

Basic Literacy and Numeracy Project Impact report



In collaboration with



People for development



Program objective.....	3
Program description.....	3
Outreach.....	3
PILOT General information.....	4
Population.....	4
Grade levels.....	6
Ages.....	6
Gender.....	6
Centers.....	7
Nationality.....	7
Language.....	8
Infrastructure.....	8
Evidence Generation and Data collection.....	9
Attendance and evaluation sheet.....	10
Attendance.....	10
Student performance pre-pilot.....	10
1. Platform friendliness.....	11
Navigation tools.....	11
Support.....	11
Audio.....	12
2. Content.....	12
Support needed.....	12
- Challenges.....	13
- Language.....	13
- Level of difficulties.....	13
- Length.....	14
3. Motivation.....	14
4. Autonomy.....	15
5. Completion.....	16
6. Improvement.....	16
Feedback Surveys.....	17
Challenges and Mitigation.....	21
Language Barrier.....	21
Internet Connection.....	21
Registration and Login Process.....	21
Length of the lessons.....	21
Length of The Project.....	22
Content.....	22
Recommendations.....	23
Annex.....	24
Facilitators' feedback.....	24

Program objective

Allowing BLN students to effectively use technology to strengthen their learning experience. The BLN content and activities on Tabshoura were developed to motivate the students while complementing the official BLN program they are enrolled in. The program was structured to be autonomously used yet can be integrated into a classroom experience.

Program description

We were subcontracted by the “Back to the Future” consortium, AVSI, Terre des Hommes Italy, and War Child Holland to design and digitalize a digital BLN program, aligned with the curriculum developed by the 3 NGOs in partnership with CERD and the Ministry of Education. The Lebanese Alternative Learning digitalized the 3 levels of the BLN in 5 subjects: English, Arabic, and French Literacy, English and French Numeracy as well as the related assessments. Each level of each subject comprises 4 themes, divided into 4 lessons (= weeks in the official curriculum). Each lesson is in its turn divided into 5 sessions (= days in the official curriculum), totalizing 58 themes, 232 lessons, and 1160 sessions.

Outreach

The BLN digital program will be published on the Tabshoura free access platform. It will later benefit from the offline App that is currently being developed. Through the “Deep Integration” of the Tabshoura platform with the Center of Education Research and Development’s Mawaridy platform, the BLN program will be open to all education centers that can benefit from it.

PILOT

General information

The following evidence generated upon pilot completion is based on the below data, given by Qlik a data analysis software: Qlik is a software specialized in data visualization and executive dashboards allowing LAL to collect a wide range of digital data on the usage of the platform.

- Total number of students: 136
- 52 completed the pilot
- 39 did not complete the pilot and only attended between 1 and 4 sessions
- 45 of the enrolled students were missing data on the evaluation sheets
- Total number of facilitators: 9

- Population

The pilot population is BLN students enrolled in our partners' NGOs education centers in the North, Byblos, and Beirut areas.

Participating NGOs - 3

Number of centers - 4

Number of students - 136

- Student ages range between 11 years to 14 years
- Student grades and groups are BLN L1 & BLN L2

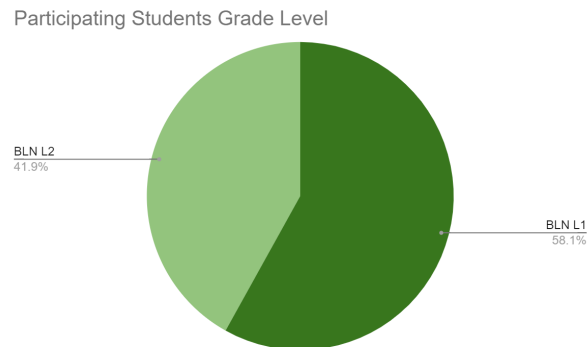
Method of Delivery

- Onsite at the centers
 - AVSI
 - Ghazeh
 - TDH-IT
 - Jbeil
 - Shwaya
 - WCH -
 - Baddawi

Below are visual presentations on the students' background information.

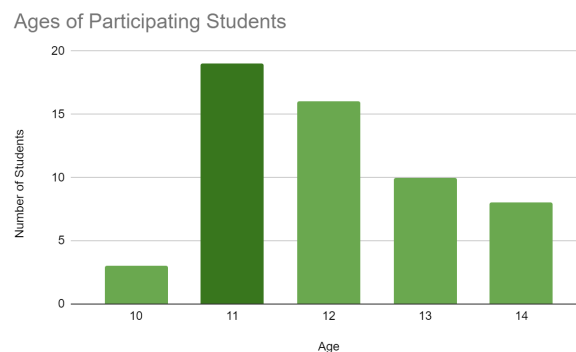
General information

- Grade levels



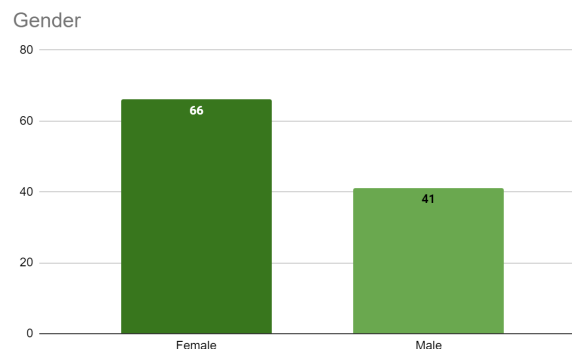
2 levels of the BLN were piloted. The levels were chosen according to the groups enrolled in the BLN program with our 3 partners. 58,1% of the participating students completed level 2, and 41,9% of the students completed level 1.

