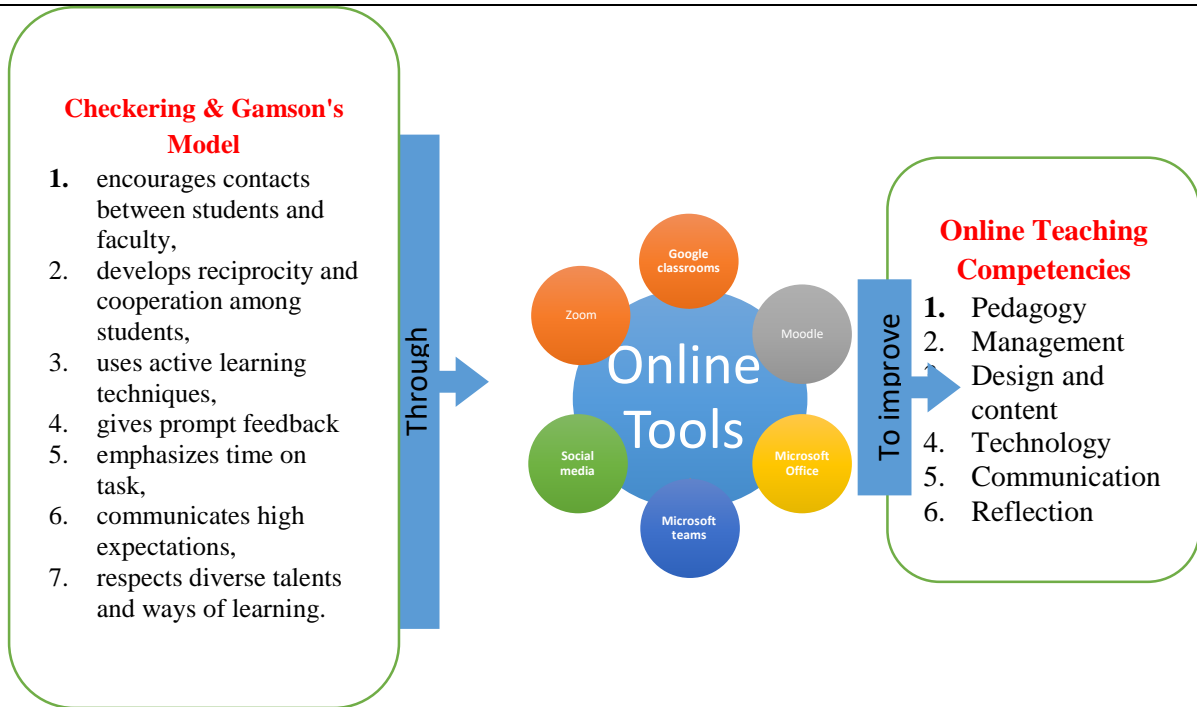
The researcher utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to conduct the statistical analyses employed in this research. These methods included the following statistical techniques:

- Mean and standard deviation.
- Independent Samples T-Test for two independent samples.
- Pearson correlation coefficient to assess internal consistency reliability.
- Cronbach's alpha coefficient to determine the test's reliability.
- MAXQDA 2022 software for qualitative data analysis.

