Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research Volume 5, Issue 2, 2018, pp. 192-206

Available online at www.jallr.com

ISSN: 2376-760X



# Google Docs: Potentials and Promises for Scaffolding Supervisory Pedagogical Practices of EFL/ ESL Students' Writing Dissertation

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#### **Abstract**

The diffusion of technology-enhanced Instruction has created enormous possibilities for teaching and learning in higher education. These new practices, more than ever before, have dramatically changed how instructions are molding. Therefore, and in this context, the present paper assumes a higher degree of reasonable relevance in its focus, treatment, and dilation of the subject matter, which although limited to the role of the use of Google docs towards achieving interminable reliability of data. In the same context, the study is an attempt to explore the instructional capabilities of Google Docs as an interactive and collaborative tool in enhancing EFL/ ESL students' writing dissertation, which is a mandatory requirement for graduation. Google Docs used as a tool for facilitating the supervision of six students graduation project from level eight at English Department, College of Arts and Humanities, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. Google Docs used to monitor students' progress in writing their dissertation and provide constructive and timely feedback. An interview was conducted to obtain students attitudes toward Google Docs-enhanced dissertation supervisory sessions. Students' responses revealed that Google Docs extends the scope of communication between them and their supervisor behind the confinements of traditional settings. Furthermore, Google Docs enhanced their editing and revision of manuscripts in an ever relaxing and motivated environment. The study highlights a set of remarkable features in favor of Google Docs as a vibrant and sophisticated research tool.

**Keywords:** Google docs, dissertation, EFL/ESL, supervisory pedagogical practices.

#### INTRODUCTION

Research Practices in today's academic contexts stand to gain the multiple advantages that the world of technology has bestowed us with. The application of various tools in mining data, interpreting facts, analyzing factors, rationalizing viewpoints, and offering conclusions itself is an indication of how the academic world extends its knowledge base with the help of the technological innovations which are enormously contributing to the more substantial canvas of data firmament. In this context the present paper assumes greater degree of reasonable relevance in its focus, treatment and dilation of the subject matter, which although limited to the role of use of Google docs towards achieving

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greater reliability of data, it does expand its scope by extending the horizons of understanding of interpretation strategies, which are by no means influenced by human interventions, but primarily intertwined by the complicated matrix of the interplay of technology with human intelligence.

Recently, and more than ever before, the substantial use of technology-enhanced instruction has extraordinarily revolutionized many ultimate aspects of instructions and course delivery methods. The fast-pace of Information Technology (IT) and its implication in higher education, in particular, has created powerful and state-of-the-art arrays of instructions and course delivery methods. These innovative sets of practices have dramatically altered classroom instruction to meet the expectations of 21th-century students. Supervision of graduation research, like the other courses being taught at higher education institutions, has deeply affected in nature by the use of technology for enhancing instruction. (Danby & Lee, 2012; Fenge, 2012). Online supervision of research and assignments has emerged as new vibrant strategies used by faculty in guiding students' research and establish a collaborative supervisory environment where students and their supervisors are involved in the process of knowledge construction. (Jensen & Bengtsen, 2014; Wisker, 2012; Handal & Lauvås, 2011; Sindlinger, 2012; Enos, 2011; Bengtsen, Mathiasen & Dalsgaard, 2015).

The massive use of technology-enhanced instruction has affected the traditional pedagogical practices in supervision of graduate research, which mainly see the research project as a product rather than a process. (Stubb, Pyhältö, and Lonka (2014) Moreover, incorporating technology into supervision pedagogy has created a drastic shift in reshaping the relationship between students and supervisors. Earlier, the relationship is known as a dyadic relationship where the physical appearance is the sole strategy for monitoring students' progress in writing their dissertation. In contrast, the new pedagogical approaches tend to be more flexible and elastic in creating a collaborative environment where knowledge is constructed with the assistance of technological tools and resources.

