



Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages

MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages
English Language
Sciences of the language

Submitted and Defended by:
NOUGA Karima

Title

**The Effect of Using Blended Learning in Enhancing EFL
Learners' Communicative Competence**

**The Case of Third Year LMD Students at Mohamed Khider
University of Biskra**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Sciences of the Language

Board of Examiners:

Mr. BOUHITEM Tayeb	MCA	Biskra	President
Mrs. BENZIDA Yasmina	MAA	Biskra	Supervisor
Dr. REZIG B Nadia	MCB	Biskra	Examiner
Dr. NASRI Rima Chahira	MAB	Biskra	Examiner

Academic Year: 2020 - 2021

Declaration

I, **NOUGA Karima**, do hereby declare that this submitted work is my original work .I also declare that a list of references is provided forward indicating all the sources of the cited and quoted information. This work was certified and completed at

Mohammed Khider University of

Biskra, Algeria.

Certified:

Mrs. NOUGA Karima

Master Student, Section of English

Signature:

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to:

- ❖ *My dearest **mother**, my source of encouragement and hope, who has been always on my side to accomplish my study after an interruption of twelve years.*

- ❖ *The soul of my dear **father**.....*

- ❖ *My **beloved husband** who never stopped supporting me, for his precious love, advice and constant help.....*

- ❖ *My lovely and cute son "**Poucef**" who means the world to me.*

- ❖ *My **sisters, brothers and relatives.***

- ❖ *All those who gave me love, patience and support, and without whom my life is worthless.*

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, greatest praise and profound gratitude are due to **Allah**, the Almighty, Who granted me strength, knowledge and patience to accomplish this modest research work.

I would like to express my sincere and special gratitude to my supervisor, **Mrs. BENZIDA Yasmina**, for her precious feedback, insightful guidance, and continuous support throughout every step of my research. Thank you for your permanent assistance and worthy advice.

My deepest thanks also go to the jury members **Dr. REZIG B Nadia**, **Dr. NASRI Rima Chahira** and **Mr. BOUHITEM Tayeb** for their considerable recommendations and valuable evaluation.

I would like to extend to my thanks to **EFL teachers** and **students** for their assistance, without their fruitful collaboration this work would not have been fulfilled.

I owe my special acknowledgement also to **Mr. DOUIDA Brahim**, who has always been at disposal whenever I needed.

Thank You All.

Abstract

A paradigm shift from traditional teaching to an online environment is considered a challenge for many instructors in higher education. Thus, the infusion of both modes into one crucial approach namely “Blended Learning” (BL) has changed the face of education. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the effect of blended learning approach on English as Foreign Language (EFL) students’ communicative competence; whereby teachers post online videos via Moodle platform, conducting a case study on third year LMD students at the Department of English, University of Mohamed Khider, Biskra. Furthermore, this study aims at eliciting students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards BL as a teaching/learning approach in improving the students’ communicative competence and fostering their autonomous learning inside and outside the classroom as well. In the current study, we hypothesize that the effective integration of blended learning method would enhance students’ communicative competence and facilitate matters for both teachers’ assessment as well as learners’ understanding. In order to confirm or reject the assumed data, a descriptive qualitative method is used to achieve this research work using two data collecting methods: A classroom observation took place within the traditional face to face (F2F) class and also inside the blended classroom, and two questionnaires were administered to fifty-three third year EFL students and ten teachers at the University of Biskra. From the results obtained through the two data gathering tools, the findings show that third year students’ communication abilities have been positively enhanced due to the blended learning approach. Moreover, the results of the study reveal the positive attitudes of students and teachers towards the effect of blended learning on learners’ communicative competence and their learning autonomy too. Besides, teachers and students are invited to integrate the designed learning method in the Algerian classes to learn the English as foreign language. Eventually, a number of recommendations are put forward for both teachers and learners to boost an effective implementation of blended learning in EFL classes.

Keywords: blended learning, communicative competence, EFL students, Third year.

List of Abbreviations

BL: Blended Learning

BLL: Blended Language Learning

CAI: Computer-Assisted Instruction

CAL: Computer Assisted Learning

CD-ROM: Compact Disc Read-Only Memory

CEIL : Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des Langues

CLT Communicative Language Teaching

CMC: Computer-Mediated Communication

EFL: English as Foreign Language

EL: English Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

F2F: Face to Face

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

H: Hypothesis

ICTs: Information and Communication Technologies

LMD: License, Master, Doctorate

LMS: Learning Management System

LP: Learning Process

M.K.U: Mohamed Kheider University

MOODLE: Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment

PPT: PowerPoint Presentation

Q: Question

RQ: Research Question

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

SLT: Situation Language Teaching

SMS: Short Message Service

List of Tables

Table 1.4: Modes of Blended Learning.....	22
Table 3.1: Students’ Responses about Teachers’ Delivery of Online Courses via Moodle Platform.....	70
Table 3.1.1: The Frequency of Teachers’ Online Courses Delivery via Moodle Platform.....	71
Table 3.2: Types of ICT Tools Teachers Use in the Explanation of Online Course in Classroom.....	72
Table 3.3: Students’ Options for their Learning Modes.....	74
Table 3.4: Teachers Integration of ICTs during Oral Sessions.....	75
Table 3.5: Teachers’ Delivery of Online Videos via Moodle Platform.....	75
Table 3.6: Students’ Option of Video Format.....	76
Table 3.6.1: Reasons behinds Students’ Option of Video Format.....	77
Table 3.7: Factors Affecting Students’ Online Learning.....	78
Table 3.8: Extent of Students’ Agreement/Disagreement with the Following Statements.....	79
Table 3.9: Teachers’ Application of Blended Learning Norms.....	80
Table 3.10: Extent of Agreement/Disagreement with the Difficulty of Speaking Skill.....	84
Table 3.11: Frequency of Students’ Preference of Language Skills.....	84
Table 3.12: Students’ Opinions about Difficulties while Speaking in Class.....	85
Table 3.13: Factors behind Students’ Communication Difficulties.....	86
Table 3.14: Frequency of Students’ Participation in Oral Sessions.....	87
Table 3.15: Aspects Affecting Students’ Motivation and Engagement in Oral Session.....	88
Table 3.16: Degree of Satisfaction about Time-Allocation in Oral Sessions.....	90
Table 3.17: Frequency of Teachers’ Feedback in Oral Session.....	90
Table 3.18: Factors Influencing Teachers’ Feedback in Oral Sessions.....	91
Table 3.19: Learning in One’s Pace Evolves student’s Autonomy.....	93
Table 3.20: Students’ Attitudes towards the Effect of Blended Learning Method in Enhancing their Communicative Skills.....	95
Table 3.23: Teachers’ Experience in Teaching English at University.....	97
Table 3.24: Teachers’ Delivery of Online Courses via Moodle Platform.....	98
Table 3.25: Teachers Delivery of Online Videos via Moodle Platform.....	99
Table 3.25.1: Frequency of Online Video Delivery.....	100
Table 3.26: Teachers’ Responses about Students’ Attitudes towards Online Videos.....	101
Table 3.27: Teachers’ Views about Students’ Benefit from Videos.....	102
Table 3.28: Teachers Perceptions towards the Most Helpful Mode as a Teaching Method.....	103
Table 3.29: Teachers’ Response about Students’ Online Learning Challenges.....	104

Table 3.30: Extent of Agreement/Disagreement with the Following Statements.....	106
Table 3.31: Teachers' Responses about the Use of Blended Learning's Norms.....	107
Table 3.32: Teachers' Perceptions about Developing Students' Communicative Abilities via Blended Learning.....	109
Table 3.33: Teachers' Responses about Students' Hinders during Learning Process.....	110
Table 3.34: Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Communicative Competence.....	112
Table 3.35: Frequency of Students' Feedback to Boost their Communication in Classroom.....	113
Table 3.36: Kinds of ICTs Integrating to Enhance Students' Communication Abilities.....	114

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: A Definition of Blended Learning.....	12
Figure 1.2: Blended Learning Approach.....	14
Figure 1.3: Components of Blended Learning.....	17
Figure 1.5: Schematic Illustration of Blended Learning Models.....	23
Figure 2.1: Components of Communicative Competence.....	37
Figure 2.2: Canale and Swain’s Model.....	39
Figure 2.3: Bachman’s Model.....	41
Figure 2.4: Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell’s Model.....	42
Figure 2.5: A Suggested Framework of CLT Approach.....	46
Figure 3.1: Students Responses about Teachers’ Delivery of Online Courses via Moodle Platform.....	70
Figure 3.2: Types of ICT Tools Teachers Use in the Explanation of Online Course in Classroom.....	72
Figure 3.3: Reasons behinds Students’ Option of Video Format.....	77
Figure 3.4: Extent of Students’ Agreement/Disagreement with the Statements.....	80
Figure 3.5: Frequency of Students’ Preference of Language Skills.....	85
Figure 3.6: Factors behind Students’ Communication Difficulties.....	86
Figure 3.7 Aspects Affecting Students’ Motivation and Engagement in Oral Session for Effective Communication.....	88
Figure 3.8: Factors Influencing Teachers’ Feedback in Oral Sessions.....	91
Figure 3.9: Students’ Attitudes towards the Effect of Blended Learning Method in Enhancing their Communicative Skills.....	94
Figure 3.10: Teachers’ Experience in Teaching English at University.....	98
Figure 3.11: Teachers’ Responses about Students’ Attitudes towards Online Videos.....	101
Figure 3.12: Teachers Perceptions towards the most helpful Mode as a Teaching Method.....	103
Figure 3.13: Teachers’ Responses about Students’ Online Learning Challenges...	105
Figure 3.14: Extent of Agreement/Disagreement with the Following Statements...	106
Figure 3.15: Teachers’ Perceptions about Developing Students’ Communicative Abilities via Blended Learning.....	109

Figure 3.16: Teachers’ Responses about Students’ Hinders during Learning Process.....	111
Figure 3.17: Teachers’ Evaluation of Students’ Communicative Competence.....	112
Figure 3.18: Frequency of Students’ Feedback to Boost their Communication in Classroom.....	113
Figure 3.19: Kinds of ICTs Integrating to Enhance Students’ Communication Abilities.....	115

Table of Content

Declaration	II
Dedication	III
Acknowledgments	IV
Abstract	V
List of Abbreviations	VI
List of Appendices	VII
List of Tables	VIII
List of Figures	X
Table of Content	XII

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction	1
1. Statement of the Problem	2
2. Significance of the Study	3
3. Research Aims	4
4. Research Questions	5
5. Research Hypothesis	5
6. Research Methodology	6
6.1 Data Analysis Tools	7
6.2 Population of the Study	7
7. Structure of the Study	8

CHAPTER ONE: BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH

Introduction	12
1.1 Definition of Blended Learning (BL)	12
1.2 Historical Background	15

1.3 Techniques and Components of Blended Learning	17
1.3.1 Techniques of Blended Learning	17
1.3.1.1 Synchronous learning	17
1.3.1.2 Asynchronous learning	18
1.3.2 Components of Blended Learning	18
1.4 The Importance of Blended Learning	19
1.5 Main Characteristics of Blended Learning	20
1.6 Blended Learning Modes and Models	21
1.6.1 Modes of Blended Learning	21
1.6.2 Models of Blended Learning	22
1.7 Implementing Blended Courses Design in ELT	24
1.7.1 Teachers’ and learners’ roles and interaction in Blended learning	25
1.8 Learners’ Autonomy in Blended Learning	26
1.9 Advantages and challenges of Blended Learning	27
1.9.1 Advantages of Blended Learning	27
1.9.2 Challenges of Blended Learning	29
Conclusion	30

CHAPTER TWO: COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: AN OVERVIEW

Introduction	33
2.1 Definition of Communicative Competence Concept	33
2.2 Historical Background	36
2.3 The Components of Communicative Competence	37
2.4 Models of Communicative Competence	39
2.4.1 Dell Hymes’ Model	39
2.4.2 Canale and Swain’s Model	40
2.4.2 Bachman’s Model	41

2.4.4	Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell’s Model.....	42
2.5	Communicative Competence and Foreign Language Teaching (FLT).....	43
2.6	Communicative Language Teaching Approach: An Overview.....	43
2.6.1	Methodological Framework of Communicative Language Teaching... ..	46
2.6.1.1	Communicative Language Teaching Activities in EFL Classroom... ..	46
2.6.1.2	Accuracy versus Fluency Activities.....	48
2.6.1.3	Teachers’ and Learners’ Roles in CLT Classroom.....	49
2.7	Communicative Competence and Technology.....	50
2.7.1	Application of Technology in EFL Classroom.....	51
2.7.1.1	Moodle: A Virtual Learning Platform.....	52
Conclusion.....		53

CHAPTER THREE: FIELDWORK

Introduction.....		56
3.1	Research Design and Methodology.....	56
3.2	Sample of the Study.....	56
3.3	Classroom Observation.....	57
3.3.1	Description of Classroom Observation.....	58
3.3.2	Analysis of Classroom Observation.....	60
3.3.3	Discussion of Classroom Observation.....	65
3.4	Students’ Questionnaire.....	67
3.4.1	Administration of Students’ Questionnaire.....	67
3.4.2	Description of Students’ Questionnaire.....	68
3.4.3	Analysis of Students’ Questionnaire.....	69
3.4.4	Discussion of Students’ Questionnaire.....	95

3.5 Teachers' Questionnaire.....	96
3.5.1 Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	96
3.5.2 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	97
3.5.3 Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	97
3.5.4 Discussion of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	117
Conclusion.....	118
General Conclusion.....	120
Pedagogical Recommendations.....	121
Limitations of the Study.....	123
References	
Appendices	
ملخص الدراسة	

Appendices

Appendix A: Classroom Observation Checklist.