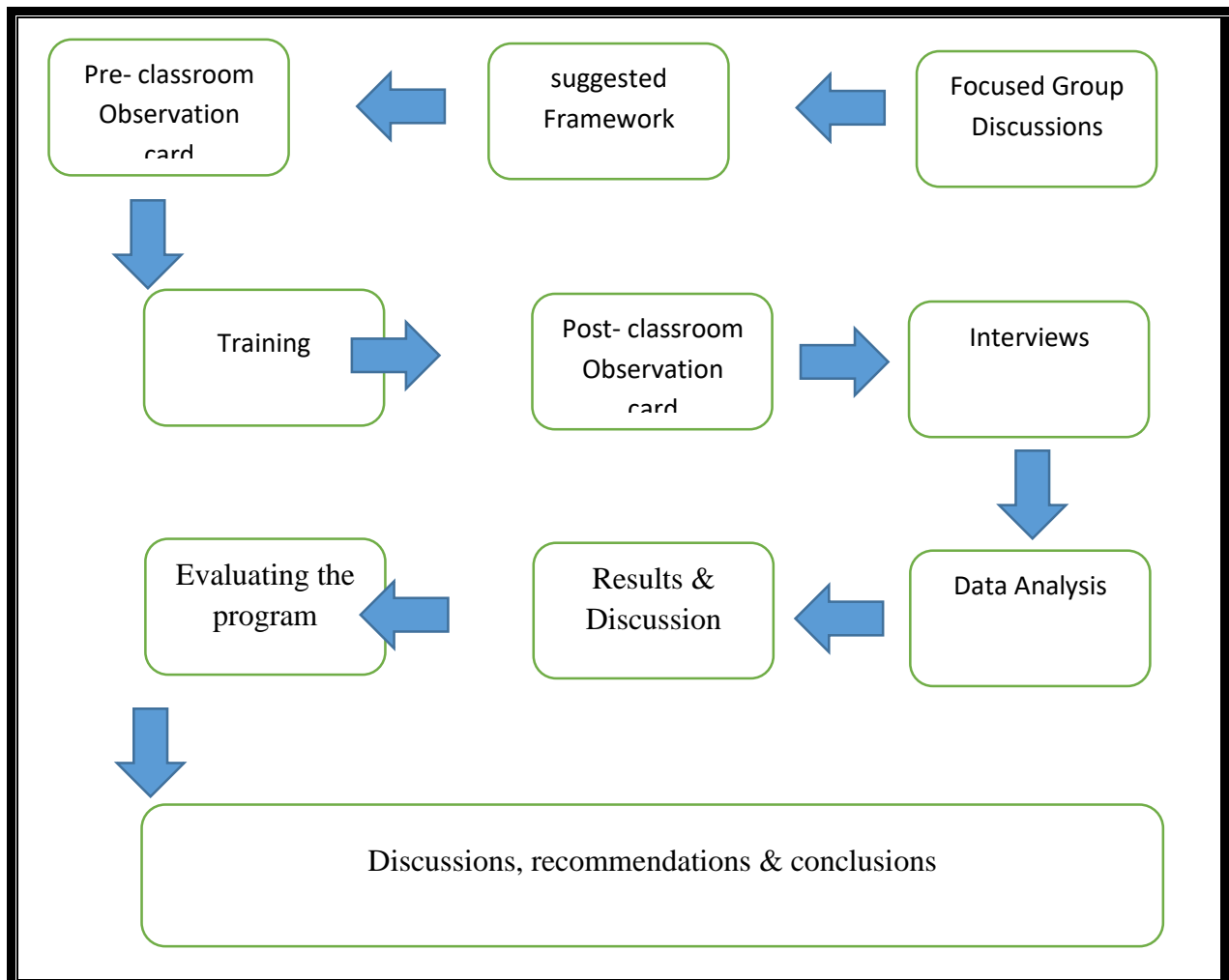
The suggested program based on Checkering and Gamson's seven principles:

The researcher followed the ADDIE procedures to design the suggested program based on Checkering and Gamson's seven principles to develop online teaching competencies of EFL instructors at UCAS.

A framework for the program, developed based on Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles for Developing EFL Instructors' Online Teaching Competencies, was designed. The diagram shows the overall framework of the suggested program as follows:



The diagram shows the steps of conducting the research:



Research Procedures:

The research procedures were as follows:

1. Theoretical Background: Related literature and previous studies about Chickering & Gamson's Model and online teaching competencies
2. Identifying the tools used to conduct the research: an observation card; and interview.
3. Data collection procedures
4. The Suggested Framework for developing online teaching competencies.
5. Implementing the training Program
6. Instructor's training and their Professional development situation
7. Evaluation and prompt feedback

Findings and conclusions:

This section comprehensively presents and discusses the findings addressing the main research question and sub-questions. The research evaluates the impact of a training program, aligned with Chickering and Gamson's principles, on the online teaching competencies of EFL instructors at UCAS. Statistical analysis unveils key insights into how the program influenced these competencies, offering valuable implications for EFL instruction. Discussions critically assess the findings within existing literature and theoretical frameworks, identifying strengths, limitations, and areas for future research. It concludes by summarizing the main findings and their implications, providing a holistic understanding of the program's impact. Additionally, it includes the presentation of research results obtained through statistical analysis.