Technology has been with us for many years crutching to scaffold and promote many areas related to research projects. Email exchange, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), searching for information and locating previous studies done on the investigated areas and data analysis and data management software such as SPSS, Nvivo, CAQDAS, are among the best examples of technology contribution.

The development of Web 0.2 has extended the contribution of technology even further. With its unique types of applications, Web 0.2 brings a new dimension to facilitate graduation research by advocating many collaborative tools such as Google Docs.

The nature of graduation research offered at the department of English along with the potentials of Google Docs for collaborative processing of the elements of graduation projects will be discussed in-depth.

## **Graduation Project**

According to Frascati Manual 2015; research can be defined as "creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humans,

culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications." Based on that, carrying out researches and studies have been one of the most practices in higher education as a tool for enhancing knowledge and learning efficiently for useful contribution for the global developments and prosperity of nations. According to Jazan University strategic plan, carrying out research is the critical fundamental practices of the university in association with effective teaching practices and community services. Research provides insights into various issues including teaching and learning in higher education. These research practices are being used as parameters for refining and upgrading the educational system as a whole.

English department at College of Arts and Humanities offers various courses to consolidate EFL students' language skills and enhance their linguistics knowledge along with various literature courses. After the successful completion of the prescribed courses, students at level 8 (the last level) are required to submit a dissertation entitled to graduation research as one of the requirements for graduation. Students study the fundamental guidelines for writing a dissertation in classes and later distributed among the faculty to guide them through the process of writing a dissertation. Graduation project is primarily offered to provide EFL/ ESL students with a variety of action research opportunities to implement and apply what they have already learned through B.A. program. Moreover, developing the skills of searching, analyzing and synthesizing the information into a well-coherent body of research is also one of the purposes of the project. Graduation research has two-fold: the theoretical framework and The production of a written dissertation.

# The theoretical, conceptual framework:

This part takes place inside the classroom in traditional teaching mode where faculty who are assigned to teach the theoretical part of the course are responsible for thoroughly explaining the components of the course. That include the following topics.

**Table 1.** Theoretical Components of Graduation Research

S/No	Topic(s)		
1	Introduction to Research/ Reading for Research /		
2	Research Writing /Thesis Statements		
3	Primary and Secondary Research /Introduction to Data Collection and Sampling		
4	Topic Identification /Exploration and Referencing /Evaluation Sources		
5	Research Proposals: Sample Drafts		
6	Mechanics of Writing: Spelling /Punctuations/ Italics/ Names of		
	persons/Numbers/Titles of works /Quotations/Capitalization		
7	Format of the Graduation Project /Pre-writing Tasks 1,2 and 3		
8	Abstract/ Chapterization Details/Academic Fair Policy		
9	Documentation: Preparing the list of works cited		
10	Documentation: Citing sources in the Text		
11	First Draft: Scope for Revision		
12	Second Draft/Presentation		
13	Final Draft /Presentation		
14	Thesis Submission Formalities		

# The practical scope of the graduation research

The practical scope of graduation research entails many aspects related to the identification of the supervisory relationship between supervisors and supervises. These practices of supervision reflect an ongoing process of providing students' persisting attention and reflection on their initial drafts in the form of constructive feedback. (Munson, 2002). This process defines supervision as "a cooperative and facilitating process." Morrison (2003). On the other hand, Pritchard (1995: 31) explains the relationship between students and their supervisors as; "The supervisor-worker relationship is the key encounter where the influence of organizational authority and professional identity collide, collude or connect."

According to English department policy and standard of academic research, the initial step of graduation research supervision starts with dividing students among academic supervisor based on the research areas suggested by students. Graduation research project often falls into three categories: language skills, Linguistics, and Literature. Students have to choose the area based on their interests. Then, students meet their supervisor to obtain his agreement upon the proposed title and get his signature. Next, the supervisor schedule the required meetings (roughly ten visits) for every single individual student. Students are guided to work on different part of the research starting with the general frame which consists of the introduction, statement of the problem, objectives, questions of the study, and the methodology. The physical presence of students is compulsory for following up his progress. This Physical presence is very crucial in establishing a sold relation of trust and reciprocal understanding between the supervisor and students. The supervisor receives students draft and thoroughly examine it and provides informative and constructive feedback on ways of improvements.