- Ages



The age of participating children ranged from 10 years old to 14 years old with a pic for 11 and 12 years old.

- Gender

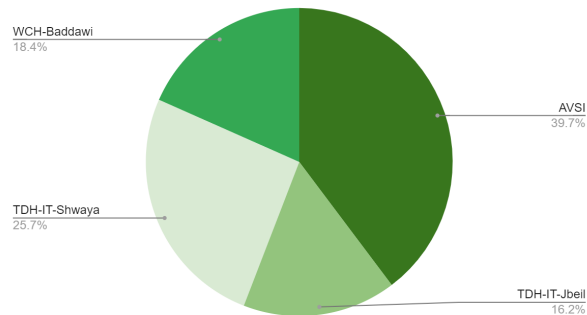


It is interesting to note that the percentage of females participating in the pilot was higher than the percentage of males. Indeed 66% of the students were females, while only 41% were males.

An assumption can be that at this age, some boys living in vulnerable communities work to support their families.

- Centers

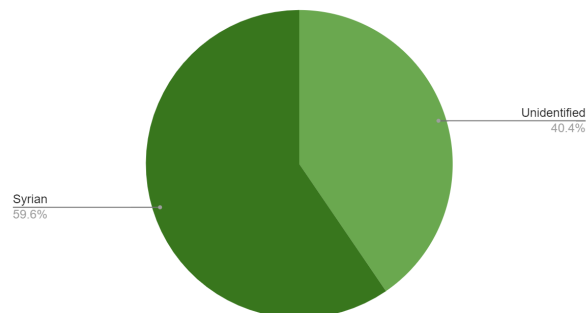
Percentage of Participating Students from Each Center



The centers were located in Shwaya, Mount Lebanon, Baddawi, a Palestinian camp North-East of Tripoli, Byblos, and Beirut.

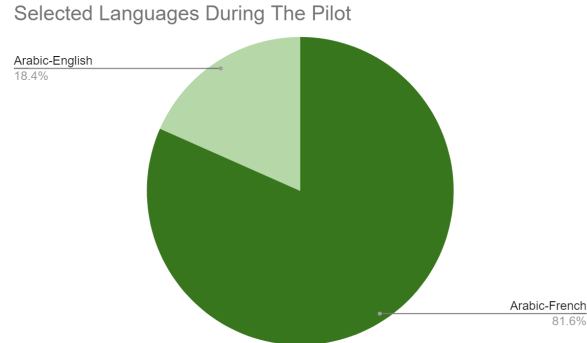
- Nationality

Nationality Of Students



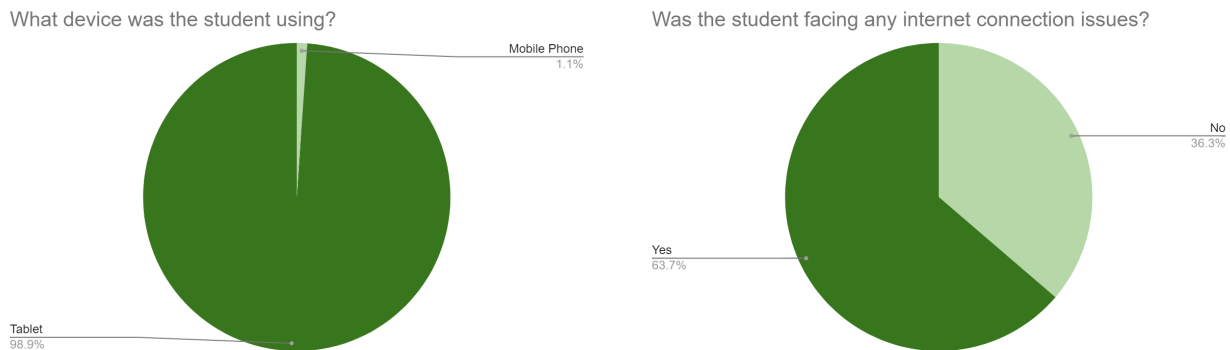
59,6% of the students were Syrian and the rest is unidentified. As one of the pilots took place in the Beddawi camp, we can assume that a percentage of Palestinian children participated in the pilot. Data was missing.

- Language



While Arabic and English are usually the main languages of teaching for refugees, it is interesting to note that Arabic and French were used by 81,6% of the students who participated in the pilot. In fact, one of the objectives of the BLN is to try to enroll students back into a formal school program. Depending on their geographic location, the language of instruction in neighboring schools varies between French and English. Our assumption is that the BLN centers of the pilot were in the region with a predominance of French/Arabic schools.

- Infrastructure



During the pilot, the students used the program with the facilitators at the center where they were provided with tablets. Most likely when the students will use the program autonomously at home, they will rely on their mobile phones. Even though the centers had an internet connection, the connection was unreliable, and downloading some imaging took time despite the fact that we are using light resolution illustrations. Our program is therefore adapted to be used on a phone screen and later will be integrated into our offline App.