Research's Criterion- Normality Distribution Test:

The Shapiro-Wilk test was employed for the small sample size of 18 to determine normal distribution. Probability values for domains exceeded significance level, indicating normal distribution. One Sample T-Test and Wilcoxon test were chosen based on normality distribution.

Normality Distribution Test for Observation Card:

The test indicated normal distribution for the overall score and the first domain. Wilcoxon test was chosen for the second to sixth domains due to non-normal distribution.

This part of the research delves into the sub-questions, providing a comprehensive analysis of the research's outcomes.

Answer of Question "1":

Addressing the first sub-question involved an in-depth literature review. Chickering and Gamson's seven principles for good practice in teaching competencies were explored through scholarly articles, books, and reliable sources. These principles have been widely acknowledged in education and serve as a framework for effective instructional strategies (Chickering & Gamson, 1989). The principles are as follows:

1. **Encourage Contact Between Students and Faculty:** This principle highlights interactive relationships, fostering support through meaningful interactions both inside and outside the classroom.

2. **Develop Reciprocity and Cooperation Among Students:** Emphasizes collaborative learning, encouraging students to work together, exchange ideas, and engage in joint activities.
3. **Encourage Active Learning:** Stresses active student involvement, prompting instructors to facilitate discussions, problem-solving, and hands-on experiences.
4. **Give Prompt Feedback:** Emphasizes timely and constructive feedback, guiding students toward continuous improvement.
5. **Emphasize Time on Task:** Allocates ample time for meaningful learning activities to deepen comprehension.
6. **Communicate High Expectations:** Sets high standards for student performance, challenging them to excel.
7. **Respect Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning:** Values diverse talents, accommodating individual needs and differences.

These principles underpin the training program's design, enhancing EFL instructors' online teaching skills. By incorporating them, instructors gain effective strategies aligned with online best practices.

Answer of Question "2": "What are the EFL instructors' online teaching competencies?"

In response to the second question of the research, a comprehensive overview of online teaching competencies has emerged from various scholarly perspectives. Researchers have classified these competencies using diverse approaches. Some frameworks group competencies into technical, pedagogical, and managerial domains (Koehler & Cain, 2013), while the TPACK framework considers technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Koehler & Cain, 2013). Bozkurt et al. (2021) identified pedagogical, technological, content, assessment, social, and cultural competencies.

Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000) highlighted design, facilitation, direct instruction, and social support, whereas Newby, Eagleson, and Pfander (2014) outlined competencies related to course overview, assessment, instructional materials, learner interaction, and accessibility. Liao and Liu (2021) expanded this spectrum with pedagogical, technical, communication, collaboration, assessment, and personal and professional competencies.

Sweeney, Bohan, and Martin (2021) emphasized pedagogical, technological, managerial, and professional competencies. Additional scholars offered their own frameworks encompassing various dimensions (Albrahim, 2020; Smith, 2008; Dubins & Graham, 2009; Guasch, Alvarez, & Espasa, 2010; Abdous, 2011; Bigatel et al., 2012; Baran & Correia, 2014; Maryland Online [MOL], 2014). Collectively, these categorizations provide valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of effective online teaching competencies.

The current research followed the above-mentioned researchers and created the following model:

Table (2): A framework for Categorization of Online Teaching Competencies

No	Researchers	Communication	Pedagogy	Technology	Design	Management	Instruction	Social	Assessment	Orientation	Personal	Content	Professional	Reflection	Cognitive	Digital	Facilitation
1.	Albrahim 2020	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		X	X		
2.	Koehler & Cain 2013		X	X								X					
3.	Kocdar, et al (2021)		X			X		X							X	X	
4.	Garrison, Anderson, and Archer 2000				X		X	X									X
5.	Newby, Eagleson & Pfander (2014).		X	X			X		X	X							
6.	Liao and Liu (2021)		X	X		X			X		X		X				
7.	Sweeney, et al (2021)		X	X		X							X				
8.	COAT (2014)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X
9.	Ní Shé et. al. (2021)		X	X		X	X	X	X			X					X
10.	Abdous (2011)	X	X	X	X	X											