Graduation research supervisors are assigned a number of tasks and responsibilities to facilitate the supervisory sessions of students. Some of these responsibilities are listed below:

- 1) Developing Students' Proposal and the topic chosen: Supervisors are expected to discuss in details the nature of students' proposal by offering suggestions, ideas and information regarding the investigated areas with much emphasis being placed on suitability and availability of the research title within the discipline. Then acceptance form will be signed and submitted to the course instructor.
- 2) Arrange regular meetings with students. The minimum number of interactive sessions with the supervisors shall be 10, and in some individual cases, it may go up to any number as decided by the research supervisor.
- 3) Ensure the time frame decided by the department and divided the assignments (often presented in chapters) the within the stipulated time.
- 4) Constructive and timely feedback: Supervisors should provide students with constant and persisting feedback which help them to maintain consistency of progress.
- 5) Review of manuscripts based on global standards associated with formatting, organization, and any other related issues.

6) Quality of research production: Supervisors have to make sure the quality of the research productions is an inconsistency with the department policy as well as the global standards of writing dissertation including ethics and academic integrity.

# **Evaluation of Graduation Projects**

The assessment scale of students' dissertation is based on the following parameters:

- a. Format
- b. Relevance
- c. Originality
- d. Accuracy
- e. Organization / Chapterization
- f. Research Questions
- g. Claims and Substantiation
- h. Evidence of first-hand reading (citations/bibliography)
- i. Effective Conclusion
- j. Documentations
- k. Defense
- l. Coursework/ Diary of Events with the supervisor

#### Web 0.2

The advancement of technology has brought in a variety of tools and resources for supporting classroom instruction in higher education. (Lever-Duffy, McDonald, & Mizell, 2003; Picciano, 2001; Rhode, Richter, Gowen, Miller, & Wills; 2017) These tools and resources have distinct features with a wide range of flexibility in molding into different instructional settings. Current researchers and studies have experimentally proved that these tools have a massive set of capabilities for improving course delivery methods and instruction that would automatically enhance students learning outcomes.

Web Application for teaching, without even a single moment of doubt, has a more profound impact on reshaping the way that teaching and learning have to be in this everchanging world. The effect of technology-enhanced instruction has always been as the persisting debated points due to its instantaneous changing nature that keeps everyone alerts in staying abreast with the current advancement and how that would drastically change the ancient and conventional teaching practices.

Web 0.2 as the butter and the cream of the Web, has spawned a number of tools, applications, and resources for streamlining the flow of communication, integration, and socialization. "Web 2.0 refers to World Wide Web websites that emphasize usergenerated content, usability (ease of use, even by non-experts), and interoperability (this means that a website can work well with other products, systems, and devices) for end users". (Wikipedia, 2017)

According to Web 2.0 for Teachers article written by Nil Peachey, Web 2.0 has tremendous promises for teachers. It enables:

<sup>\*</sup>Source: Graduation Research Course Description prepared by the instructor.

**Socialization** - Through socialization, our students can use the language and skills they are learning to build networks and develop relationships with real people.

**Collaboration** - They can work together with others to construct and share real knowledge.

**Creativity** - They can create genuine products, in a wide range and combination of media to high standards that will have a real audience.

**Authenticity** - The tasks and activities they do and the people they communicate with to do them are real and motivating.

**Sharing** - They can share what they create and learn from each other.

# **Google Applications**

Google Corporation has developed a package of free applications dedicated to foster different aspects of interactivity, content sharing, productivity, and creation of virtual social communities. The following chart illustrates in details some of the different types of Google services and its instructional possibilities in EFL/ ESL settings.