Evidence Generation and Data collection

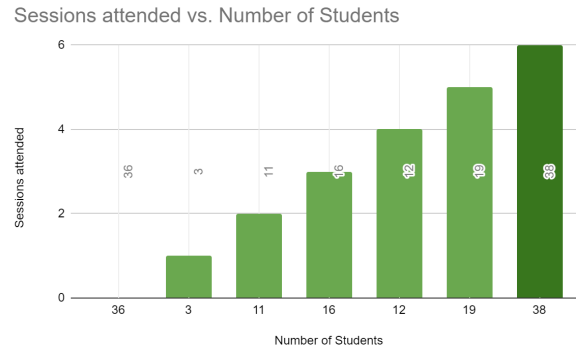
Besides the Data provided by Qlik, gathering information was completed in two different ways:

- I. Attendance and evaluation sheets: An evaluation sheet was created on google drive and shared with each educator from all participating organizations. The facilitators received a unique copy of the sheet that includes students' login details, and a list of 19 questions to answer. Almost all of the questions had a list of the drop-down menus to select the answers from, in addition to a section where additional notes can be added for each student individually.
- II. Feedback and Survey: Feedback surveys were shared with the facilitators to fill out after the pilot completion to evaluate the digital experience. We asked the facilitators to observe the interaction of the students with the platform and to fill out the survey accordingly.

I. Attendance and evaluation sheet

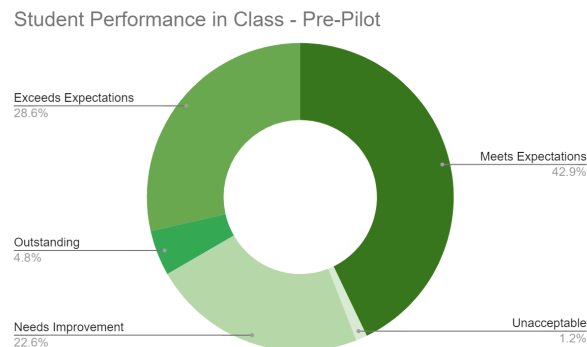
An evaluation sheet was created on google drive and shared with each educator from all participating organizations. The facilitators received a unique copy of the sheet that includes students' login details, and a list of 19 questions to answer. Almost all of the questions had a list of the drop-down menus to select the answers from, in addition to a section where additional notes can be added for each student individually.

- Attendance



57 of the students attended almost all the pilot sessions, run in the centers, and 36 did not attend. 14 attended 2 to 1 sessions and 28 attended halves of the pilot sessions.

- Student performance pre-pilot



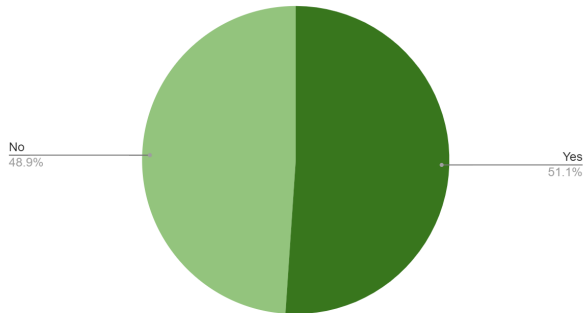
To set a baseline for our assessment, we asked the facilitators to evaluate the students' performance in class pre-pilot.

1.2% had an unacceptable performance and 22.6% of them needed improvement while 42,9% met expectations and 28,6% exceeded expectations.

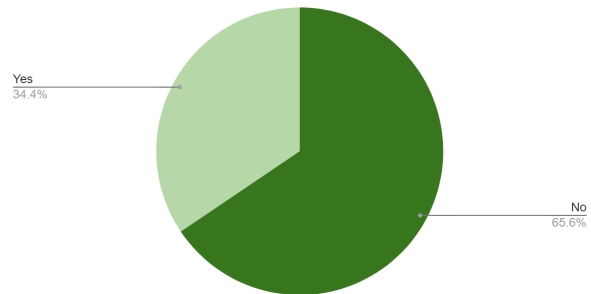
1. Platform friendliness

- Navigation tools

Were the navigation tools easily understood by the student?



Was the student able to navigate through the platform by himself/herself?



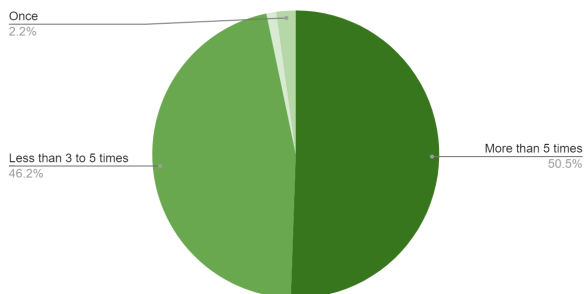
51.1% of the students found it easy to navigate the platform while 48,9% had difficulties. Indeed, 65.6 needed support.

After our field explorations, we learned that students are mostly used to interacting using phones, not tablets. One of the major differences between navigating through a phone and navigating through a tablet is the fact that the navigation on phones is mostly vertical while navigation on tablets in general, and for our program in particular, is horizontal.