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Third year EFL Students.

Appendix C: Questionnaire for EFL Teachers.

General Introduction

Introduction

Technology is no longer a luxury in any learning environment. It proves to be a vital part of effective learning and an essential element of our daily life. With the development of Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) in the 1980's, the appearance of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) and the different network tools and applications of the 21st century, several changes have been prompted in the ways and methods of education and teaching foreign languages. Technology gives learners the chance to experience the real world gradually and smoothly (Jackson, 2014). Therefore, it should be integrated in teaching and learning process for various reasons.

First of all, it gives students feeling that what they learn is not separated from their daily life since it is unacceptable to teach 21st century students using only traditional methods. If this happened, they will feel bored, unmotivated, and unenthusiastic to learn. Because of that, educational systems should take into consideration the increasing change in the world caused by technology and prepare students to cope with it successfully in order to be able to deal with real life situations and their future careers. In order to integrate technology in teaching and learning process, it has to be planned carefully and systemically according to course outcomes and objectives. New trends in education have emerged around the world urged by the tremendous technological advances that took place during the last 20 years. “Blended learning” is one trend that is becoming widely used for many reasons that will be discussed later in this study.

Blended learning (BL) "mixed" or "hybrid" is one approach of many others of integrating technology in teaching and learning. It focuses on combining face-to-face (F2F) classroom instruction with online activities or materials. This combination of the online activities and F2F instruction is what constitutes the philosophy of the BL approach. As English foreign language (EFL) learners, there is an extreme need to use technology in

teaching and learning for several reasons. One of the main reasons underlying the use of a blended approach is to improve students' communicative competence and encourage a more active rather than a passive approach to learning particularly in large classes. According to Stacey and Gerbic (2007), students learning experience and performance can be improved when online resources are integrated with traditional forms of course delivery, such as F2F lectures and tutorials.

At Biskra University, teachers need to be familiarized themselves with BL approach to overcome the challenges of the teaching and learning process and to know how blending can influence students' motivation and their communicative competence since many studies show that e-learning provide better results for the educational system, such as improving and up-dating the teaching task. Therefore, BL appears to be a clue to help the teachers and learners in enhancing the quality of education in general and the course in particular.

Being a student at the Department of English, Sciences of Language, we had witnessed with our teachers the potential benefits of BL model inside the classroom and even outside to foster our communicative skills and to be self-reliant learners.

1. Statement of the Problem

The present research work is motivated by the fact that there are many EFL students still have problems to improve their communication skills which are mostly caused by less opportunity for practice during the sessions, limited time, or the lack of ideas they have about vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar etc... In this case, teachers are expected to find a strategy to involve their learners to communicate effectively. Furthermore, teachers still depend on the traditional methods of teaching; most of them prefer to use the board as a classroom aid and lack of computer literacy, which make

learners feel bored or less engaged in the classroom. It is also noticed that the traditional classroom practices became less effective in teaching EFL and did not encourage learners particularly university students to interact, participate, and to foster their communicative abilities in English classes.

Tackling those problems, a new line of thought has now emerged to facilitate learning in language classes known as "blended" learning. The major reason for this approach is gaining momentum, due to the fact that teachers do not use online learning to completely replace traditional F2F classroom teaching but to complement or overcome some of its shortcomings. This combination of the online activities and F2F instruction is what constitutes the philosophy of the hybrid learning approach to improve students' communication skills and encourage them to be active, confident and self-reliant learners.

Consequently, the present work is mainly concerned with implementing the use of BL to maximize learners' communicative competence. Throughout this paper, we intend to show the effectiveness of using this method with third year LMD students of M.K.U, mainly in oral expression classes as well as other modules; whereby teachers integrating technological tools as "videos" to deliver their courses online via Moodle website. Thus, the teacher can urge his learners to search more about a given topic, activities, outlines etc... In this way, teachers and learners will mutually discuss and exchange information about the suggested topic during F2F classroom session.

2. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study emerges from the fact that today's teaching learning process is not only limited in the class but also can be conducted through e-learning or internet. One of learning model that becomes popular today is BL which is a combination

between traditional F2F learning supplemented by online learning. Therefore, learners can access to go through sequences of instruction to complete the learning activities, to achieve an effective communicative competence, and to be more independent in their learning. Moreover, Blending in teaching process appears to be a clue to help the teachers in enhancing the quality of education in general and the course in particular as it turns the setting from teacher-centered class into student-centered class.

Along this line of thought, the present study is significant in enhancing EFL students' communicative competence through BL model, which proved to be an efficient approach in facilitating language teaching / learning process. Similarly, the findings reveal that including BL approach in an EFL setting is the best for the sake of increasing students' communication skills and thereby fostering their learning autonomy.

3. Research Aims

The general aim of the current study is to improve learners' communicative skills through the implementation of BL model conducting a case study on third year LMD students at the Department of English, M.K.U of Biskra. More precisely, this work aims at:

- Investigating the effect of BL, as a teaching approach, in improving the students' communicative competence.
- Shedding light on the principles of BL model.
- Encouraging teachers to adopt BL model in teaching EFL classroom.
- Eliciting third year students' attitudes towards BL and its role in enhancing their autonomous learning as well as the teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of BL approach.

- Determining the difficulties which EFL teachers face when they do not integrate technology and rely on traditional materials.
- Finding out the challenges that teachers encounter in adopting BL method in teaching EFL classes.

4. Research Questions

Since this research work aims at investigating how can BL maximize EFL learners' communicative competence and hence improve their learning autonomy at M.K.U of Biskra, it addresses some questions about the feasibility and the effects of using BL to enhance learners' language skills and to improve their self-directed learning:

1. To what extent does the integration of BL, as a teaching approach, foster student's communicative competence?
2. What kind of techniques should EFL teachers adopt in order to build an effective BL atmosphere?
3. Does BL facilitate teacher's evaluation in EFL classes?
4. How can posting online videos to EFL students facilitate matters for both teachers' assessment and learners' understanding?

5. Research Hypotheses

It is a matter of fact that EFL students facing hurdles during their communication which can be attributed to some reasons such as language incompetence, lack of knowledge about the topic, lack of authentic materials in the classroom, teacher's dependence on traditional methods of teaching and many other factors which are explained in details in the present study. Accordingly, we believe that the implementation of BL as

an effective model would help learners to overcome those problems. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H1: Students' communicative competence would be improved if their teachers use BL in teaching EFL effectively.

H2: BL facilitates the teachers' evaluation by motivating the students to search more about the topic through a given outline .Likewise, BL urges student' autonomous learning.

6. Research Methodology

The current study is designed to examine the effectiveness of BL model in enhancing EFL learners' communicative competence. The research employs qualitative method for data collection. Questionnaires for teachers and learners, as well as classroom observation, with detailed and understandable analysis of the results obtained.

Questionnaires are instrumental in understanding the nature on level of utilization of BL model by teachers as well as learners to improve their communicative skills and thereby their learning autonomy. Additionally, teachers' and students' attitudes towards the BL as an instructional source in the teaching of EFL and how it helps to foster and increase the students' curiosity and motivation to learning and mastering communicative competences. Questionnaires are also helpful in finding out the challenges that teachers encounter while integrating BL method in their lessons.

Meanwhile, the observation is conducted by examining and investigating all conditions related to some activities along with the implementation of BL-based model to enhance students' English communicative competence. In order to carry out the observation, we will use a checklist as a tool that helps us in getting adequate and valid data.

6.1 Data Analysis

In the present study, qualitative method of data collection, consists of questionnaires and classroom observation, is used. Thus, a descriptive research methodology is opted for this research work since it is appropriate for its nature; which is mainly based on the theoretical part. Moreover, BL approach is new in the Algerian Universities. The data can be representative of a true and full picture of using BL to improve EFL learners' communication skills.

6.2 Population of the Study

The sample of this study consists of third year LMD students and teachers at the Department of English, M.K.U of Biskra during the academic year 2020- 2021. The sample of students is selected randomly. The reason behind opting for this sample is that they have experienced the use of ICTs inside and outside their classrooms and its absence in various situations. Particularly, third year students had witnessed the potential use of e-learning combined with F2F class during the critical period of nonviolence “Hirak” movement and with the spread of Corona epidemic as well. Thus, they are more aware of the usefulness of both virtual and F2F learning in improving EFL communicative competence to master the language effectively. Therefore, they serve as the most suitable sample.

The target sample of teachers consists mainly of oral expression teachers, besides other modules at the Department of English, University of Biskra. They are selected as they often integrate e-learning with F2F instruction by implementing modern technological tools; posting online videos via Moodle platform, in order to encourage their students in terms of boosting their communicative competence of English language in and out-class setting.

7. Structure of the Study

This research work is divided into two main parts with a general introduction and conclusion. The first is the theoretical part which is composed of two chapters. Whereas, the second one represents the empirical part consists of one chapter which is concerned with the fieldwork and the analysis of the collected data.

The first chapter is allotted to an introduction of BL approach. Through this chapter, we introduce the definitions and the historical background of BL, its components, importance, main characteristics, its modes and models. Likewise, the issues related to the implementation of blended instructions in EFL classrooms, coupled with the impact of such integration on EFL learners' autonomy. Moreover, this chapter also sheds the light on challenges faced by teachers and students in BL environment.

The second chapter is devoted to the notion of communicative competence. It shows its several definitions and overviews, its historical background, components and models, characteristics. Also, it includes other concepts that refer to communicative competence and the importance of CLT in EFL classroom with reference to some communication strategies and activities; hence, the benefits of ICT in teaching/learning and its influence on EFL learners' communicative competence. Additionally, we tackle potential advantages and challenges of communicative competence in EFL classes.

Finally, **the third chapter** is dedicated to the practical part of the research. Precisely, we analyse two data gathering tools namely classroom observation checklist and questionnaires for students as well as teachers. In this chapter, a description of both tools was provided. Moreover, it displays the findings along with its analysis. Eventually, a section for discussing the results of both tools is devoted in this chapter. By the end of the

current chapter, we suggest several pedagogical recommendations for teachers and learners in the English division at the University of Biskra as future implications to help them in order to adopt BL method in their teaching/learning process.

Chapter One: Blended Learning

Table of Contents

Introduction	12
1.1 Definition of Blended Learning (BL)	12
1.2 Historical Background	15
1.3 Techniques and Components of Blended Learning	17
1.3.1 Techniques of Blended Learning	17
1.3.1.1 Synchronous learning	17
1.3.1.2 Asynchronous learning	18
1.3.2 Components of Blended Learning	18
1.4 The Importance of Blended Learning	19
1.5 Main Characteristics of Blended Learning	20
1.6 Blended Learning Modes and Models	21
1.6.1 Modes of Blended Learning	21
1.6.2 Models of Blended Learning	22
1.7 Implementing Blended Courses Design in ELT	24
1.7.1 Teachers' and learners' roles and interaction in Blended learning	25
1.8 Learners' Autonomy in Blended Learning	26
1.9 Advantages and challenges of Blended Learning	27
1.9.1 Advantages of Blended Learning	27
1.9.2 Challenges of Blended Learning	29
Conclusion	30

Introduction

Nowadays, the utilization of the internet in pedagogy is able to facilitate the increased intensity of educational activities. The lecture process that was previously only in F2F classroom is undergoing a transition at present. Mixed teaching methods and materials of direct learning or F2F in class and E-learning by online methodologies in formal education as called “Blended Learning” (BL) has been popular in educational practice. BL approach provides teachers with new strategies and techniques to enhance learning as well the teaching process. Accordingly, this chapter deals with the different issues of the BL strategy including definitions and historical background. It also includes BL significance. The current chapter highlights BL components, its characteristics, its modes and models in addition to its implementation in the course design as well as teachers and students roles in BL, shedding light on students’ autonomy. Finally, the advantages and the challenges of the BL are included in the chapter.

1.1 Definition of Blended Learning (BL)

Several researchers attempt to define BL in a substantive way when the literature is marked by huge variety in approaches. One of the simplest definitions is that of the combination of physical and virtual environments, for example, Bleed’s (2001) idea of the innovative and interactive combinations of “technology, architecture and people” through the right mix of “clicks and bricks” (2001, p. 18).