**Table 2:** Google instructional possibilities in EFL/ ESL settings.

Search   Locating authentic materials		8	, ,
Searching for answers,    Maps	Google Service	Examples	Possibilities for EFL/ ESL Settings
Searching for answers,  Maps Enhancing the skills of asking about the location and giving direction.  Chrome Browsing the net  YouTube Playing authentic videos, lectures, tutorials for improving Listening and Speaking Skills  Play music Chrome cast Chrome cast  Gmail Connecting TV and Cell phones for presentation and utilization of online resources.  Enhancing teacher-student connectivity behind the confinement of classroom time and space.  Getting in touch with students through SMS applications. Ideal for sending notifications and announcements.  Creating social communities and sharing ideas and thought through verbal and written formats with people sharing same interests.  Google Ploto Making video calls with native speakers.  Sharing digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughs critically.  Contacts Challed Photos Sharing address and details through address book Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keep Bocs Sharing, editing, and revising documents.  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Slides Presenting new teaching points in classrooms.  Storing files with different formats safely with easy		Search	Locating authentic materials
Answers, Maps giving direction.  Chrome Browsing the net  YouTube Playing authentic videos, lectures, tutorials for improving Listening and Speaking Skills  Play music Streaming audio file  Chrome cast Chrome cast Utilization of online resources.  Enhancing teacher-student connectivity behind the confinement of classroom time and space.  Google Allo Getting in touch with students through SMS applications. Ideal for sending notifications and announcements.  Creating social communities and sharing ideas and thought through verbal and written formats with people sharing same interests.  Google Duo Making video calls with native speakers.  Sharing digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughts critically.  Contacts Sharing address and details through address book  Calendar Calendar Vereping a record of students' notes, memos, or any other personal thoughts.  Keep Bocs Sharing, editing, and revising documents.  Creating life rent events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keeping a record of students' notes, memos, or any other personal thoughts.  Sheet Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Slides Presenting new teaching points in classrooms.  Storing files with different formats safely with easy	Coonabina for	Translate	Translating texts into different languages.
Videos & Music Streaming  Play music Streaming and Speaking Skills  Play music Chrome cast	· ·	Maps	
Videos & Music Streaming   Play music   Streaming and Speaking Skills		Chrome	Browsing the net
Streaming  Chrome cast  Chrome cast  Chrome cast  Connecting TV and Cell phones for presentation and utilization of online resources.  Enhancing teacher-student connectivity behind the confinement of classroom time and space.  Google Allo  Google Allo  Creating in touch with students through SMS applications. Ideal for sending notifications and announcements.  Creating social communities and sharing ideas and thought through verbal and written formats with people sharing same interests.  Google Duo  Making video calls with native speakers.  Sharing digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughts critically.  Contacts  Sharing address and details through address book  Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keep  Collaboration,  Demonstration,  Demonstration,  Prive  Storing files with different formats safely with easy	Videog <sup>Q</sup> Music	YouTube	
Chrome cast  Chrome cast  Connecting IV and Cell phones for presentation and utilization of online resources.  Enhancing teacher-student connectivity behind the confinement of classroom time and space.  Getting in touch with students through SMS applications. Ideal for sending notifications and announcements.  Creating social communities and sharing ideas and thought through verbal and written formats with people sharing same interests.  Google Duo Making video calls with native speakers.  Photos Sharing digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughts critically.  Contacts Sharing address and details through address book  Organization of personal stuff  Calendar Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keep Keeping a record of students' notes, memos, or any other personal thoughts.  Docs Sharing, editing, and revising documents.  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Drive Storing files with different formats safely with easy		Play music	Streaming audio file