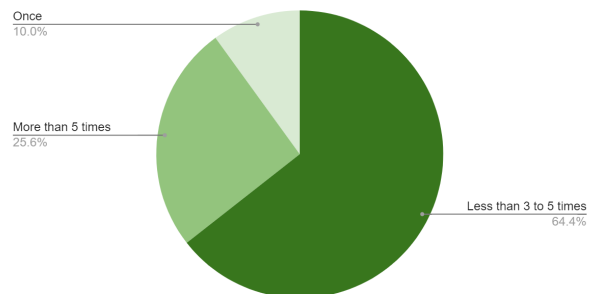
Outcome: One of the BLN objectives is to enhance digital literacy; we could add a unit that will focus on the navigation activities. It can be a requirement before starting the program.

- Support

How many times did the student ask for help in the first session?



How many times did the student ask for help after the first session?

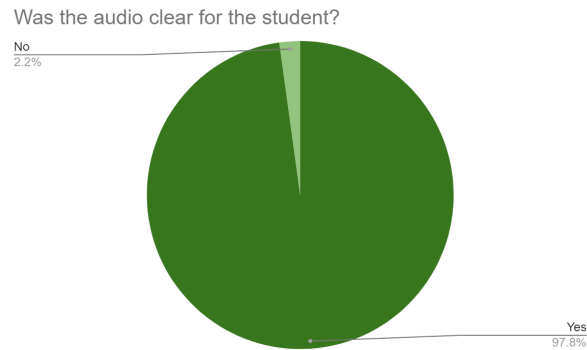


2.2% asked for help only once. This increased to 10% after the first session. 50.5% needed support more than 5 times during the first session. This was reduced to 25.6% after the first session.

This shows that after the first session, 74.4% were autonomous to navigate the platform.

Outcome: Make the “navigation practice activities” a required unit.

- Audio

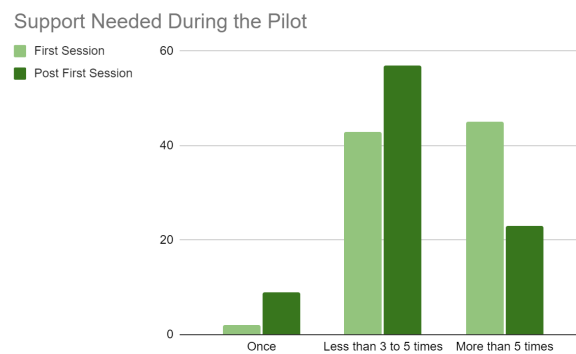


The audio was clear for 97.8% of the students.

Outcome: Keep the same audio.

2. Content

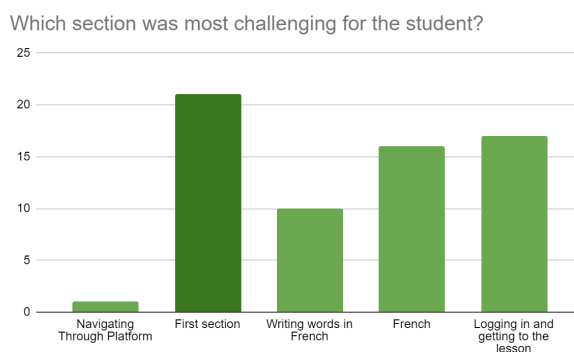
- Support needed



The program is built to be autonomous. 22 students still needed support after the first session. One of the major issues shared by the facilitators was the inability to understand the language.

Outcome: Insert bilingual audio instructions for the first sessions in each level.

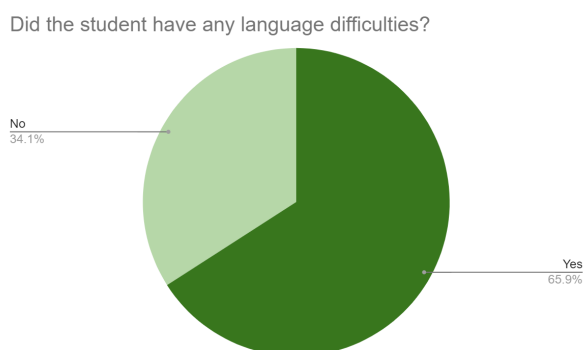
- Challenges



The first session was challenging for a majority of students.

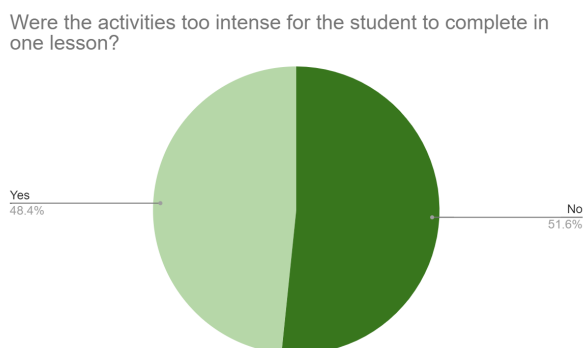
Outcome: Add a tutorial with a screen recording as an introduction to the program in addition to the “navigation practice activities” unit.

- Language



65.9% of the students have language difficulties, especially when it comes to the foreign language of instruction be it English or French. **Outcome:** Insert bilingual audio instructions

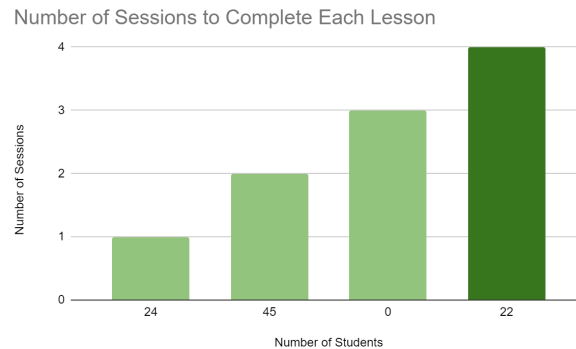
- Level of difficulties



51.6% of the students found the activities too intense. Once more, the facilitators pointed out that the language was one of the main issues in understanding the instructions.