Most definitions refer to combining F2F and online learning, for example, Graham (2006, p. 5) who adds a historical perspective to his working definition when he discusses the convergence of two quite separate learning environments. These are traditional F2F environments that are essentially synchronous and based on high fidelity human interaction, and distance environments that are asynchronous and have been traditionally reliant on text driven and independent learning. Thus, Driscoll (2002, p. 54) defines BL as

the intermixing of any instructional forms (e.g., videotape, CD-ROM, Web-based training, film) to achieve an educational goal.

Garrison and Kanuka (2004, p. 97) also mention that to blend means to integrate the classroom teaching with online experiences. BL is an effective hybrid of different learning techniques, technologies, and delivery modes to supply students' needs (Heinze & Procter, 2004; Bateman, 1981; Graham, 2006).

Furthermore, Horn and Staker (2013, p. 3) outline BL with a three-part definition. These elements are summarized in the figure below:

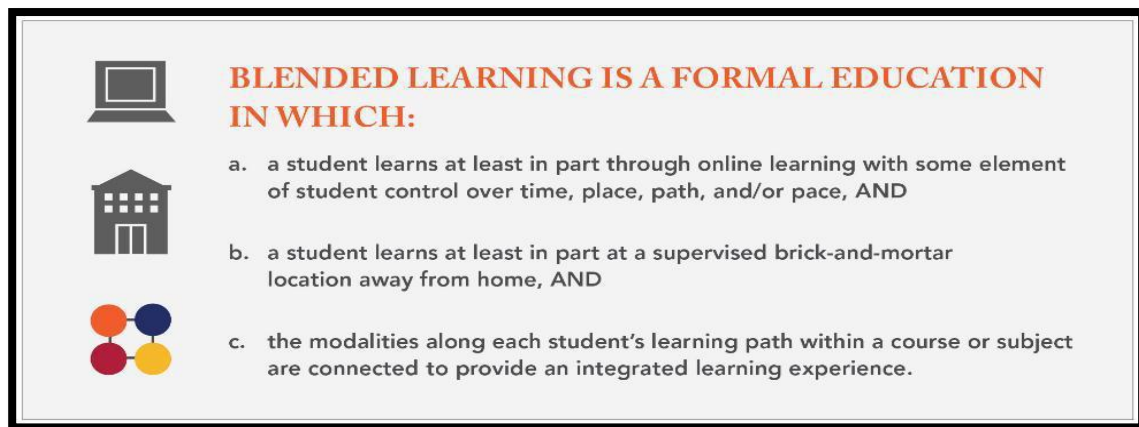


Figure 1.1 A Definition of Blended Learning

(Horn and Staker, 2013 in Christensen)

- Blended learning is any formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace.
- Students learn at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home.
- The modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience. To paraphrase Michael Horn and Heather Staker's definition, BL integrates the learning experiences both online and

F2F to provide a shift in the instructional model that increases student control of time, place, path, and/or pace.

Singh (2003), in his turn, explains that BL is a learning system that includes more than one method and combines different delivery media to promote meaningful and motivating learning which is used to optimize the learning outcome. The tools such as live chats, instant messaging, social networking, blog and forums, applications, and webinars can be utilized for incorporating online opportunities in their classes.

According to Rovai and Jordan (2004), BL is “a hybrid of classroom and online learning that includes the conveniences of online interaction without the complete loss of face-to-face contact.” (p.1)

In a similar vein, Krause (2007) defined the term BL as a strategy that is adopted to combine the best aspects of online learning and face to face learning.

Blended learning is realized in teaching and learning environments where there is an effective integration of different modes of delivery, models of teaching and styles of learning as a result of adopting a strategic and systematic approach to the use of technology combined with the best features of face to face interaction(as cited in Bath & Bourke 2010, p. 11).

On the light of this view, a common definition of BL refers to the integration of online activities and traditional F2F class activities. This simply imply that, BL has the purpose of getting "the best" learning by combining the various advantages of each component in which online methods can provide material online without limitation of space and time so that maximum learning can be achieved, whereas conventional methods make it possible to conduct interactive learning. Ololube (2014, p. 196) proposed one of the recent figures that depict the conceptualization; mentioning the combination of virtual

and physical environments, for instance a figure states two aspects of BL: “learner-centeredness” and “assessment” (see Figure 2).

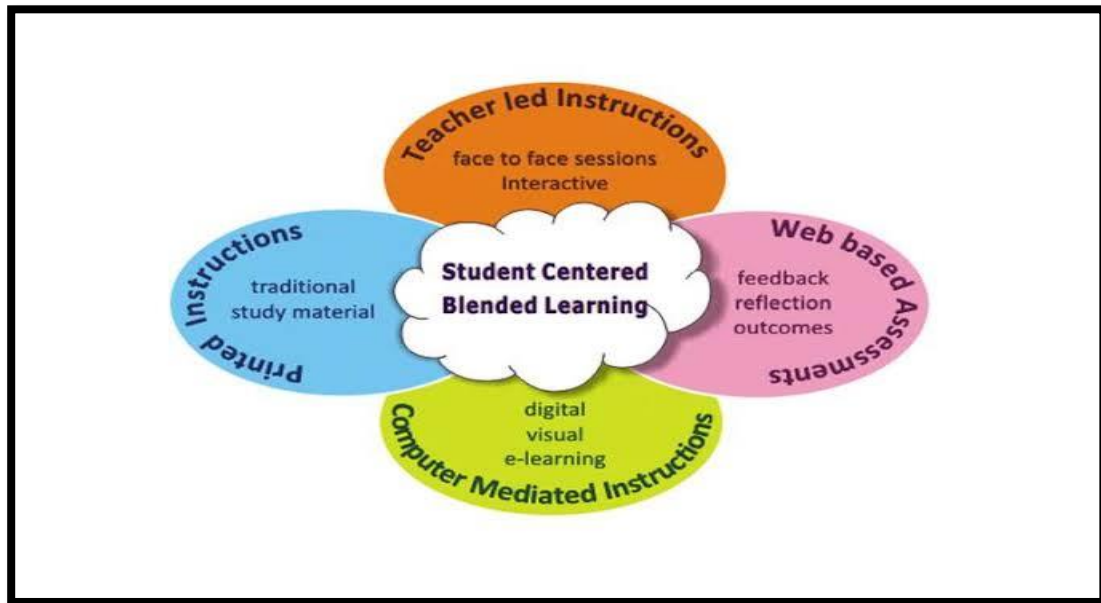


Figure 1.2 Blended Learning Approach

(Ololube, 2014, p. 196)

1.2 Historical Background

To understand BL strategy, we must first recognize how it all got started and the historical backgrounds that shaped its core principles along the way. One of the earliest examples of distance learning can be attributed to Pitman Training, recorded as early as the 1800’s. Sir Isaac Pitman invented Shorthand and established his training company back in 1837. That is he sent shorthand texts to his students via mailed postcards and they were required to send them back to be graded and corrected. Even though computers and mobile devices were not involved, and would not even be invented for roughly a century, effective feedback and assessments were still an integral part of the process. Though there were other variations on the concept prior to Pitman’s, his was to resemble distance learning as we know it today (Pappas and Nicholson, 2015).

However, from 1960's to 1970's, the developed shift to the use of computer-based learning and Computer-Assisted Learning (CAL) allowed learners to use computers in their traditional educational settings (Bersin, 2004).

Fast forward to the next century, many universities have moved to embrace true BL; Stanford and the Open University in particular. They have worked to combine distance learning, classroom learning, one-to-one tutorials and even created TV programs to allow students to gain qualifications without having to attend university full time. Instead of having to send assignments to the professor by mail or courier, learners can now submit their work for review online (Nicholson, 2019). Blended training strategies and applications evolved along with the widespread of technology. Pappas (2015) stated that Schools and organizations began using CD-ROMs to deliver more interactive learning experiences. For the first time in E-learning history, computer-based courses were now able to offer a rich and comprehensive learning experience. In some cases, it even took the place of F2F instruction.

In the past two decades, BL and E-learning have seen a rapid change with the first generation of web-based instruction in 1998. Pappas (2015) added that, computers started to offer greater interactivity; graphics sound, and video became more immersive, while browsers increased connection speeds and gave virtually everyone access to internet learning resources. Organizations could simply upload material, E-Learning assessments, and assignments via the web, and learners could access them with a click, rather than having to distribute CD-ROMs to learners. Consequently, Many CD-ROM developers also recognized that their existing online content, such as large video files that took minutes to download, would need to meet the needs of web-based learners.

Today, the union between F2F instruction and technology-based learning is producing new and creative ways to enrich the educational experience and make learning fun, exciting, and even more beneficial. BL is now being talked about more than ever; gaining momentum as the age of modern learners and remote working continues to develop.

1.3 Techniques and Components of Blended Learning

1.3.1 Techniques of Blended Learning

BL approach includes two techniques which are Synchronous learning and Asynchronous learning

1. 3.1.1 Synchronous learning

Synchronous learning refers to a mode of educational communication where learning or instruction happens at the same time but not essentially in the same place. That is, teacher and learners effectively interact within the same time period and place. The principal form of synchronous learning is represented through the conventional classroom situation; though the live online e-learning has become available alternative now. In the modern digital era the examples of synchronous learning are one-on-one tutorials, and even online seminars (often called webinars). According to Er.*et al.* (2009), the best examples of synchronous online educational technologies comprise video-conferencing, web-casts, interactive learning models, teleconferences, chatting etc.

1.3.1.2 Asynchronous learning

According to Mayadas (1997, pp 2-3) Asynchronous learning is a learner-centered teaching-learning process where online tools are used to help sharing information outside the limits of time and space among a group of networked people. The foundation of asynchronous learning technique is the constructivist theory; a learner-centered teaching-learning process that emphasizes the significance of peer-to-peer interactions (Wu, D., *et. al.*, 2008). In an asynchronous learning environment learners have got good opportunity to actively perform in their own learning and spontaneously interact with their fellow learners or peers. Besides, there are different tools that are used in the asynchronous learning such as, e-mail, recorded voice messages, blogging, online training courses, peer discussion, and recorded webinar.

1.3.2 Components of Blended Learning

There are three major components of BL. These are learning environment component, instructional component and media component as per indicated in Figure 3 below.

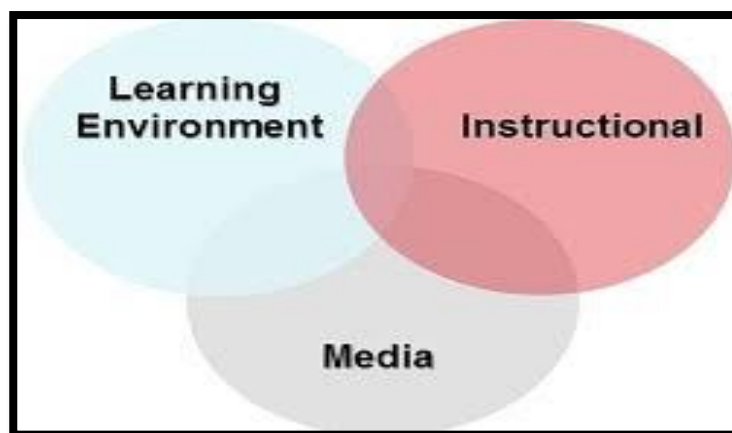


Figure 1.3 Components of Blended Learning (Kaur, 2013, p. 613)

- a. Learning environment component:** A learning environment is an area where the learning process takes place to support an effective teaching and learning process. It can either be synchronous or asynchronous. The aim of BL is to increase the specific positive attributes of each environment to ensure the optimum use of resources to attain the instructional goal and learning objectives. (Holden & Westfall, 2006)
- b. Media component:** Media refers to tools, methods, and techniques use to make communication more effective and interactive between teachers and students in the process of educational and learning which essential part of the teaching and learning process for the achievement of educational goals in general and learning objectives in particular. However, some instructional media may be more appropriate than others in supporting either a synchronous or asynchronous learning environment. That is, when the most appropriate media are selected, learning outcomes will not be affected to internet.
- c. Instructional component:** This component is part of methodology/technique in mixed learning that helps to achieve the learning target and facilitate the transfer of learning. Maintaining instructional quality is paramount when developing BL. Therefore, learning objectives need not be compromised when developing a BL solution (Holden & Westfall, 2006).

1.4 The Importance of Blended Learning

Various reasons enable an instructor, trainer, or learner might pick BL over other learning options. According to Graham (2003), three main reasons, among many learning factors, lead an instructor, trainer, or learner to select BL in order to enrich specific learning objectives. These reasons are arranged as: First, **improved pedagogy** refers to pedagogical practices that are the most effective reasons for blending. That is merging

asynchronous Internet technology with F2F interaction is associated with improved pedagogy and easier access to information (Bonk & Graham, 2004). Similarly, Carman (2002) noted that instructors can use Learning Management Systems (LMS) Moodle to post readings, videos, wikis, forums and quizzes to enhance self-regulation and boost student-teacher interaction outside the class setting. Such BL tools can pave the way for the negotiation of meaning, scaffolding, and collaboration. So, it is indisputable that mixing technologically mediated learning with class discussions helps students get more understanding of the subject matter, and develops their cognitive and social skills as well.