Connectivity  Connectivity  Connectivity  Connectivity  Coogle Allo  Google Allo  Google Allo  Creating in touch with students through SMS applications. Ideal for sending notifications and announcements.  Creating social communities and sharing ideas and thought through verbal and written formats with people sharing same interests.  Google Duo  Making video calls with native speakers.  Sharing digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughts critically.  Contacts  Sharing address and details through address book  Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keep  Collaboration,  Demonstration,  Demonstration,  Drive  Confinement of classroom time and space.  Getting in touch with students through SMS applications.  Ideal for sending notifications and announcements.  Creating digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughts critically.  Contacts  Sharing address and details through address book  Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keeping a record of students' notes, memos, or any other personal thoughts.  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Drive  Storing files with different formats safely with easy	Streaming	Chrome cast	
Connectivity    Google Allo   Ideal for sending notifications and announcements.		Gmail	
Organization of personal stuff  Contacts  Keep  Docs  Collaboration,  Demonstration,  Demonstration  Google +  Coogle Duo  Google Duo  Making video calls with native speakers.  Sharing digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughts critically.  Sharing address and details through address book  Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keeping a record of students' notes, memos, or any other personal thoughts.  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Prive  Creating new teaching points in classrooms.  Storing files with different formats safely with easy	Commontivity	Google Allo	•
Organization of personal stuff  Calendar  Calendar  Contacts  Calendar  Keep  Docs  Collaboration, Demonstration,  Demonstration,  Demonstration,  Demonstration,  Photos  Sharing digital photos for stimulating discussion and reflecting students' thoughts critically.  Sharing address and details through address book  Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keeping a record of students' notes, memos, or any other personal thoughts.  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Prive  Shoring files with different formats safely with easy	Connectivity	Google +	Creating social communities and sharing ideas and thought through verbal and written formats with people
Organization of personal stuff  Calendar  Keep  Docs  Collaboration, Demonstration,  Demonstration,  Demonstration  Organization of personal stuff  Contacts  Sharing address and details through address book  Organizing different events including schedules, exams, tests, and assignments deadlines.  Keeping a record of students' notes, memos, or any other personal thoughts.  Sharing, editing, and revising documents.  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Prive  Storing files with different formats safely with easy		Google Duo	Making video calls with native speakers.
Organization or personal stuff  Calendar  Cale		Photos	
Personal stuff  Calendar	Organization of	Contacts	Sharing address and details through address book
personal thoughts.  Docs Sharing, editing, and revising documents.  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Demonstration, Slides Presenting new teaching points in classrooms.  Storing files with different formats safely with easy	0	Calendar	
Collaboration, Demonstration, Slides Drive  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Presenting new teaching points in classrooms.  Storing files with different formats safely with easy		Кеер	
Collaboration, Demonstration, Slides Drive  Creating data records of students' performance on the exam for instance. Ideal for data analysis as well.  Presenting new teaching points in classrooms.  Storing files with different formats safely with easy		Docs	Sharing, editing, and revising documents.
Storing files with different formats safely with easy	Collaboration,	Sheet	Creating data records of students' performance on the
Πriva	Demonstration,	Slides	Presenting new teaching points in classrooms.
		Drive	•