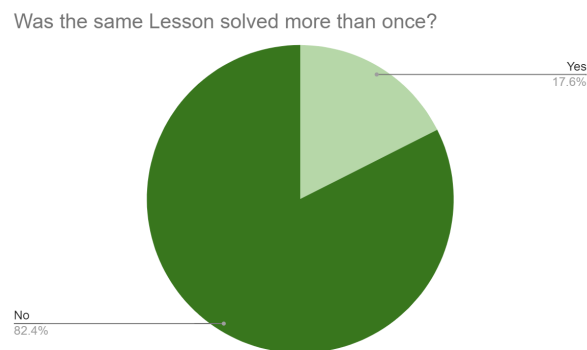
Outcome: Add bilingual audio instructions.

- Length



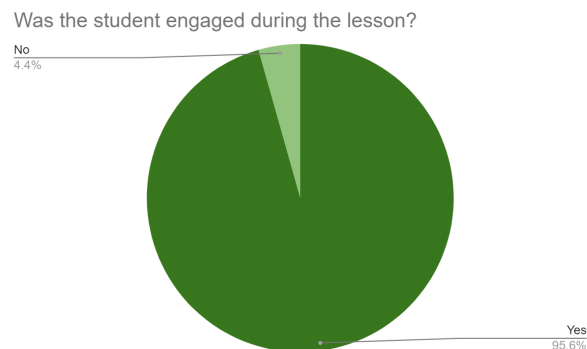
The lessons were considered long by a majority of users. The majority of students needed 2 sessions to complete a lesson. 22 of them needed as many as 4 sessions.

Outcome: As the lessons are divided into sections, split them into several sessions.



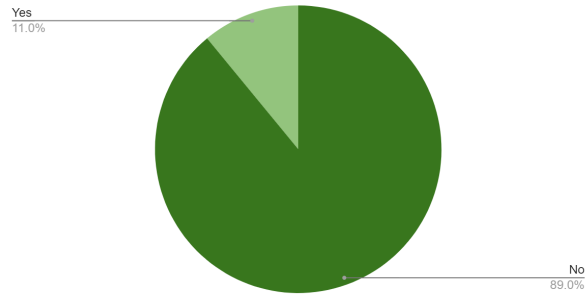
Only 17,6% needed to solve the lesson more than once. The numbers match with the 22.6% percentage of students not meeting the expectations before the pilot.

3. Motivation



The level of motivation shown by the students reached 95,6%. Learning through digital resources is appealing to teenagers and keeps them motivated.

Did the student find it difficult to sit still and focus during the session?

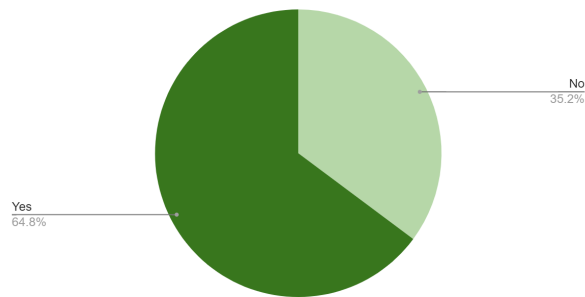


89.0% of the students stayed still and focused during the session which reinforced the result of the level of motivation noted above.

Outcome: Keep the same learning process.

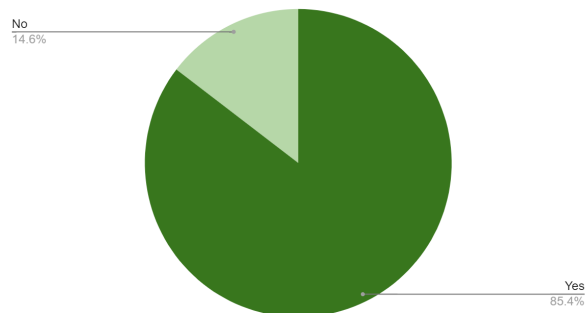
4. Autonomy

Was the student familiar with the content before taking part in this Pilot?



This question is linked to the following ones. We wanted to understand if the autonomy of the students while solving the activities was due to the fact that they were familiar with the content.

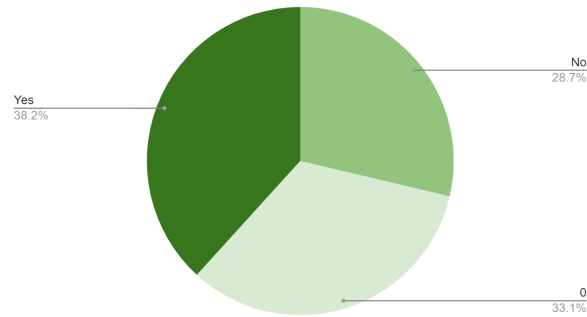
Was the student able to solve the activities by himself/herself?



85,4% were able to solve the activities by themselves which shows that even some of the students that were not familiar with the content could solve the activities by themselves.