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The integration of insights from multiple researchers and dimensions has culminated in a comprehensive model for online teaching competencies. This model encompasses various facets such as communication, pedagogy, technology, design, management, instruction, social aspects, assessment, orientation, institution, cognitive abilities, personal factors, content, professional aspects, reflection, digital skills, and facilitation.

This holistic model recognizes that successful online teaching transcends technical skills, encompassing cognitive abilities, interpersonal dynamics, and reflective practices. As a valuable resource, this model holds the potential to enrich online teaching practices and guide professional development. It equips educators with a multifaceted framework to design and deliver engaging online learning experiences that foster student engagement and achievement. The research concludes by adopting the encompassing online teaching competencies categories outlined in the model.

The current research concluded and adopted the following online teaching competencies categories during the research as follows:

Online Teaching Competencies

1. Pedagogy Online competencies
2. Management Online competencies
3. Design and content Online competencies
4. Technology Online competencies
5. Communication Online competencies
6. Reflection Online competencies

Answer of question "3": "Is there a statistically significant effect at a significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ for implementing Chickering and Gamson's seven principles on developing EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS?"

Designing the Training Program based on Chickering and Gamson's Principles

The researcher employed the ADDIE model to formulate the training program aimed at cultivating online teaching competencies for EFL instructors at UCAS, aligned with Chickering and Gamson's seven principles. This endeavour was executed by adhering to the sequential phases of the ADDIE model:

Analysis:

- Conducted a thorough review of Chickering and Gamson's principles for online teaching competencies.
- Examined prior studies related to the online teaching proficiencies of UCAS EFL instructors.
- Evaluated the distinct requirements of UCAS EFL instructors concerning online teaching skills.

Design:

- Identified optimal tools, instructional strategies, methods, and activities for bolstering EFL instructors' online teaching skills.
- Utilized Chickering and Gamson's principles as the foundation for shaping program content and activities.
- Factored in the unique context of UCAS EFL instructors during the design phase.

Development:

- Generated comprehensive training materials encompassing course content, instructional guides, and assessments, meticulously tailored to the UCAS EFL instructors.

Implementation:

- Launched and administered the devised program to UCAS EFL instructors via a fitting online delivery mode.
- Executed the program with the objective of enhancing instructors' online teaching capabilities and fostering effective student engagement in the virtual learning sphere.

Evaluation:

- Assessed the efficacy of the training program in accomplishing the intended learning outcomes for UCAS EFL instructors.
- Garnered insights from instructors and examined feedback to gauge the program's influence.
- Leveraged evaluation results to refine and optimize the training initiative for future iterations, with a concentrated focus on meeting the specific requisites of UCAS EFL instructors.

The accompanying diagram provides a comprehensive overview of the proposed program's overarching framework, ensuring the alignment of the program with the principles of Chickering and Gamson for the advancement of EFL instructors' online teaching skills at UCAS.

Assessing the Impact of the Training Program:

Addressing the fourth question of the research, "Is there a statistically significant effect at a significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ of the training program based on Chickering and Gamson's seven principles on developing EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS?" involved a meticulous analysis of pre-application and post-application data from the observation card. The ensuing effect sizes were calculated to ascertain the program's influence.

Total Score of the Observation Card:

Analysing the total score's impact entailed evaluating the disparities between pre-application and post-application scores using statistical tests due to a normal distribution. Results indicate a p-value (sig) below 0.05, signifying substantial differences favoring post-application. This underscores the training program's efficacy in enhancing UCAS EFL instructors' online teaching proficiencies.

Eta Squared (η^2) Calculation:

The magnitude of the program's effect was quantified using the eta squared (η^2) metric. Calculated as per the equation $\eta^2 = t^2 / (t^2 + df)$, it yielded a value of 0.78, denoting a substantial effect size in line with the research's criterion. This underscores the training program's significant positive impact on improving UCAS EFL instructors' online teaching skills.