Second, **increased access and flexibility** factors where “access to learning” is one of the significant factors influencing the growth of distributed learning environments (Bonk, Olson, Wisner, & Orvis, 2002). Besides, “flexibility and convenience” are also of growing importance for learners with outside engagements seeking additional education. A third major factor for BL systems in both higher education and corporate institution is **cost-effectiveness**. Hence, for the sake of achieving a large audience and dispersed audience, BL systems provide an opportunity for content delivery, in a short period of time with consistent.

1.5 Main Characteristics of Blended Learning

Despite the conflicting views of instructors and theorists around the conceptualization of BL, it is essential that in an effective mixed learning course have key characteristics. Carman (2005, pp 3-7) proposed five key ingredients that apply different learning theories:

- a. Live Events:** Synchronous events must be involved in BL through which students and the teacher gather at the same time as in live “virtual events”. This also includes traditional lessons, synchronous discussions online, YouTube, or a virtual classroom (Carman, 2005).

- b. Self-Paced Learning:** Asynchronous learning events in which the learner completes on his/her own, at his/her pace without the assistance of the teacher. Various objects can be used to create self-paced learning. Internet-based events (reading and answering uploaded audio/video files, e-documents, and posted questions) and computer-based events such as CD-ROM training.
- c. Collaboration:** Is a vital component of BL whether in the form of synchronous such as “online chat” or asynchronous communication as “Email”. It includes learners’ communication with others to boost their learning forward. This component may take the form of e-mail, discussion groups, online chats, peer feedback, blogs ...etc.
- d. Assessment:** One of the most important elements in BL is assessment which must be of two forms; “formative or summative” assessment for learning. This can take the form of pre-assessments, post assessments, ongoing feedback, reflections, journals, etc. It must be planned according to the different Bloom’s levels. Students must know where they start from and how far they come along to see what they have learned (Carman 2005).
- e. Performance Support Materials:** An essential element of BL design is support materials. These latter enhance “learning retention and transfer” as Gagné claims. Among these materials are printable downloads, Job Aids (graphs, diagrams, summaries), and online downloads (audio/video files).

1.6 Blended Learning Modes and Models

1.6.1 Modes of Blended Learning

Bath and Bourke (2010, p. 2) claim that BL represent a continuum span that covers a broad range of activities between conventional F2F interactions and those that are fully

online. They identify three modes of operation to indicate the level of use of web-based technology in learning and teaching. These modes are summarized in the table below:

Mode 1	Technology is used to <i>facilitate</i> course management and resources that intend to <i>support</i> the process of learning. Examples of this mode: upload recorded lectures online or perform administrative functions such as uploading course announcements or schedule as supplements to traditional learning.
Mode 2	Technology is used to <i>enrich</i> the quality of learning through interactive learning activity alongwith F2F classroom. That is,changing the philosophy of learning into more active, constructive, motivating, and interactive learning rather than using the most innovative and complicated technologies.
Mode 3	Technology is used to <i>support</i> the process of self-directed learning as well as interactive and collaborative learning activities. In this mode courses deliveredfully online.

Table 1.4 Modes of Blended Learning

1.6.2 Models of Blended Learning

A wide range of suggested models comes into BL that may help to understand the many ways in which online learning blends with and supports traditional learning strategies. Sana & Adhikary (2018, pp. 34-35) categorize BL into five models in terms of their delivery. These models can be summarized as follows:

First, **the F2F driver model** which allows teachers to use technology in classroom in given situations, is suggested to help those students who have good capabilities to enable them to be advanced and to achieve better learning outcomes, as well as to help students who face problems with keeping up with the class setting particularly in language learning classes.

While, **the rotation model** requires students to rotate their learning place from traditional classroom to the computer lab for the E-learning station according to pre-scheduled sessions. This model encourages students to learn through online resources and

make them understand how things work. Other modalities might include activities such as small-group or full-class instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, and pencil-and-paper assignments. The students learn mostly on the brick-and-mortar campus, except for any homework assignments.

On the other hand, **the flex model** provides full online learning under teacher’s supervision. It is offered for those students who have behavioral, academic, and social problems. That is, it provides them with a safe learning environment.

Likewise, **the self-blend model** includes self-selected subjects to learn, serves the demands of high school students who look for extra courses to help them in university admission or getting a job.

The last model is called **the online driver model**, where students of limited time can meet their teachers online and selectively come to have F2F classes or attend meetings. Thus, this model of BL is ideal for learners who need more flexibility and independence in their daily schedules (Staker and Horn, 2012). A recent five elements model suggested by Sana & Adhikary is shown in the following Figure:

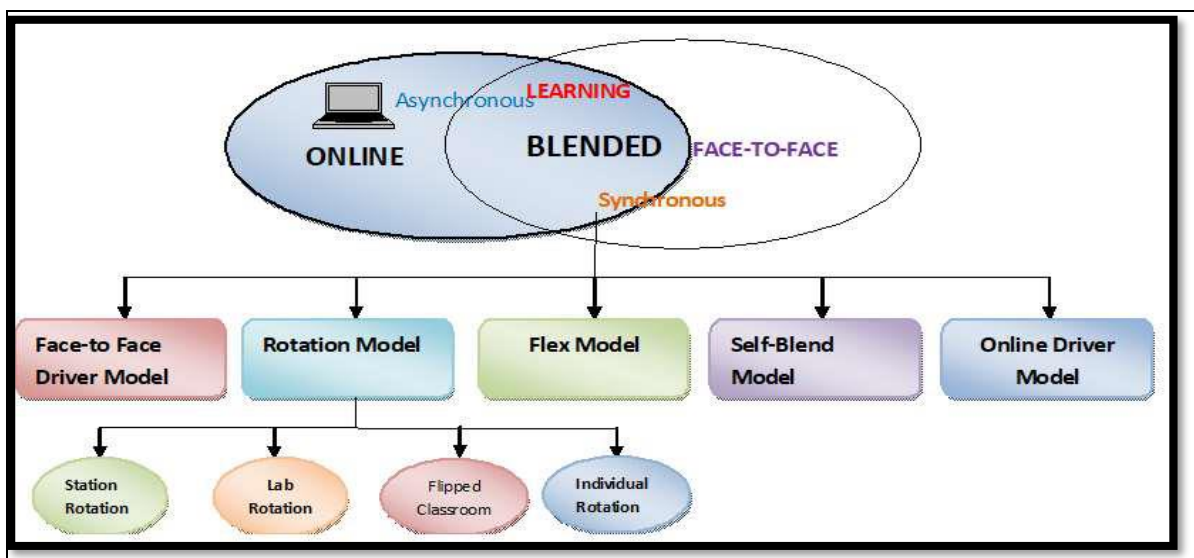


Figure 1.5 Schematic illustration of Blended learning Models

(Sana & Adhikary, 2018, p. 36)

1.7 Implementing Blended Courses Design in ELT

As widely held, designing an effective BL course is an issue of paramount importance to English Language Teaching (ELT) practitioners and researchers. There is clearly no one ‘right blend’ due to the numerous range of contexts in which BL can take place, the various needs of learners, and the different models, content and approaches that can inform course design.

Nevertheless, McCarthy (2016) suggests that in the field of ELT that can be drawn on in blended language learning course design, there is a substantial body of research. He specifies Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and classroom interaction studies, as well as insights from corpus linguistics, as useful in helping course designers to create an optimum balance between F2F classroom work and computer-led-out of classroom.

In practical terms, Whittaker (2013) offers a four-step approach to designing a BL course which organized in: The first step is to “carefully consider the **teaching and learning context**”, to identify the reasons for adopting a blended approach and to determine what the limiting factors to the design will be. The second involves designing the course by choosing the **technology component** of the blend, deciding what the lead mode (F2F or technology-led) will be, and deciding how much time learners will spend on each mode, as well as what the pedagogic purpose of each mode will be, and how this fits with the overall methodology of the blend. The third step includes a **consideration of learners and teachers** such as , who will be involved in the course design process, what the teachers’ and learners’ roles will be, and what interaction patterns will be included in both the F2F and technology-led/off-site components of the course.

Other important issues to address at this stage include considering how teachers and learners will be supported in the transition to a blended approach, what level of autonomy learners will need, and what ratio of learners to teachers the technology-led

component of the course will have. This last point has implications for the demands on teachers' time, and how and when feedback is provided on learners' out-of-class work. Finally, the fourth step tackles deciding how to **evaluate and develop the blended course**.

However, designing a blended course with no clear framework or guidelines will certainly back fire and defeat the purpose of the whole idea. Sharma and Barrett (2007) think that a BL course that lacks a principled approach may seem broad and lack focus. This in turn can end up as rather a "mish mash" and learners may suffer "the worst of both worlds" (p.8).

1.7.1 Teachers' and learners' roles and interaction in Blended learning

Actually, teachers and learners are the basic participants of the learning process; their role is significant for a successful process as their work completes each other. This is not confined only to the traditional environment, in a BL environment; also, they have certain functions for effective application.

In the traditional F2F classroom, teachers had control over the whole process, but with blended classrooms, everything has changed even the role of the teachers and students become active participants. Jones (2007, p. 25 as cited by Marsh, 2012) stated that the teacher has several roles for successful teaching and learning process. First, it is to improve learner-centered learning in the classroom. This simply means, in this environment, teachers focus their planning, teaching, and the assessment on the needs and abilities of students in order to make students actively engaged in understanding, creating, and connecting to knowledge. He further suggested another teacher's role, which is "facilitator". Hence, training and support are a crucial part to be dealt with when using technology.

Moreover, Marsh (2012) highlighted the teacher's third role concerning the use of BL, which is encouraging autonomous and collaborative learning. Also, he claimed that flexibility works as a helper for students and enables them to study anywhere, anytime they want; however, the teacher's role here is to develop the language skills they need to use autonomously. The fourth role is creating a supportive online community, which means one of the aims of a BL course, is to boost autonomous learning. The last role is managing and facilitation online interaction. It uses technology and several tools to offer opportunities for online interaction. Teacher's role here is to monitor this interaction and manage it.

In traditional classroom instruction, students are most of the time just recipients. Recently, many researchers proved that their function in the blended classrooms totally changed. Furthermore, Stracke (2007, p.1 as cited by Marsh, 2012) asserted, "The pedagogical rationale behind Blended Language Learning (BLL) is the aim to allow for a higher degree of learner independence in the teaching and learning of second/foreign languages" (P. 12).

BL supports learners' total flexibility to choose time without being tied up with fixed classroom hours. Therefore, this will push them to work independently and be responsible for their own decisions.

1.8 Learners' Autonomy in Blended Learning

The concept of learner's autonomy has gained an important attention since its emergence in the field of Foreign Language Learning (FLL). This later requires an active learner in the learning process. Thus, learner's autonomy refers to a broad subjective approach of learning; a self-directed procedure where learners take control over their learning. They really engage in an active participation and contribute in their own progression (Chamot, *et al.*, 1999). Similarly, Huang (2006) perceived that autonomous

learning as “a process concerned with the negotiation between teacher and learner in an atmosphere of genuine dialogue and collegiality” (p.41). Hence, the teacher should select the appropriate approach, framework and course design by which learner can reach an autonomous learning.

Subsequently, in a BL environment, which combines teaching and learning media with several teaching and learning methods, learners play a significant role in their own learning by employing their own self-directed learning characteristics. Whereas, the teachers’ role involves being a facilitator to guide, suggest, and challenge learners to reach their own learning goals. Moore (2005) has stated that BL is related to self-regulation and self-directed learning which are consisted of three correlated factors: interactive, structure, and autonomy.

Therefore, BL is only effective and successful if learners demonstrate responsibility and determination in their own learning (Bonk & Graham, 2006). Also, BL enhances collaborative style learning, whereby learners are encouraged to learn autonomously online through the use of software introduced during class time.

1.9 Advantages and challenges of Blended Learning

1.9.1 Advantages of Blended Learning

Since BL combines the best of face-to-face instruction and computer-mediated instruction, it provides many advantages which can help students to better learning practices if managed properly. Osguthorpe and Graham (cited in Bonk & Graham, 2006, pp. 8-10) distinguished six essential benefits of BL. First, BL presents pedagogical richness. That is, some models of BL, for instances, are designed to enable learners to go through three phases; online self-paced learning to acquire background information, F2F learning lab favors active learning and experiences instead of lecture, and online learning

and support for transferring the learning to the workplace setting. Second, BL opens access to knowledge. Third, BL facilitates social interaction. Fourth, BL facilitates personal agency. Fifth, BL offers cost-effectiveness and provides an opportunity for reaching a large, globally dispersed audience in a short period of time with consistent, semi personal content delivery. Finally, BL provides ease of revision.