5. Completion

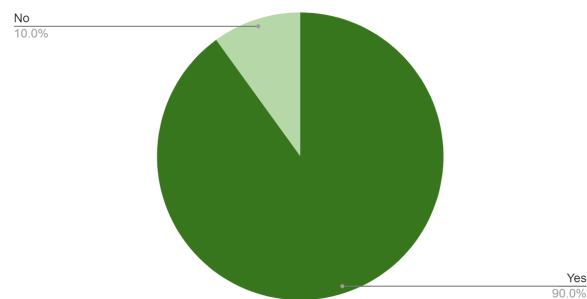
Did the student complete the pilot program?



38,2% completed the pilot program. One of the main reasons for the non-completion of the program was the fact that the students were using the program from the centers, therefore the completion of the program was affected by their absenteeism.

6. Improvement

Did the student show improvement upon the program completion?

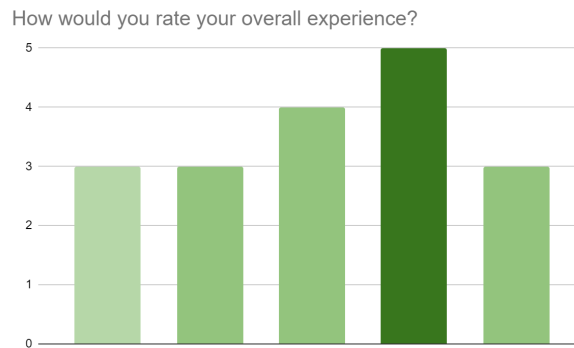


90% of the students showed improvement upon the program completion. The facilitators confirmed that the audio-visuals improved the understanding of the language and the concepts. The variety of activities that motivated the students was also an improving factor.

To dig deeper into certain aspects and have a better understanding of the digital learning experience of BLN students we shared a Feedback Survey with the facilitators.

II. Feedback Surveys

Feedback surveys were shared with the facilitators to fill out after the pilot completion. Results were collected from 5 respondents which does not allow us to generalize or come up with relevant conclusions.

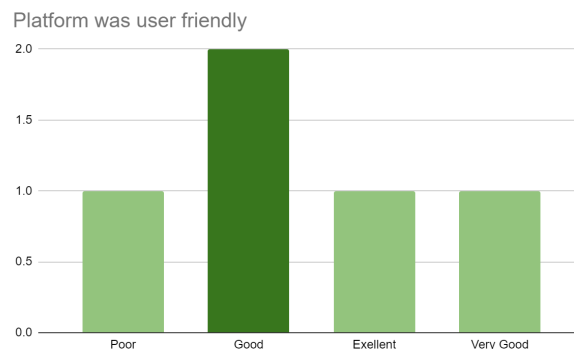


Extremely Dissatisfied - 1

Extremely Satisfied - 5

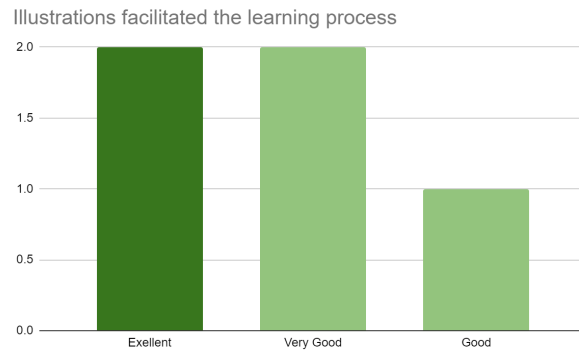
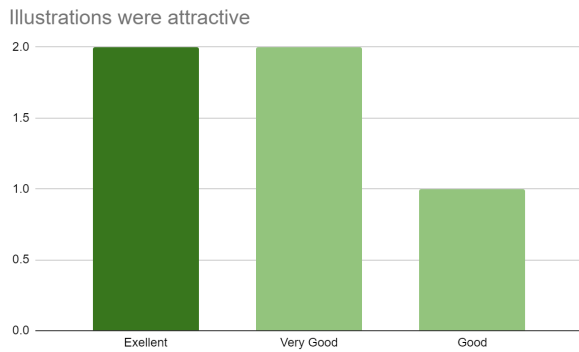
3 facilitators rated the experience “3” out of 5, 1 teacher rated the experience “4” and 1 teacher “5”. One of the major issues shared by the facilitators was the internet's slow connection which prevented the images to download and delayed the pages to open. Another issue was the drag and drop bug we encountered as a lot of our activities rely on the drag and drop feature.

Outcome: The drag and drop issue is solved. Offline solutions can be provided upon request.



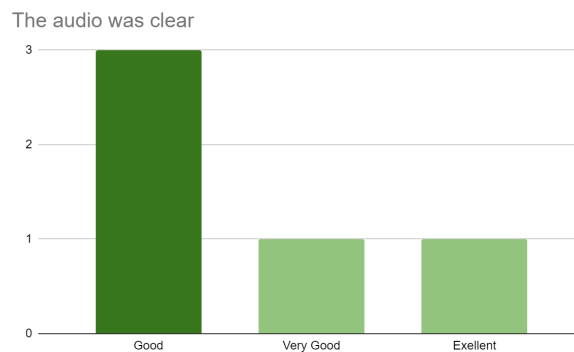
Overall, the platform was considered user-friendly by 4 out of 5 facilitators. The above issues, mainly the slow internet connection, were a challenge for navigation.