## **Google Docs**

Google docs have captured a prominent place as the most potent collaborative tools that have been widely used in collaborate Projects in EFL/ ESL settings. (Dekeyser and Watson, 2006; Broin and Raftery, 2011; Yang, 2010). Google documents are one of the best web-based applications which help users to share their documents written in different file formats. Also, it has a remarkable impact on developing user collaboration, connection, and production over the web in asynchronous computer-mediated communication. Rouse (2007, January 20) mentions in her blogs; "Google Docs is a free Web-based application in which documents and spreadsheets can be created, edited and stored online. Files can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection and a full-featured Web browser. Google Docs is a part of a comprehensive package of online applications offered by and associated with Google". According to Wikipedia (2018), Google Docs is "a free, web-based word processor, spreadsheet, presentation, form, and data storage service offered by Google."

Innumerable researchers and studies have probed into the potentials for Google Docs as a tool for supporting collaborative projects, especially in writing classes. (Chen, 2008; Chou & Chen, 2008; Raman, Ryan, & Olfman, 2005; Zhou, Simpson, & Domizi, 2012)

In teaching English language settings, Google Docs provide EFL students with ample opportunities for editing their work and receiving constructive feedback. (Hardison (2012). Seyyedrezaie, Ghonsooly, Shahriari, & Fatemi, in their study conducted in 2016 have consolidated the reality that Google Docs have a significant and incredible contribution to develop EFL writing productivity through collaboration. Moreover, EFL students could be involved in collaborative work with students from all over the world. Using such tools enable students to share their writing productions with their peers and teachers to collaborate on the editing process. Rouse (2007) in her blog has stated a number of Google Docs merits as:

Users of Google Docs can import, create, edit and update documents and spreadsheets in various fonts and file formats, combining text with formulas, lists, tables, and images. Google Docs is compatible with most presentation software and word processor s. Work can be published as a Web page or a print-ready manuscript. Users can control who sees their work. Google Docs is ideal for publishing within an enterprise, maintaining blog s or composing work for viewing by the general public."

EFL students while using Google document as a tool for enhancing the process of editing and revising of the written, the can easily trace the changes occurred on the documents through revision history and monitor who participated in the editing process whether they are their teachers or peers. This merit of Google document has propped it up as one of the most reliable tools in enhancing editing and revising of texts.

# Features of Google Docs

Google Docs has recently been equipped with state-of-the-art features that promote it as one of the best tools the web technology has to offer in collaborative teaching and learning environment. Some of these features are as follows:

**Editing & Formatting Tool:** It helps students to tackle many areas associated with size and style of fonts. Moreover, indenting a text, spacing, numbering, for instance, are also provided. Margin creation, double spacing, paper's heading and paper formatting into different formatting style can be easily established.

**Add-ons:** One of the most remarkable features that have been added recently to google docs. These new features enable researchers to cite the resources used in their research manuscripts in the three formatting style: MLA, APA, and Chicago. The best example is Easy Bib, Paperpile, and Zotero. Recently, a new feature has just been added to Google Docs. This new feature is known as Kaizena. The newly added feature enables teachers to provide comments on students writing by recording a voice comment. Byrne (2018) reported; "One other awesome aspect of Kaizena is the option to link your comments to a lesson that you have stored in your Kaizena account. For example, you could highlight a misuse of "their" or "there" in a student's document and then link that highlight to a lesson about homonyms."

**Sharing:** Sharing a document using google docs is one of the features that make it as excellent collaborative tools. A document can be shared and permitted editing with some participants through an email link. It also can be shared on social media handles.

**Research Tool:** Is one of the remarkable features of Google Docs that facilitate writing a research paper, dissertation and theses. This new feature provides researchers with quick access to biography and proper citation on the three styles: APA, MLA, and Chicago. Moreover, research tool provides students with the possibilities of integrating quotation, images, and much more.

**Integrated Reference Tools:** Some reference tools such as thesaurus, dictionaries, and concordances are built in to provide quick access to meaning, a wide variation of vocabulary usage, meaning and synonyms and antonyms.

**Voice Typing:** This feature has been added recently. It can be accessed from the drop-down menu and then voice typing. A microphone will appear at the left side of the document. Click on the microphone icon and say the word or the sentences you want to write. Immediately and intellectually Google docs pick up the verbal messages and change it into a written format.

**Template:** Various types of the templates are offered to suit different writing purposes.

**Tracking History:** Tracking history is immensely beneficial in screening changes done by individuals who participated in a written collaborative project. In case of the supervisory session, supervisors can track the changes happened in the documents based on suggestions for improvements provided in the editing box.

# **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study is sought to provide answers to the following questions:

1) What are the potentials of Google Docs for facilitating the supervision of students' graduation research?

- 2) In what ways does Google Docs enhance supervisor and students collaboration over editing, revising and organization of manuscripts?
- 3) How do students perceive the use of Google Docs for supporting their dissertation writing?

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The study is based on qualitative analysis of data obtained through an interview which is mainly designed to elicit faculty and students perception and attitudes towards using Google Docs for supervising students graduation research.

# **Participants**

Six students participated in the study (N=6). These students were assigned to the researcher to supervise their graduation research. All students have already completed seven semesters and are expected to be graduated by the end of the first term of the academic year 2017-2018. Moreover, students are majoring in English language and literature and belong to the same linguistic, literary, and cultural backgrounds.