Furthermore, Carroll (2003) and Johnson (2002) identified “the revolving around accessibility, pedagogical effectiveness, and course interaction.” (p.5). They stated that students can get access to a wide variety of learning resources through their devices that are connected to the internet while being seated to their comfort and safety in their classrooms or even at homes. Moreover, teachers can vary their pedagogy and enhance it by accessing libraries and databases, using the various media types available, and managing their classrooms electronically.

Similarly, Wingard (2004) added that the idea of accessibility motivates students as:

They like to have the ability to access course materials anytime, anyplace, and are positive about the convenience and flexibility this provides them. Because blended learning courses help in providing them with the flexibility they need to juggle jobs, school and family (p. 27).

Another advantage suggested by Poon (2013) that BL is a principal redesign of the instructional model with a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered (as cited in Banditvilai, n. d). A transformation of the role of the teacher from lecturer to facilitator enables the students to actively engage in their learning and take more responsibility for

their own learning while receiving support and encouragement from a facilitator (Moore, Akhurst & Powell, 2010).

To conclude, given the widespread existence of social media, BL offers the learners an appropriate challenge can have positive results in terms of learning outcomes in academic settings.

1.9.2 Challenges of Blended Learning

Despite the aforementioned benefits BL can provide, it is charged with potential pitfalls. Adopting BL strategy by instructors revealed some difficulties and challenges which might have some effects on the quality of the learning process and may hinder its expansion and application in different learning settings.

Graham et al. (2005) classifies the challenges that encounter BL strategy into the role of live collaboration, the role of learner selection and self-organization, the need for models for sustenance and training, the need to create balance between novelty and production, the need for cultural adaptation, and the skill to handle the digital world. Though being part of the 'net generation', many students still prefer to stay in their comfort space when it comes to education. Students' resilience and lack of interest can be very frustrating for enthusiastic teachers.

Biligin (2013) notes that if students use an online program for the first time they will show a lot of dissatisfaction. It seems that although students today are very technology oriented in their daily lives, they may not be as eager in their learning (cited in Hockly, 2014).

Another major challenge that might face BL education is the teachers' reluctance to indulge in technology and integrate it in their teaching. Many teachers particularly those from older generations are hesitant when they are asked to use technology in their classes. Some feel threatened that their lack of technological abilities will be easily exposed by

their tech-savvy students (Abbas, 2014). This challenge is referred to by Prensky (2001) as the 'digital native and digital immigrant divide'. Prensky regards it as "the single biggest problem facing education today" and he raises a crucial question "what should happen? Should the Digital Native students learn the old ways, or should their Digital Immigrant educators learn the new? Unfortunately, no matter how much the Immigrants may wish it, it is highly unlikely the Digital Natives will go backwards" (p.3)

For this reason, instructors, supported by their organizations, should take this issue into consideration and take the initiative to work harder to develop their technological skills in order to fit in the new teaching situation. Finally, other factors might play a role in the success or failure of any BL environment.

Conclusion

BL provides a new and an innovative teaching as well as learning method. It helps instructors easily manage teaching/learning as well as monitor student performance. Throughout this chapter we have tackled different theoretical standards of the BL method, starting from a theoretical background concerning the method to the elements that are characterizing this method and highlighting its advantages and challenges. Since teachers and learners are the most important participants in the learning process, their roles and perception concerning the recent method had been discussed, in addition to other different aspects related to the method.

**Chapter Two:
Communicative
Competence**

Table of Contents

Introduction	33
2.1 Definition of Communicative Competence Concept	33
2.2 Historical Background	36
2.3 The Components of Communicative Competence	37
2.4 Models of Communicative Competence	39
2.4.1 Dell Hymes' Model	39
2.4.2 Canale and Swain's Model	40
2.4.2 Bachman's Model	41
2.4.4 Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell's Model	42
2.5 Communicative Competence and Foreign Language Teaching (FLT)	43
2.6 Communicative Language Teaching Approach: An Overview	43
2.6.1 Methodological Framework of Communicative Language Teaching ...	46
2.6.1.1 Communicative Language Teaching Activities in EFL Classroom	46
2.6.1.2 Accuracy versus Fluency Activities	48
2.6.1.3 Teachers' and Learners' Roles in CLT Classroom	49
2.7 Communicative Competence and Technology	50
2.7.1 Application of Technology in EFL Classroom	51
2.7.1.1 Moodle: A Virtual Learning Platform	52
Conclusion	53

Introduction

The ever-growing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for English teaching around the world. It should be recognized that learning a second/foreign language is not an easy task, but things become different and somehow easier with the world-wide development of technology and its multiple materials such as: computers, internet, video plays and others. It's noticeable that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) raises educational quality and makes teaching and learning engaging connected to real life.

In this chapter, we consider the following fundamental issues: First, we shed light on theoretical background of communicative competence concept in an attempt to mention some basic definitions of communicative competence concept, its main components and models. Then, we tackle communicative competence and foreign language teaching as well as highlighting communicative language teaching approach. After that, we point out to the pedagogical framework which was developed to achieve a communicative objective in EFL teaching context exposing the main communicative activities that are used in EFL classroom. Finally, as a way to enhance students' communicative competence, a review on ICT is also stated.

2.1 Definition of Communicative Competence Concept

Communicative Competence was first introduced by Dell Hymes on the basis of Chomsky's notions 'competence and performance'. According to Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1983), communicative competence means: "the ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also to know when and where to use these sentences and to whom." (p49). Brown (1994) states, "Communicative Competence then is that aspect of our competence that

enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts.” (Brown, 1994, p. 227).

Nevertheless, to define the notion ‘Communicative Competence’ we can look into the two words that constitute it, of which the word ‘competence’ is the headword. ‘Competence’ can be described as the knowledge, ability or capability while the word ‘Communicative’ has the meaning of exchange or interaction. In this sense, we can say that communicative competence is nothing but a ‘competence to communicate’; that is, having the ability that allows the person to communicate in order to fulfill communicative needs. Accordingly, Hymes (1967) defined “communicative competence as follows:

Communicative competence is experience-derived knowledge that allows speakers to produce utterances (or texts) that are not only syntactically correct and accurate in their meaning but also socially appropriate in culturally determined communication contexts. Communicative competence also allows speakers to understand the speech (or texts) of their communication partners as a function of both the structural and referential characteristics of the discourse and the social context in which it occurs (p. 278).

In Hymes view, the term ‘communicative competence’ deals with the ability to produce utterances. These latter are situationally and socially acceptable, as well as what would normally be held to be part of the speaker’s competence in a specific language.

Since Hymes perspective, a number of researchers have written about communicative competence. For Savignon (1972) has defined communicative competence as “the ability to function in a real communicative setting” (p. 8). This shows that, communicative competence is close to Hymes’ view. She considers communicative competence as an ability functioning in communicative settings and this is totally different

from the linguistic competence by Chomsky (1965) as no one can function in real life situations with only grammatical competence. Savignon (1983) identified that competence is “what one knows” and performance is “what one does” (p. 94).

Furthermore, Terrel and Krashen (1983) have defined communicative competence as the use of language in social communications without grammatical analysis. They related communicative competence to the communication with no focus on the grammatical competence (i.e. communicative competence is manifested in the communication). They proved that the principal goal of language learning should be the development of the communicative skills (Terrell & Krashen, 1983 as cited by Ahmed, 2018).

Canale and Swain (1980), in their turns, conceived communicative competence as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication. This view agreed with Hymes and others that communicative competence consists of various competencies. In another sense, Knowledge refers to one’s knowledge of the various aspects of language and language use, while skill deals with how one can use the knowledge in specific communication.

Likewise, Widdowson (1978) described communicative competence in terms of Usage and Use; where ‘Usage’ refers to one’s knowledge of the linguistic rules, and ‘Use’ relates to one’s ability to use his knowledge of the linguistic rules to communicate effectively (pp. 3-4).

Overall, it is worth mentioning that these definitions vary through the various models of communicative competence as well as the different concepts stated by many scholars.

2.2 Historical Background

Various theories and methods of language learning have been introduced in the field of second/foreign language teaching and learning as a dynamic issue of debate for a long time. Grammar translation method (GLT) occupied the field for many decades and is still of use today. The field has also been dominated by the behaviorist theory and the idea that language is nothing but a social behavior that can be learned as any other behavior through the process of habit formation; and many language drills have been designed for this objective.

Learners may share the same aim of learning a language which is 'being able to use it effectively'. However, this ability has been arisen many questions for both linguists and methodologists. With the later trends in language teaching approaches and methodology and the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in 1970s, communicative competence has become the main aim for second/foreign language learning. Such competence should be reflected in language syllabi and teachers' training, teaching and learning methodologies...etc. Many courses have been changed to employ these new trends in teaching to fulfill the learners' needs in learning a language.

Originally, the term 'communicative competence' was first used by Dell Hymes in 1966 in his lecture delivered in a conference on 'Developing the Language of the Disadvantaged Children', then it was published as a paper entitled 'On Communicative Competence' in 1972 and republished in 2001. Hymes has introduced his notion 'communicative competence' in contrast to Chomsky's distinction between 'competence and performance' and Saussure's dualism (1922) 'langue and parole'. For Chomsky (1965), competence is "the ideal speaker- listener knowledge of his language". He argued

that the focus of the linguistic theory is “to characterize the abstract abilities of the speaker listener which enable him to produce grammatically correct sentences” (p. 3).

As Hymes (1972) point out that communicative competence does not only stand for the grammatical competence but also the sociolinguistic competence. He has stated that “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (Hymes, 2001) and defined communicative competence as “the tacit knowledge” of the language and “the ability to use it for the communication”. Therefore, the term competence as used by Chomsky equals the grammatical or linguistic competence in Hymes’ model which represents only one part of the communicative competence (as cited by Ahmed, 2018).

2.3 The Components of Communicative Competence

As already mentioned, Hymes emphasizes on the point that for language to be used in communication, the speaker must possess both capacity to construct grammatically correct sentences and also the competence to produce socially appropriate utterances. Communication then, depends on communicative competence. This latter can be seen inclusive of many components that should be mastered or at least acknowledged by the speaker-hearer for better understanding in communicative contexts. Several linguists and sociolinguists categorized communicative competence components into: linguistic component, socio-cultural component, strategic component and discursive component. Celce-Murcia (2001) summarized all the above components in the following figure:

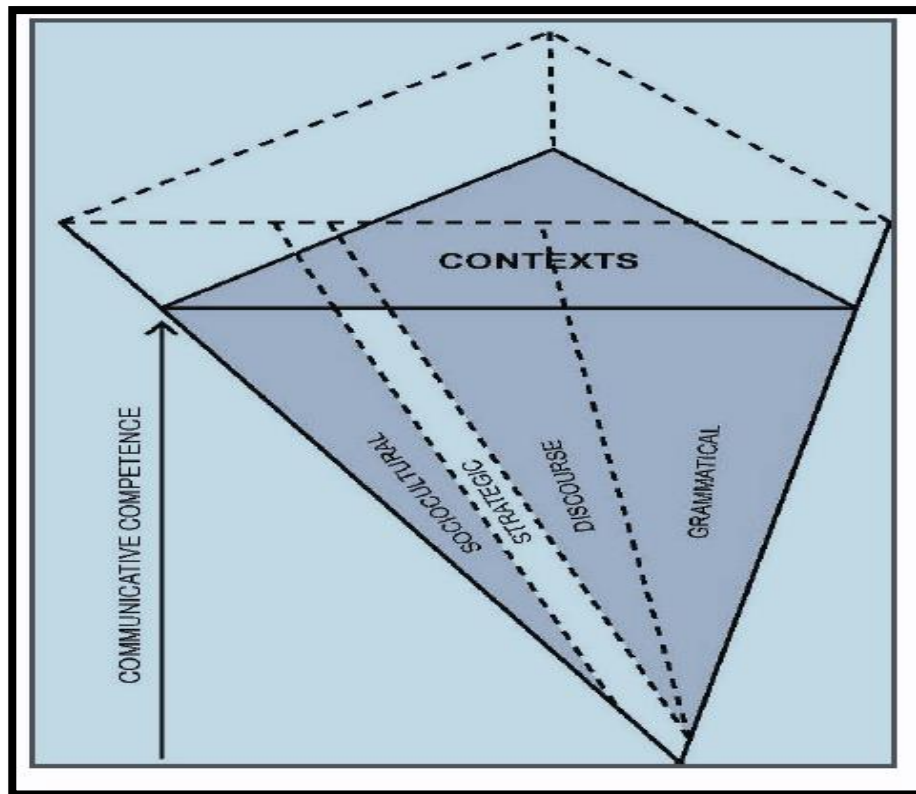


Figure 2.1 Components of Communicative Competence

(Savignon, 2001 in Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 17)

- a. **Linguistic component:** It refers to the ability to master language rules in different aspects (syntax, phonology, morphology, and semantic). “Linguistic component includes knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology” (Shohamy, 1996, p. 143).