Outcome: Keep the same platform, and improve the connection issue by providing offline boxes and/or offline App that is under development and will be released in September 2022.



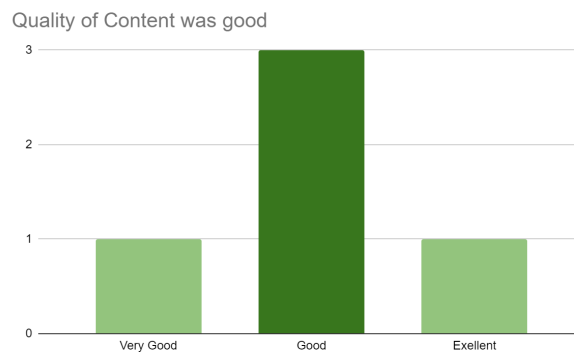
Good feedback on illustrations. The facilitators confirmed that the illustrations helped in concept acquisition and motivation.

Outcome: Keep the same visual identity.



Both the quality and the voice talents were considered good. The audio recording is one of the main features we added to the program for users that are learning to read and write.

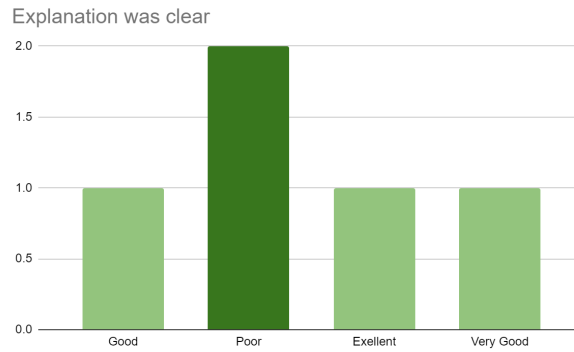
Outcome: Keep the same process and the same voice talent.



The quality of the content was considered good to excellent.

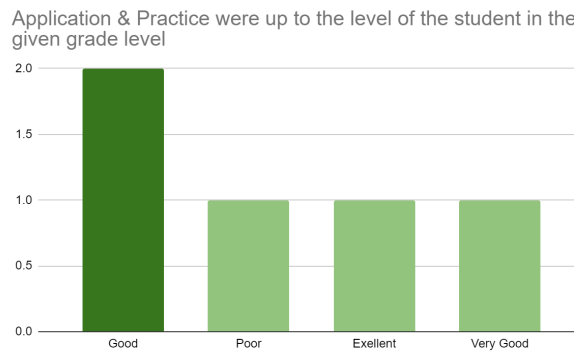
Some improvement is needed as facilitators pointed conceptual gaps and a quick transition from easy activities to difficult concepts.

Outcome: Fill the progression and conceptual gaps in a potential second phase of the project.

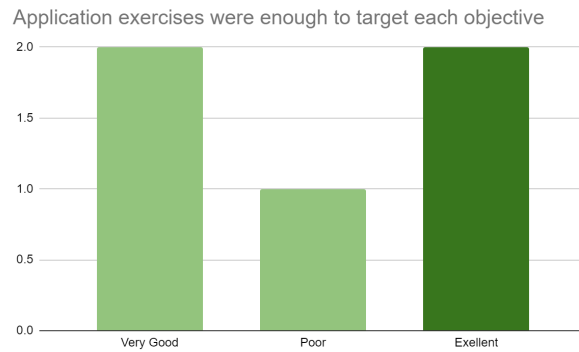
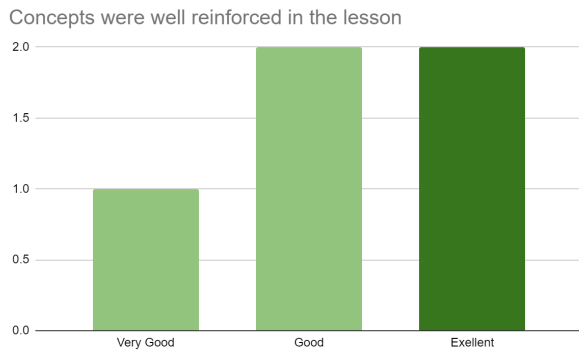


2 of the facilitators considered the explanation not sufficient. This is related to the above comment on the conceptual gaps and the quick transition from easy activities to difficult concepts.

Outcome: Same as above.

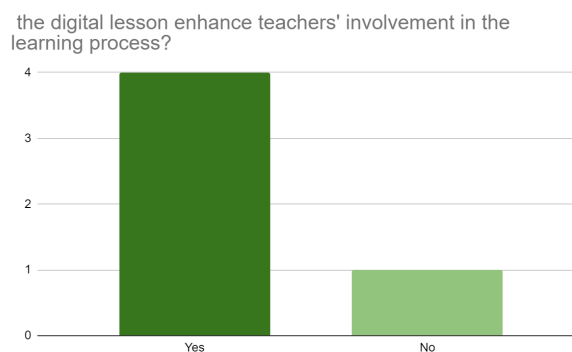


4 of the 5 facilitators evaluated the activities up to the level of the students.