#### Instrument

A semi-structured interview was conducted to stimulate Students' responses about the ways they perceive the effectiveness of using Google Docs as a cooperative tool for improving the production of their dissertation. The six students were interviewed immediately after the final submission of the final copy of their manuscripts. The interview consisted of 10 question.

#### **Procedures**

This stage is fundamentally concerned with preparing students to work in google document environment. Students need to create Gmail account and create google docs homepage where they can manage all the page interface and account as well. Later, students were informed about the strategy that would be adopted by incorporating Google Docs as collaborative tools for improving the quality of students' dissertations. A WhatsApp group was created to display the basic information regarding the task. An email account on Gmail <a href="mailto:researchsupervision17@gmail.com">researchsupervision17@gmail.com</a> was created to receive students' draft. Then, google docs were created for each student with his draft being shared with the supervisor. Immediately students started adding sections, organizing their writing under the direct supervision of their supervisors. The collaboration of editing, revising, and organizing took place in the Asynchronous and Synchronous communication mode. By activating the track changing, the supervisor is aware of the amendment of the research based on the in-document feedback given to the students.

#### DISCUSSION

1) The potentials of Google Docs for facilitating the supervision pedagogy of students' graduation research

In traditional supervisory settings, EFL/ ESL students are required to visit their research project supervisor on regular bases to discuss in details the production of each chapter. Faculty supervisors are responsible for providing them with succinct and well-defined guidelines through the process of the production of students' dissertation. That typically takes place in a face-to-face session that would enhance a supportive and advisory environment and create a reliable and truthful relationship between the two parties. These sessions are authenticated by completing the supervisory form specifying date and day in addition to the points that have already been discussed along with written feedback for improvement.

The use of Google Docs has provided a new dimension to the face-to-face supervisory session. That idea represents a new set of blended Learning strategies where the traditional supervisory sessions of graduation research were extended online to provide more room for simultaneous and concurrent collaboration over the writing dissertation phases. This simple experience has revealed enormous and critical issues about the use of Google Docs for facilitating the supervision of graduation dissertation. Some of these potentials are explained below:

Communication Possibilities: Google Docs extend the communication between supervisor and supervisees 24/7. Students take the privilege of being able to have quick access to their supervisor through different communication channels. They do not have to wait to the next supervisory session to consult their supervisors. Specifying online office hours has facilitated supervisor and students Synchronous communication through chatting options. Chat features enable students to discuss what are their ideas and thought they want to write in real-time communication with the supervisor.

*Editing and formatting of Students' manuscript:* These practices have proved to be most effective in revising students' manuscripts. Earlier, supervisors used to comments on the printed version using pencils to put lines, circle and draw speech balloons, questions marks which in fact is very frustrating for students when they look at it.

Comment and Suggestion for improvements: Comments and suggestions are mainly to improve the quality of students' manuscripts. Apparently, these comments revolved around new ideas, thoughts, formatting, and organization of the content to fit into the standard parameters of writing a dissertation.

Proper Work cited using different styles: Students are oriented about the benefits of using Add-ons embedded in Google Docs. These add-ons were frequently used during the time located for preparing the final draft of the dissertation. Students showed remarkable progress in citing online resources using Easy Bib.

Constructive & Timely Feedback: Feedback is critical components of effective teaching. It provides insights into the progress of students in the learning process by tackling the most problematic areas for students. It has two forms: formative and constructive Feedback. The use of Google Docs in facilitating the supervisory sessions of students' dissertation helps students to learn from the comments they received for improvements. The supervisor reviewed students' manuscripts on daily bases and provided feedback in the margin of the documents.