- b. **Socio-cultural component:** It refers to the knowledge of social rules and norms of interaction between individuals, including knowledge of cultural history and of the relations between social objects. It is also the ability to use and respond to language appropriately given the setting and topic and the relation between people communicating. For Shohamy (1996) it is “knowledge of socio-cultural rules of use.” (p 143).

- c. Strategic component:** This component covers verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication. Van EK (1995) defines it as the ability to use compensatory to resolve communicative problems and shortcomings.

- d. Discursive component:** A component added by Canale (1983) that represents the ability to combine language structures and language functions into a coherent and cohesive text. Schechter (1996, p. 144) associates her definition to ‘cohesion and coherence’ in written or spoken text.

2.4 Models of Communicative Competence

The concept of communicative competence has been developed over years and different models of the concept have been offered by different scholars:

2.4.1 Dell Hymes’ model of communicative competence

Hymes (1972) while accepting the superiority of Chomsky’s terminology (Competence and Performance) over Desaussure’s content (Langue and Parole). He believes that knowledge of language structure and sociocultural rules are both important in language acquisition. A learner acquires knowledge of language not only as grammatical but also as appropriate. “He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner” (Hymes, 2001, p. 60). By this discussion, Hymes shows that grammatical knowledge or linguistic knowledge in Chomsky’s linguistic theory is not sufficient to explain the child’s competence to accomplish communicative needs. He added that “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (Hymes, 1972, p. 277).

2.4.2 Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence

Canale and Swain (1980) introduced their model of communicative competence which has become the most common for researchers in this field nowadays. The model was not a contrast to Hymes' perspective but it is rather a further development for it. They believe in the importance of the sociolinguistic work that Hymes had emphasized in his model of communicative competence. Canale (1983) restructured the model which was proposed in 1980 and added discourse competence. So he developed a four-dimensional model as per indicated in the figure below:

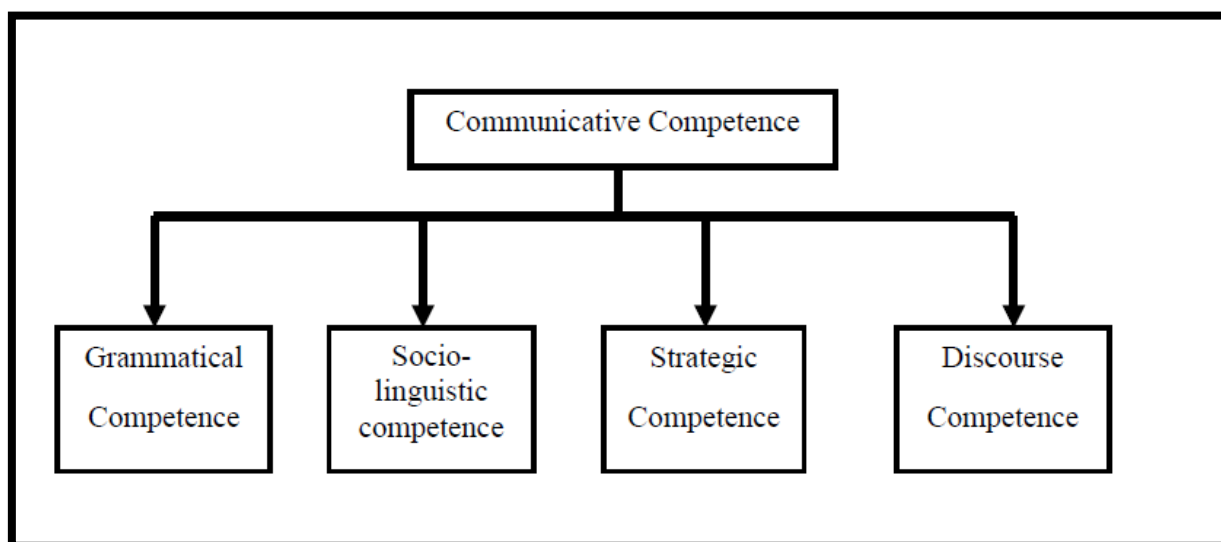


Figure 2.2 Canale and Swain's Model (1980)

As concerns this model of communicative competence, it consists of four competencies: grammatical competence i.e. knowledge of language code; sociolinguistic competence i.e. knowledge of socio-cultural rules of use in a particular context; discourse competence i.e. knowledge of achieving coherence and cohesion in a spoken or written text. Pragmatic competence is particularly included in this model under sociolinguistic competence. Canale and Swain (1980) described it as "socio-cultural rules of use" (p. 30). They added strategic competence i.e. the ability to avoid and correct mistakes in

communication. In this sense, they note that a valid measure of language ability needs to gather these four components.

2.4.3 Bachman's model of communicative competence

Bachman and Palmer (1996) proposed a much more comprehensive model of communicative competence. In Bachman and Palmer's model, 'organisational knowledge' is composed of 'abilities' engaged in a control over formal language structures, which are grammatical and textual knowledge. Grammatical knowledge consists of several areas of knowledge such as knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology, and graphology. Textual knowledge enables comprehension and production of (spoken or written) texts. It covers the knowledge of conventions as well as knowledge of rhetorical organisation. However, pragmatic knowledge refers to abilities for creating and interpreting discourse. It includes two areas of knowledge: knowledge of pragmatic conventions for expressing acceptable language functions and for interpreting the illocutionary power of utterances or discourse (functional knowledge) and knowledge of socio linguistic conventions for creating and interpreting language utterances.

Lastly, strategic knowledge is conceived in the model as a set of metacognitive components. To conclude this illustrative description, one cannot deny that this model is more complex, more comprehensive and much clearer than the model of Canale and Swain. It is preferable because of its detailed and at the same time very organisational description of basic components of communicative competence (as cited by Bagaric, 2007). The figure below summarizes all the above components:

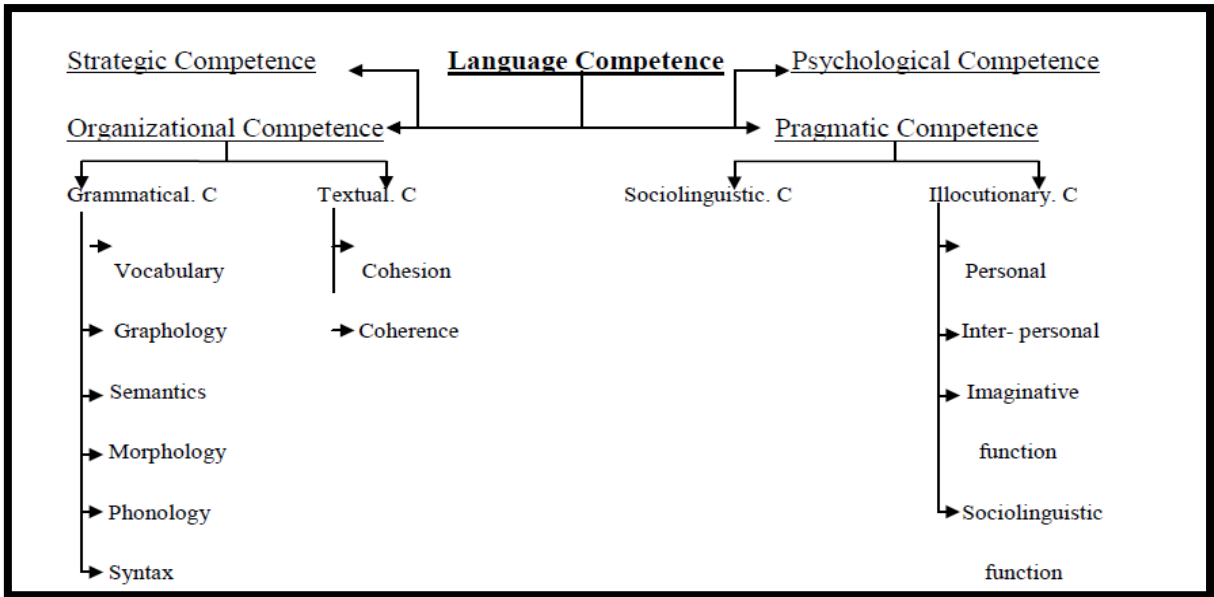


Figure 2.3 Bachman's Model (1990)

2.4.4 Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell's model of communicative competence

Another alternative model of communicative competence belongs to Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995). This representation takes discourse competence as the centre circle and then places socio-cultural competence, linguistic competence, and actional competence as the three components of the surrounding triangle, all of which are regulated by strategic competence in the outer circle as shown in the figure below:

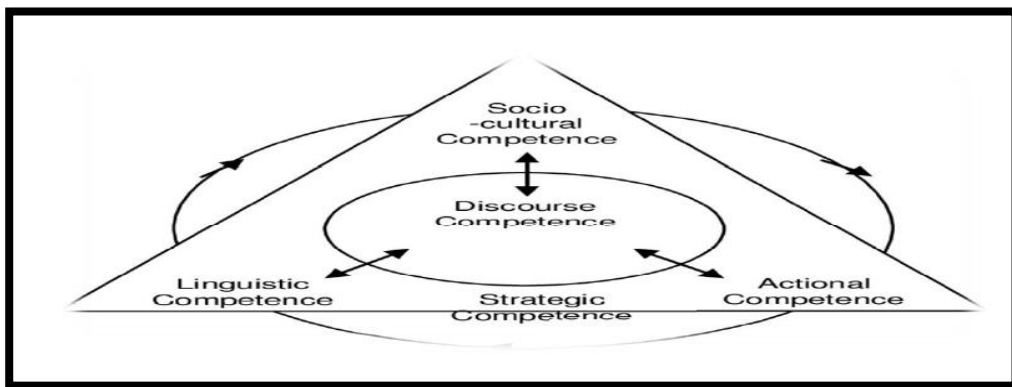


Figure 2.4 Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell's model (1980)

However, in a revision by Celce- Murcia (2007), the mentioned three components were expanded to four with the addition of formulaic competence and transformation of actional competence into interactional competence. Thus, the dynamic implications of this model include cultural instruction, contextually shaped discourse, a balance between language as system and language as formula (i.e. formal grammar and speech acts), while the emphasis in this model is on communication strategies since it has been regarded as the most explicit, in addition, the strategies are more relevant to communicative language use and communicative language teaching (CLT) in general.

2.5 Communicative Competence and Foreign Language Teaching (FLT)

The works of Hymes, Savignon, Canale and Swain and others on the theoretical basis for communicative competence, and the rapid acceptance of such a new principle urged language instructors to apply it on language teaching, and this is what led to what came to be known as the communicative approach or simply communicative language teaching (notional functional approach).

2.6 Communicative Language Teaching Approach: An Overview

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to teach foreign/second language which focuses on communicative competence. It also emphasizes on interaction as a means to teach language. CLT replaced the Situation Language Teaching (SLT) which had been used to teach English as a second/ foreign language. It had been considered as the major British approach. The goal of SLT approach was to teach the basic structures of language. Whereas, in the 1960s, the linguists realized that language taught on the basis of situational learning would have been of no use and it was partly in response to Chomsky's (1965) criticism of structural theories and British functional linguists such as Firth and Holliday, as well as American sociolinguists such as Hymes, Labrov (Brumfit, 1984).

In the mid of 1970s, the scope of Communicative Language Teaching has extended. Both American and British advocates now see it as an approach that aim to make communicative competence the basic goal of language teaching and develop procedure for the teaching of four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication (Richards & Rodgers 1986).

Today, the wide demand for English has created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources. Learners set themselves demanding goals. They want to be able to master English to a high level of accuracy and fluency .To achieve such level becomes a prerequisite for learners' success and advancement in many fields. The demand for an appropriate teaching methodology is therefore as strong as ever. Subsequently, at the level of language theory, CLT has a rich, if somewhat eclectic, theoretical base (Richards & Rodgers 1986) which means it borrows teaching practices from a wide array of methods that have been found effective and that are in accordance with principles of learning.

Recently, this approach is a recognized theoretical model in English language teaching (ELT). Many applied linguists regard it as one of the most effective approaches to ELT. It has served as a major source of influence on language teaching practice around the world. Its primary goal is for learners to develop communicative competence (Hymes 1971). In other words, its goal is to make use of real-life situations that necessitate communication.

In this sense, Littlewood (2007) stated that CLT has been introduced in EFL settings to improve students' abilities to use English in real contexts. This is simply means that the main focus of CLT method is to help the students to learn a language so that they can use it to communicate meaningfully in any real life situation. So it advocates teaching

practices that develop communicative competence in authentic contexts (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Similarly, Richards (2006) also demonstrates: “Communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom.”(p. 2).