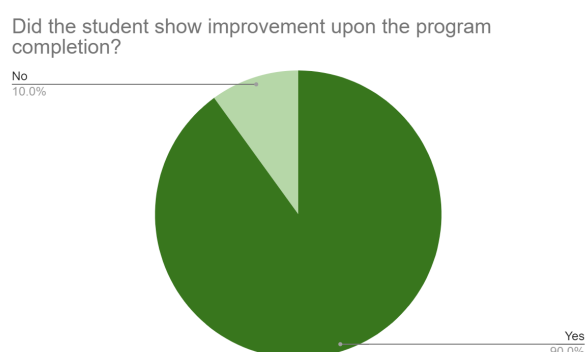


The alignment of the digital content with the paper content reinforced the concepts as shared by the facilitators.

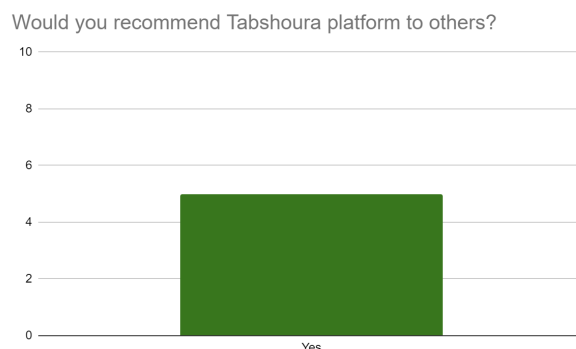
Outcome: Keep the same alignment



All agreed on the benefit of the digital support program on the teaching experience and noted that the motivation of the students to use digital was high which made them eager to learn.



90% of the facilitators confirmed that the program impacted positively the students and helped in their improvement.



5 over 5 facilitators who responded to the Survey will recommend Tabshoura platform to others.

The overall feedback is positive. Students were motivated and seemed to enjoy the lessons and activities. All facilitators found Tabshoura of good support, enhancing students' skills, motivating them, and making concepts accessible. With reference to the data collected from the facilitators, the students have evidently shown improvement toward the end of the pilot program.

Challenges and Mitigation

- Language Barrier

With reference to the above-generated evidence, the BLN students are mainly refugees from Arab countries. With that being said, native Arabic speakers with no educational background, have found French and English to be particularly difficult.

Mitigation; the language barrier challenge can easily be overcome by adding bilingual audios to the lessons.

- Internet Connection

The slow internet connection speed tends to be overwhelming for both students and facilitators as it inevitably resulted in images not downloading while students are in session, exiting the platform suddenly, or not being able to submit the work.

Mitigation; Tabshoura-in-a-box offline boxes to be installed in the centers where multiple users can access the box and work on their lessons without any interruptions. In addition, the mobile App will allow both students and facilitators to download the content and use it offline.

- Registration and Login Process

It is crucial for all platform users to be registered in order to access the platform and for tracking the submitted progress on all activities. Our process is very precise and follows several steps.

Mitigation; direct links to the lessons will be created and sent to the facilitators to share with their registered students.

- Length of the lessons

Some lessons are too long and need two sessions to be completed.

Mitigation; extending the time from 45 minutes to 1 hour, or encouraging autonomous learning at home, or making content choices.

- Length of The Project

LAL follows a unique and delicate process to transform static content into an appealing interactive learning experience. Content is initially adapted, contextualized, and designed by a pedagogical expert; next, a team of illustrators and animators create a digital library dedicated to each lesson; and finally, the audio recording for each lesson is created in-house, and added to each lesson and activity.

Mitigation; allowing LAL enough time to implement the above-mentioned process to produce an impeccable end product.

- Content

Scope and progression: not consistent with the learning to communicate, read, write and count objectives but with Elementary Cycle I. Learning conversational language is missing, day-to-day transactions and related vocabulary.

No specific literacy or numeracy methodology of teaching strategies: a mixture of many methods
Conceptual gaps: level of difficulty not consistent, concept and pre-requisite missing

Mistakes and spelling errors

Recommendations

- ❖ Implement a phase 2 in order to fill the gaps and improve the program:
 - Rework the scope and sequence to identify missing steps and concepts
 - Create consequently additional activities
 - Record and insert bilingual audios
 - Scale the program by reaching other BLN centers and providing capacity-building workshops on the digital program.
 - Install offline boxes.

Build a consortium of different NGOs providing BLN to review the program and improve
Add some extra activities from existing non-formal programs.

Annex

Facilitators' feedback

What did you enjoy most about the platform?

"The fun stories, activities mostly the fun ones, illustrations and of course Tabshour the avatar that became highly popular among kids."

"The score at the end of the lesson"

"The platform has a very friendly and simple user interface that allows the students to develop their learning process"

What section/area can be improved in the lessons? How?

"Mostly navigation between lessons, and technical problems in some activities"

"Explaining the task in Arabic by putting translation"

"All the sections were excellent"

"The drag and drop section needs to be improved"

"Concepts are difficult especially in Math"

"Language needs to be more useful"

"Learning some useful daily sentences is missing"

"Oral part is not emphasized"

What features were missing?

"To be always logged in to make it easier on students and keep the student in one program (e.g a BLN student should be redirected automatically to the BLN program)"

"Translation"

"Drawing"

"Nothing"

"The platform needs to include poems"

"Bilingual audio"

Do you have any comments or feedback that you would like to share?

"Overall good, fun, and interesting. Makes good support for pre-acquired lessons. However, it definitely requires time to practice (one session at a time) so that students won't feel overwhelmed, and navigation could be simplified further. Finally, a weak connection doesn't allow the full experience unfortunately."