During the supervisory session of students' dissertation by using Google Docs students were provided with suggestions and comments on areas such as inappropriate use of the language, context organization, mechanics of writing and style. Students edit their manuscript accordingly with the close follow up of their supervisor. Moreover, the availability of feedback in-text enhances students' capabilities to reconsider their writing in the light of the comments received and enriched their knowledge at the same time. This reality is in concordance with the findings of some other researchers. (Ertmer & Stepich, 2004; Srba, 2010; Ciftci & Kocoglu, 2012).

# 2) The role of Google Docs in enhancing collaboration between supervisor and students over editing, revising and organization of manuscripts.

After the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> session, students are requested to complete the assigned tasks and assignment and send it to supervisor for collaborative editing and organizing of manuscript. The researcher created Google docs for students and sent the link via email. The use of Google Docs maintains an exceptional working environment for both students and supervisors to work together on the same documents in an Asynchronous and Synchronous environment where the comments and suggestions for improvements are automatically provided. The editing process goes on till the supervisor is satisfied with the manuscript and deemed it as ready for a print phrase which provided in the suggestion box.

# 3) Students Perspective & Perception

Analyzing the responses of students to the interview questions reveals many exciting aspects of using google docs for facilitating the production of research manuscripts. Apparently, most of them agreed to the idea that the use of Google Docs provides them with a sense that they belong to the world by using sophisticated media in writing their dissertation. Moreover, Google Docs is user-friendly and easily accessible from their cellphones. Students consolidated the fact that they had no problem dealing with different features of Google Docs. However, they had no experience in using it for any collaborative written assignments during their study.

In relation to editing and organizing their research, students believe that the use of Google Docs minimize the time and efforts they usually spend when they are revising and editing their manuscript using printed version. Collaboration with their supervisor in Asynchronous and Synchronous communication mode facilitate and support the constant feedback they received and hence, amend their manuscript accordingly.

Students also pointed that, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) assist them to extend their interaction with their supervisor behind the confinement of the scheduled supervisory office hours. They do not have to wait until the second visit to discuss their matters with the supervisor.

As students submitted the final draft of their manuscript, they were asked to report their attitudes about the experience of using google docs as a tool for facilitating their writing dissertation. The findings revealed that students highly appreciate the implementation of Google Docs as a platform for developing their dissertation with the direct supervision of

their supervisors. The most appreciated areas are these associated with editing, revising, and organizing of the manuscript through immediate feedback presented in comments in text and suggestions for improvements.

Students also express their sense of comfort while working on their research manuscript under the close supervision of their supervisor. According to them, the use of Google Docs for editing, organizing, and revising their dissertation creates an anxiety-free environment and boosts their confidence (Shang, 2013) and productivity as a writer. Moreover, they tend to be motivated as they experienced new methods and sophisticated platform for writing. Hence, they put more effort in developing their dissertation.

Many features are available to improve students writing. Applications such as spelling and grammar checkers have great potentials for tackling student's difficulties in writing neatly and precisely. The use of a thesaurus and reference tools enable students to develop their writing style by providing a range of vocabulary usage and language variation.

Students firmly believed that the use of technology in general and Google Docs, in particular, would benefit EFL/ ESL students in participating in any collaborative written projects. That statement is closely related to the contribution of (Kessler et al., 2012). Hence, Google Docs is strongly recommended as a platform for developing supervisory sessions of graduation research and connections between students and supervisors in an ever-relaxing and productive environment.

#### CONCLUSION

The study reveals a significant role of technology in dramatically changed many instructional practices in higher educations. Technology-enhanced instruction has been considered as the driving forces that make the supervision of graduation research is an inspiring process for both students and faculty. It can be observed that Google Docs has played a remarkable role in facilitating students-to-supervisor interaction and collaboration. The result in enhanced in the study of Maor, & Currie (2017, 03) as they observed that; "New technologies may play a vital role in transforming traditional, dyadic forms of supervision towards a more collaborative group process." The study conducted on a very limited scale where the findings might not be generalized. However, it has a positive impact on EFL/ ESL students writing of graduation research. More in-depth studies are strongly recommended to explore the full potentials of using Google Docs for facilitating the supervisory sessions in a collaborating, captivating and motivating learning environment.

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