Impact on Specific Domains:

Assessing various domains' progress involved employing different testing methods depending on the normality of distributions. In all domains, statistically significant differences were found in favour of post-application, showcasing the program's efficacy.

Effect Size Calculation:

To quantify the effect sizes for each domain, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test utilized the effect size (r) formula. Results unveiled an effect size (r) exceeding 0.50 across all domains, indicating high effect according to the research's criteria. This underscores the training program's robust influence on improving online teaching competencies, particularly in domains spanning from the second to the sixth.

In summary, the statistical analyses demonstrate that the training program founded on Chickering and Gamson's principles wielded a statistically significant and substantial impact in enhancing UCAS EFL instructors' online teaching competencies, substantiating its effectiveness across various domains

Answering of question "4":

The exploration of factors that influence the enhancement or hindrance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS is a crucial endeavour in the modern educational landscape. To gain comprehensive insights, this research conducted interviews with EFL instructors, focusing on a training program rooted in Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles for developing online teaching competencies. This research presents a detailed analysis of the research's qualitative assessment and its alignment with quantitative measurements, shedding light on key findings and recommendations.

Six EFL instructors were selected for interviews, with a pilot interview ensuring the quality of the process. The interview tool, designed with content validity, effectively measured constructs related to the training program. Thematic identification, aided by MAXQDA 2022 software, facilitated data sorting and analysis, enabling a comprehensive exploration of the research question.

Quantitative-qualitative Comparison: The collected data were transcribed into text format, and symbols and key words were extracted to compare findings with quantitative measurements. The distribution of main interview topics and their percentages revealed a strong focus on competencies (46.6%) and significance (34.4%). These themes underscored EFL instructors' competency in online teaching and highlighted the program's impact on teaching practices, emphasizing its value for UCAS and similar institutions.

Positive Attitudes and Program Alignment: Interviewees displayed positive attitudes toward the suggested program and Chickering and Gamson's principles. They commended the program's emphasis on student engagement, active learning, and inclusivity, recognizing these elements as integral to effective online instruction. The consensus among interviewees on the program's potential to enhance EFL instructors' abilities and improve student learning experiences underscores its significance.

Key Themes and Insights: The interviews yielded six main themes within the competencies domain: self-reflection, communication, technology, pedagogy, design and content, and management. These themes emphasize the multifaceted nature of effective online teaching and highlight areas for professional development. The significance domain revealed five main themes: active learning, effectiveness, inclusiveness, comprehensiveness, and engagement. These themes offer valuable guidance for designing impactful and inclusive educational programs that cater to diverse learner needs.

Challenges and Recommendations: Challenges in implementing the program were identified, including technological barriers, limited student engagement, and instructional adaptation. The recommended solutions encompassed comprehensive technical support, interactive activities, community fostering, technological utilization, and instructional modification. To enhance the program's effectiveness, interviewees advocated for continuous professional development, a collaborative environment, comprehensive guidelines, feedback-driven reflection, and innovation promotion.

Instructors' Responses: An in-depth analysis of individual interviews provided valuable insights into instructors' perspectives. They praised the program's comprehensive approach, shared positive views on Chickering and Gamson's principles, and offered specific examples of improved teaching practices. Challenges such as technological barriers and illiteracy were acknowledged, and practical solutions were proposed, highlighting the importance of comprehensive support and continuous improvement.

The research successfully addressed the research question through a robust methodology that integrated qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research sheds light on factors enhancing or hindering EFL instructors' online teaching competencies at UCAS. The interviews uncovered valuable insights, emphasizing the significance of competencies, program alignment, positive attitudes, and key themes. Challenges and recommendations provided practical guidance for

program refinement. By implementing the recommendations, UCAS can elevate its online teaching programs, ensuring high-quality learning experiences for both instructors and students.

Conclusion:

In summary, this research thoroughly examined how a Chickering and Gamson-based training program affects the online teaching competencies of EFL instructors at UCAS. It looks closely at four important questions related to this topic.