Among the basic features of CLT is learner-centered concept. That means, it embraces both the goals as well as the processes of classroom learning. In communication language teaching context, language should be introduced by means of language use through which learners perceive the language system and apply it to their real conversation (Widdowson, 1978). Accordingly, Nunan (1991) claimed that “CLT is usually characterized as a broad approach to teaching, rather than as a teaching method with a clearly defined set of classroom practices”. He suggested the basic features of this approach, and listed some characteristics of classroom practices, such as focusing on learning to communicate through interaction, engaging learners in learning process (making the learner an active element in the classroom), and also making learners’ personal experience an important element in the classroom learning. As these features show, the communicative approach is concerned with the unique individual needs of each learner who can acquire the desired skills rapidly and effectively if we apply the idea of making the language relevant to the world and the outside environment rather than making it relevant only to the classroom.

To sum up, the major focus while using CLT approach is on the learners. The teacher should create situations which help to promote communication; hence, he should give activities such as role play which help the learners to learn the language in social context. Overall, Communicative activities enable the learners to attain communicative

objectives of the curriculum, engage learners in communication, and require the use of such communicative processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction (Richards & Rodgers 1986, p. 76).

Therefore, since our goal in this research work is to focus on teaching competence in communication, we will describe the main ideas of the CLT approach (the functional-notional approach).

2.6.1 Methodological Framework of Communicative Language Teaching

2.6.1.1 Communicative Language Teaching Activities in EFL Classroom

In CLT approach, communicative activities are important to stimulate learners' abilities in both linguistic as well as communicative aspects in the English class, and these activities should be ranged from easy to more complex based on the level of the students. Moreover, teachers should provide their students with constant scaffolding and feedback for each activity they are involved in (Banciu & Jireghie, 2012). A suggested framework of CLT by Lebbal (2006, p. 37) contains pre-communicative activities and communicative activities:

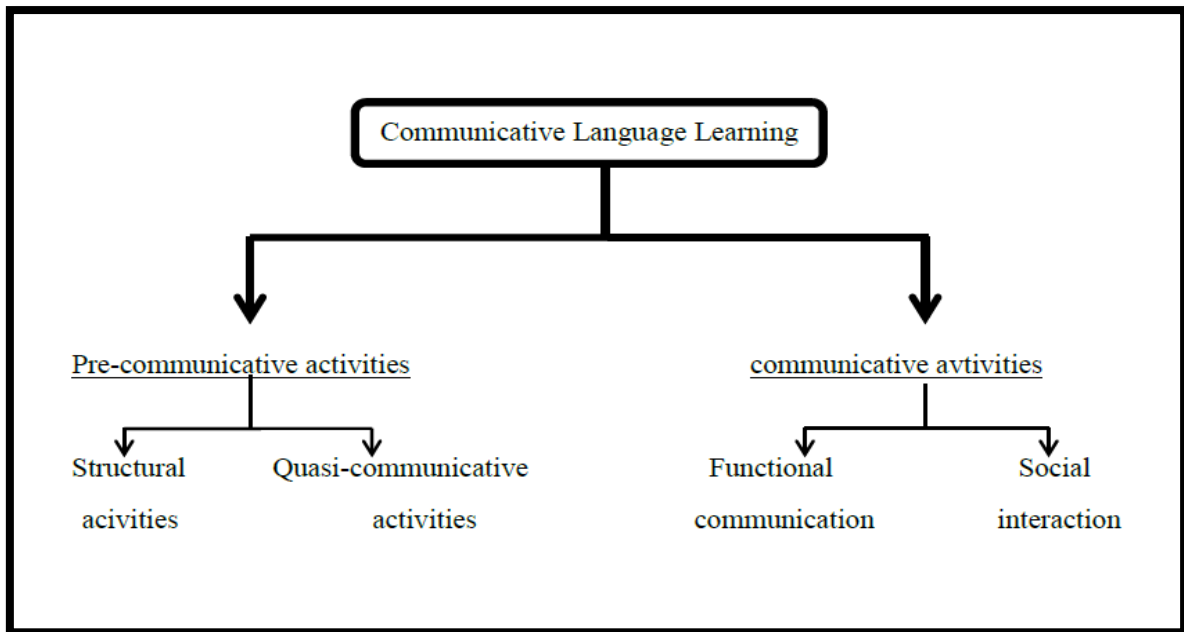


Figure 2.5 A Suggested Framework of CLT Approach

(Lebbal, 2006, p. 37)

- a) Pre-communicative activities:** These activities are used as a kind of preparation for communication activities, through which the learner practises some activities before being able to communicate, they cover two categories of activities: Structural activities that include grammar rules to enhance the learners' linguistic knowledge (regular/irregular verbs, tenses...etc). While, in quasi-communicative activities the learner apply the grammatical rules in social contexts in the classroom. In this stage, learners have an acceptable level of communicative abilities to arrange grammatically correct sentences in social context.
- b) Communicative activities:** The focus in this kind of activities is on the learners' abilities in communication. They include functional activities that enable learners to learn the different language functions; for example, greeting, thanking, complaining...etc and then use them in communication in the classroom. Social

interaction activities are such activities whose goal is to focus on the social interaction among learners. Thus, learners will be able to interact with each other about mutual personal topics. Besides, learners must pay attention to the context and the roles of the people involved, to attend to such things as formal versus informal language (Littlewood, 1981).

Most of the activities discussed above reflect an important aspect of classroom tasks in CLT, namely that they are designed to be carried out in pairs or small groups.

2.6.1.2 Accuracy versus Fluency Activities

Amongst the main goals of CLT is to develop fluency in language use. Richards (2006) states that “fluency is natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his /her communicative competence.” (p. 14). He adds “fluency is developed by creating classroom activities in which students must negotiate meaning, use communication strategies, correct misunderstandings, and work to avoid communication breakdowns.” This means that fluency maintains the learners’ ability to communicate effectively in a given context. Fluency practice can be contrasted with accuracy practice, which focuses on creating correct examples of language use.

In terms of differences between activities that focus on fluency and those that focus on accuracy, Richards categorizes them into: activities focusing on fluency and activities focusing on accuracy; the first category of activities reflects natural use of language that seeks to relate language use to context. These activities focus on meaningful use of language in achieving communication. The second type of activities, however, reflects classroom use of language which does not require meaningful communication. It focuses on the formation of correct examples of language out of context.

2.6.1.3 Teachers' and Learners' Roles in CLT Classroom

The type of classroom activities suggested in CLT involves new roles in the classroom for teachers and learners.

For teachers in a communicative classroom have totally different roles from their counterpart in the traditional classroom. The teacher interacts “with students, giving feedback, offering solutions and assign speaking in collaborative way” (Gutierrez, 2005, p. 7). Furthermore, Littlewood (1981) asserted that the teacher is also a guide, a planner, an organizer, an inspector, an assessor, a prompter, a resource, a facilitator of learning, an instructor, a curriculum developer, a classroom manager a consultant and a monitor (p. 92-93). Basically, teachers' main goal in Communicative Approach is to enable students to communicate effectively.

Widdowson (1978, p. 105) claimed that the challenge for second/ foreign language teaching is whether we can arrange learning opportunities in such a way that learners benefit the development of communicative competence. To do that, the teacher encourages his learners to speak and express their ideas and opinions without emphasis on grammar and spelling mistakes. Widdowson (1978) also suggested “teachers must focus on communication and meaning rather than accuracy” (p. 19). Another role of the teacher is that he/she should make the classroom more comfortable and enjoyable environment in order to motivate learners by creating communicative activities which aim to develop their confidence in communication. In this context, Simmons and Page (2010) suggest some activities such as role-play, interviews, information gap, games, language exchanges, surveys pair-work...etc.

In communicative classroom, learners are expected to participate in the communication process actively as the essence of CLT is the process of communication

rather than mastery of language forms. Therefore, they are required to speak and communicate rather than just repeat phrases. “The students do most of the speaking, and frequently the scene of a classroom during a communicative exercise is active” Widdowson (1978, p. 53). Students are encouraged to interact with each other and with the teacher so as they learn from each others’ mistakes, they are required to participate in classroom communicative activities and be productive rather than receptive learners. They also should seek for communication opportunities outside the classroom with native speakers through different means of communication technology in order to learn the second language pronunciation (fluency, accuracy) and social rules and cultural norms (appropriateness), in order to use them inside the classroom while performing communicative tasks.

2.7 Communicative Competence and Technology

With the advent of ICTs and web-based materials, developing communicative skills in English has been seen essential for different academic and professional fields. Saeed and Congman (2013) emphasize that “Communicative competence in the target language is more demanded now than ever before.”

Improving communicative skills has become of huge importance for EFL teachers in classes since it is the way in which students can convey information and negotiate meaning in different contexts (Brown, 1994). Institutions, teachers and students nowadays recognize that “graduates with good communication skills are in a better position to explore new avenues in this highly economized society” (Saeed & Congman, 2013). Thus, the need to help learners to develop satisfactory communicative competence in the target language has increased significantly the responsibility of the English language teacher and means a new challenge in the classroom.

Consequently, it is essential that the education sector keep apace of the global technological revolution by adopting modern technological means such as computerization, e-learning, multi-media devices, mobile phones, videos, and social media, to optimize EFL instruction and equip teachers to connect with classroom language learners in a systematic and advanced way. As claimed by Lamri (2015): “With the availability and utility of the new technological supports, today’s learners are labeled the digital generation; their main communication activities are done through digital texts by exchanging SMSs or emails” (p. 53).

2.7.1 Application of Technology in EFL Classroom

Though the idea of integrating ICTs in EFL classes was beyond perception some decades ago, nowadays EFL classes seem to be boring and dull without the use of technology. This technology provides a great opportunity to conduct research for effective teaching and learning, as well as increasing access and reducing costs. A variety of technological tools are applied to help EFL learners improve their language skills. These tools are worth mentioning comprise English language learning websites, Computer-Assisted Language Learning programs, presentation software, electronic dictionaries, chatting and email messaging programs, CD-players, and learning video-clips (Nomass, 2013). However, only through using appropriate methodology along with teachers’ management applied in the classroom that the positive outcomes of this tools can be achieved. Particularly, e-learning opened the use of learning platforms that allowed interaction and effective communication such as Moodle,Microsoft teams and Zoom platform.

2.7.1.1 Moodle: A virtual learning platform

Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is free software to support teaching / learning process. Moodle is an open source learning management system (LMS), meaning it is free to anybody under the terms of the General Public License (Brandt, 2005). Many institutions have moved to the Moodle system and usage has increased since its beginning in 2003.

Biskra University, as most of Algerian universities, has been instructed to perform an online teaching/learning process as a step towards reducing the spread of the Corona disease. The rising concern of the pandemic has urged the reliance on the “shift- system” which is divided into F2F in-class and on-site learning (15/15), i.e. they offer students to attend F2F classes through groups; 15 days for each group alternately. Therefore, the students are able to benefit from BL courses; associated mainly with modules of the fundamental unit (Oral, grammar, phonetics, reading, linguistics...).

The government recognizes the increasing importance of online learning, in addition to traditional classes, in this dynamic world through regular, established e-Learning platforms, especially Moodle platform. This system provides a platform to facilitate interaction and create a dynamic learning environment for F2F classroom and blended course formats, as well as online courses, where teachers can create online study rooms, make teaching tools available and propose interactive tasks such as forums, creating wikis and tests. For students, this environment facilitates communication and the exchange of knowledge, through interaction in the teaching/learning process. Thus, the BL setting has proven its usefulness and also served as a viable option, mainly in the time of crisis.

Conclusion

It is assumed that mastering communicative competence is the ultimate goal of language learning. To achieve this competence, teachers develop creative teaching strategies to encourage students' participation in classroom activities. That is, encouraging EFL students to be active in all classroom activities means that the teacher needs autonomous learning of students to participate in the classroom. By integrating ICTs, especially with the application of e-learning, teachers can build close relationships with students in order to enhance their communication. In this regard, technological teaching methods are also ideal for teachers because they have enough time to work individually with students who are struggling.

Overall, this chapter is intended to be a theoretical complement to the basic role of ICTs in teaching EFL students and applying CLT to improve students' communicative competence, then comes the practical part of the study which concerns the research design, analysis and suggestions. The next chapter then is dedicated to the practical part of the study that includes the analysis of the collected data and suggestions.

Chapter Three:

Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

Table of Contents

Introduction	56
3.1 Research Design and Methodology	56
3.2 Sample of the Study	56
3.3 Classroom Observation	57
3.3.1 Description of Classroom Observation	58
3.3.2 Analysis of Classroom Observation	60
3.3.3 Discussion of Classroom Observation	65
3.4 Students' Questionnaire	67
3.4.1 Administration of Students' Questionnaire	67
3.4.2 Description of Students' Questionnaire	68
3.4.3 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire	69
3.4.4 Discussion of Students' Questionnaire	95
3.5 Teachers' Questionnaire	96
3.5.1 Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire	96
3.5.2 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire	97
3.5.3 Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire	97
3.5.4 Discussion of Teachers' Questionnaire	118
Conclusion	119
General Conclusion	121
Pedagogical Recommendations	122
Limitations of the Study	124
References	
Appendices	
ملخص الدراسة	

Introduction

The current chapter is devoted for the field work and the analysis of the obtained data achieved through investigating the effect of BL in enhancing students' communicative competence. The basic aim of this work is to answer the research questions proposed in the present research and confirm its hypothesis. More precisely, the findings are based on observing students' communicative competence during their oral expression session. Hence, we have selected for the present work two data gathering tools that are; classroom observation, in order to have more reliable and adequate data, as well as two (2) questionnaires are administered for both teachers and students who have experienced BL to determine their attitudes towards the proposed approach.