The training program is carefully designed to improve the online teaching abilities of EFL instructors. It does this by showing instructors how to use effective methods that are already recognized as best practices. By using these methods, the goal is to help EFL instructors become better at teaching online.

A comprehensive model encompassed six categories of online teaching competencies—Pedagogy, Management, Design and Content, Technology, Communication, and Reflection—as a sturdy foundation for future endeavoured in the field of online pedagogy.

The training program's different parts were investigated, following ADDIE design model. The program uses things like workshops, webinars, hands-on practice, working with other teachers, getting feedback, and reflecting on teaching methods. These all work together to help EFL instructors improve their skills and create interesting online learning experiences.

The research also checked how well the training program works. The results show that it has a positive effect on various aspects of online teaching skills. This means that the program helps instructors get better at things like teaching methods, using technology, managing classes, communication, and creating content.

The research also asked instructors about their experiences. They shared that they feel more confident in their online teaching skills, especially when it comes to using technology. Interviews add more insights, showing that active learning and quick feedback are important for successful teaching.

In conclusion, this research answered the main question and highlights the program's potential to improve online teaching skills. Challenges like technology issues and staying engaged were found, and suggestions emphasized the importance of ongoing support and improvement. In short, this research's careful exploration of how the training program affects EFL instructors' online teaching skills at UCAS sat a strong foundation for future improvements in online teaching. The mix of theory, practical methods, and instructors' thoughts all work together to make online teaching even better.

Recommendations and Implications:

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, the following recommendations were offered for various stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of online teaching practices and promote professional development:

Academic Institutions:

1. Integrate the comprehensive model of online teaching competencies into faculty development programs to guide instructors in delivering effective online courses.
2. Foster a culture of continuous improvement by providing regular workshops, seminars, and collaborative platforms for instructors to share best practices and exchange experiences.
3. Establish mentorship programs where experienced online instructors can support and guide their peers in developing and refining their online teaching skills.

Professional Institutions:

1. Develop and offer specialized training programs for EFL instructors that align with Chickering and Gamson's principles, focusing on the identified competencies.
2. Collaborate with academic institutions to design certification programs that recognize instructors' proficiency in online teaching competencies.
3. Facilitate networking opportunities and communities of practice where instructors can engage in discussions, share resources, and learn from one another.

EFL Instructors:

1. Engage in self-directed professional development by participating in webinars, online courses, and workshops focused on enhancing specific competencies.
2. Regularly reflect on their teaching practices and seek feedback from peers and students to continuously refine their online teaching strategies.
3. Embrace technological advancements and explore innovative tools and techniques to create engaging online learning experiences.

Higher Education Students:

1. Undertake further research to explore the longitudinal impact of the training program on instructors' online teaching competencies and student outcomes.
2. Investigate the intersection of cultural diversity and online teaching competencies to develop strategies that cater to the needs of diverse student populations.
3. Collaborate with academic institutions and professional organizations to develop and assess new training interventions aligned with emerging trends in online education.

Suggestions for Further Research:

To advance the understanding of effective online teaching practices and their impact, future research endeavours could explore the following areas:

1. Conduct longitudinal studies to assess the sustained impact of the training program on EFL instructors' online teaching competencies and their influence on student learning outcomes.
2. Undertake comparative evaluations to determine the relative effectiveness of different training models in enhancing specific domains of online teaching competencies.
3. Investigate the correlation between instructors' mastery of online teaching competencies and the quality of student learning experiences, engagement, and achievement.
4. Explore strategies for promoting inclusivity and accommodating diverse learning styles within the framework of online teaching competencies.
5. Examine innovative assessment practices that align with online teaching competencies and foster authentic and meaningful learning experiences for students.

6. Conduct cross-cultural studies to identify cultural nuances and preferences that influence the application of online teaching competencies across different educational contexts.
7. Foster interdisciplinary collaboration between education, technology, and psychology fields to develop comprehensive models of online teaching competencies that encompass cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions.
8. Evaluate the sustainability and scalability of the training program by assessing its long-term impact on instructors' teaching practices and institutions' online learning offerings.

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