3.1 Research Design and Methodology

The present research is conducted through a descriptive research methodology and a qualitative research approach as they are appropriate for the nature of the study which is mainly based on the theoretical part. Likewise, BL is a new approach; that is not largely used in all the Algerian Universities. Thus, opinions That will be earned in the research will be significantly helpful in the future studies of the higher education and hence the findings can be representative to a true and full picture of using BL to improve EFL learners' communication skills and their autonomous learning as well.

3.2 Sample of the Study

The present research work targets Third year LMD students and teachers at M.K.U of Biskra, Department of English, during the academic year 2020-2021.

Learners' profile

Third year EFL students are selected at the level of M.K.U of Biskra to participate in the present research work. The sample is chosen randomly consists of fifty three (53) students. However, the reason behind opting for this sample is that they have experienced the importance of ICTs inside and outside the classroom and also its absence. Particularly, third year students had witnessed the potential use of e-learning combined with F2F class during the critical period of nonviolence "Hirak" movement and notably with the serious outbreak of the global pandemic COVID-19 as well. Thus, they are more aware of the effectiveness of both virtual and F2F learning in improving EFL communicative competence to master the language effectively. Therefore, they serve as the most suitable sample.

Teachers' profile

The target sample of teachers consists mainly of ten (10) teachers (oral expression and other modules) at the Department of English, University of Biskra. Besides, most of them their experience in teaching English ranges from 5 to 10 years, holding different academic degrees and different ages too. They are selected as they often integrate e-learning with F2F traditional class through posting online courses, particularly videos, via Moodle platform, as well as they encourage their students to enhance F2F interaction with technology such as: online activities, power point, videos ...etc.

3.3 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is opted for this research work as a method to determine whether BL is an effective approach to improve students' communicative abilities or not, for the sake of accomplishing this study and proving the validity of our hypothesis. Consequently, in order to carry out the observation, we have used a checklist as a tool which helps us to gain adequate and valid data. This checklist consists of four items

(sections) that should be observed. Thus, we used the prepared checklist within both the traditional as well as the blended classroom. For the former, a checklist is used to get enough data concerning students' communicative competence. While the latter, to check the positive effect of BL model on students' communicative skills.

Population and Sampling

We have selected second year EFL students; precisely group eleven (11) at the level of MKU of Biskra to be observed as representative to our current research work. Unfortunately, we were obliged to choose second year students instead of third year ones because of the limited time .i.e., third year students were finished their study shift during Ramadan. Hence, we have applied the classroom observation during their oral expression sessions. The chosen sample consists of (14) students, but not all of them were attending their sessions.

3.3.1 Description of Classroom Observation

As far as the present classroom observation which conducted in order to reinforce the obtained data of questionnaires, we fairly attended the oral expression module so as to have a closer look at the EFL teaching/learning process through two sides. First, observing the teacher's practices and teaching behaviour. Second, noticing the learners' reactions and attitudes towards the proposed method. More precisely, observing their communicative competence when integrating e-learning with F2F learning in the target language through tasks and activities during the classroom session. Therefore, to accomplish the current fieldwork observation, we attended only two observational sessions because of the limited time.

The first observational session took place within the traditional class, which started in April 12th 2021 and lasted one hour from 9:00 to 10:00. Throughout this session, the

teacher used his ordinary way of teaching where he relied on handouts to present the lesson. Practically, the teacher started with warming up stage by providing his students with some items related to the target lesson “brainstorming”. Then, he moved to supply the students with activities to be done during class time. Eventually, the teacher ended the session with checking students’ attendance. In the first session, the teacher provided students with handouts that served the nature of tasks. In other words, interactional discussions and various activities used to present a well-structured lesson.

On the other hand, one session was also devoted to blended classroom which took place in April 13th from 9:00 to 10:00. The session took place in CEIL room where 15 students attended the session and other were absent. The class atmosphere was appropriate; it was arranged in a horseshoe form that helped the students to realize their work comfortably. Basically, the teacher paved the way to the lesson by attracting students’ attention to the topic, through recalling what the posted video was about. Next, for the sake of motivating and engaging his students, the teacher provided them with different instructions and activities to be corrected, after discussing the activities they correct them.

Moreover, the instructor boosted his students with feedback and further information concerning the tackled lesson. Also, besides to the remarks given by the teacher, this latter opened the way to his students to interact with each other through group discussion by discussing similar-related topics .i.e., each group was asked to describe specific topic and perform it in front of its classmates, as by giving comments or suggestions to the topic. Lastly, the teacher ended the session with calling his students’ names to check their attendance. Concerning the observational session of implementing blended classroom, students had already received an online video, via Moodle platform.

The posted video was authentic; prepared by native speakers. Different reasons behind the selection of this video which based on the dimensions of authenticity, comprehensibility, clarity and easiness; so that students could easily understand and get the ideas presented for them. The video took time from 10 to 12 minutes, introducing the topic of “Good manners” which was rich of various vocabulary and expressions related to the target topic. Besides, the students had already informed and introduced to the new method of learning by the teacher. In fact, most of the students watched the online video at home, but not all of them due to different common problems such as the lack/absence of internet access. To sum it up, it was obviously noticed that in implementing any new method of teaching/learning process, it is natural that several obstacles will occur .However; these obstacles that appeared in the process to the blended classroom were not a big issue thanks to the students’ collaboration among each other and the continuous help from the teacher.

3.3.2 Analysis of Classroom Observation

Part One: Traditional Classroom

First Item: Classroom Atmosphere

As we have observed in traditional class, the physical setting was not appropriate to fulfil the given tasks and activities. In this sense, the classroom environment had negative effect on the students’ participation. That is, the oral session was conducted at one of the BC’s rooms, where the classroom’s seating was not arranged for an effective interaction. The reason behind this problem refers back to the lack of well-equipped and organized classrooms such as the lack of ICT tools where student can undertake his/her tasks appropriately. Also, teaching oral session needs to be carried out at the level of the language laboratory which serves the nature of the given activities.

Second Item: Teacher's Role

Overall, the teacher management of his classroom was effective. In other words, he could totally make his class under control. Though the observed facts that the teacher talking time exceeded students' talking in the class, and also the teacher could not provide all his students with an immediate feedback for the activities whenever it is needed because of the limited time of the session, he kept motivating and encouraging them to communicate in the classroom.

Third Item: Students' Reaction

Students' reaction or participation in the classroom is one of the main items that should be considered in the checklist. During the observational sessions of the traditional classroom, it was noticed that most of the students were not motivated .i.e.; only 5 or 6 students among 15 students were participating and showing their interest in the class. Although, the teacher was trying to motivate them in order to increase their participation by asking questions. However, they appeared reluctant and demotivated. Such passive reaction from the students may be associated to different problems like the fear of making mistakes in front of the whole class, students' personality which can also affect them negatively; for instance students' shyness, anxiety, and lack of self-confidence.

Fourth Item: Students' Communicative Competence

As we have mentioned above, although the teacher was making great efforts along the traditional session to keep the students engaged in order to communicate effectively, most of them were passive so that the classroom was mainly teacher-centred. Based on what we have observed, many students showed their lack of interest (they were keeping silent, playing with their mobiles, or talking to each other). Despite the teacher's attempts

to boost students' communication and to keep them talking; students appeared reluctant and unenthusiastic to interact or discuss about the topic. Besides the reasons that we have stated in the third item, other basic obstacles may face the student is the lack of fluency and/or accuracy. The former is the lack of fluency to communicate in the target language. This simply may due to the fact that students have not accustomed to dedicate time to practise the speaking skill of the target language outside the classroom. Whereas, the latter is the lack of accuracy associated with the grammar rules and pronunciation where students do not use tenses appropriately or even utter the words incorrectly. The reason behind the lack of accuracy may be related to the way of learning grammar rules, which are learned in isolation. In other words, students did not practise the rules in given contexts.

Additionally, another factor behind students' unwillingness to participate in the classroom discussion may due to the type of topics tackled. Also, it may be due to the method of teaching itself which was not suitable to foster students' communicative abilities. Basically, unsuitable classroom atmosphere can hinder the students to participate actively too.

Part Two: Blended Classroom

First Item: Classroom Atmosphere

Throughout the observational session of blended classroom, the learning environment was arranged according to the requirements of the tasks. The session took place at a CEIL classroom. The students were sitting in a form of horseshoe. However, when the session began, the teacher invited them to work in groups (of three students) where they could face each other to undertake the task that was writing a short paragraph

then performing a discussion about various moral issues. After that, the representative of each group was invited to read for the class to share a whole class discussion. Arranging the physical setting can boost the students' motivation and improve their communicative abilities. Consequently, the classroom atmosphere under mix learning strategy can ensure the students' collaboration, individualized feedback, and foster student interaction in the classroom.

Second Item: Teachers' Role

As we have mentioned in the traditional classroom analysis, the teacher hold a control over the whole process so that he managed his classroom effectively. In other words, he offered a comfortable and a friendly atmosphere by providing his students with real and personal experiences to engage them. Furthermore, in the blended classroom, the teacher focused his planning, teaching, and the assessment on the needs and abilities of students in order to make them actively engaged in understanding and connecting to knowledge. Along the observational blended session, the instructor depended largely on the online content "video" that was delivered via Moodle platform to introduce the lesson by motivating his students to communicate effectively. Thus, he acted as a facilitator in order to improve learner-centered learning in the classroom; that is the crucial component of the mixed approach. Also, the teacher provided his students with a positive and immediate feedback to encourage them keeping a continuous discussion.

Unlike the traditional session, the timing division in blended classroom is mostly devoted for practice. We noticed that the time allocated for the stages of the session was divided into: 10 minutes were devoted for warming up phase where the teacher introduced the different parts of the session. Also, 10 minutes dedicated for recalling the main ideas of the topic introduced in the video. The students practiced the tasks individually or in groups

taking time of 25 minutes. The rest 15 minutes were offered for the students to provide the answers of the activities; correcting them by producing complete meaningful statements. Eventually, the teacher ended up the session with checking students' attendance.

Third Item: Students' Reaction

Based on the observational session under the blended classroom, the students showed their positive willingness as active participants. As they had already learned about the topic of the course through the posted video before the class session, so they were more interacted and motivated in solving the tasks as well as to respond to teacher's instructions and feedback. That is, the students' prior knowledge of the topic boosted their understanding and their communicative skills in the session. We noticed in the traditional classroom, students were most of the time just recipients. Whilst under the blended process, there was a shift from passive receivers to active producers. Likewise, there were some students who did not watch the videos or listen to the tracks, but they were engaged in the discussions and tasks since there was collaboration between students who help and support each other.

Fourth Item: Students' Communicative Competence

All the aforementioned items helped the students to enhance their communicative competence in the blended classroom, where it was clearly noticeable that there was an improvement in students' communicative abilities. More precisely, they were performing their speaking fluency by uttering new and advanced vocabularies along with keeping the flow of communication and interaction without making pauses. Students were confident and engaged in doing their tasks besides their production of full and meaningful sentences

with clear ideas, at the same time they enjoyed their active participation and discussion. Moreover, we noticed that there was a kind of betterment in students' accuracy.

Unlike the traditional class, students used correct grammar rules in the appropriate contexts. In addition to the well-structured sentences and phrases. The factors behind this remarkable improvement may be due to the fact that students had an opportunity to prepare themselves before the session time as they had watched the online video and understood the topic. Also, they had sufficient time to check other sources by themselves so that they seemed more responsible in their learning.

3.3.3 Discussion of the Classroom Observation

According to the classroom observation, the obtained findings showed that the blended model can affect the students' learning process positively when compared to the traditional class. Primarily, the classroom atmosphere had a great influence on the students' performance where we found in a blended classroom, the teacher created an active, joyful and relaxing atmosphere for his students who, in their turns, were actively engaged and motivated to participate in the mixed session. So that there was a kind of flexibility in the learning setting that helped the teacher and the students to interact and communicate effectively. In traditional F2F class however, the surrounding was inappropriate for both the teacher and his students to communicate or undertake the tasks.

Furthermore, the new roles of the teacher in the blended classroom, instead of the ordinary roles in traditional class, contributed widely to the success of the teaching/learning process. The teacher's roles are relatively minimized in the classroom by applying the blended method. The teacher as a facilitator, monitor and supporter helped the students to be active rather than passive participants in the class and even outside, since the

instructor supported his students to use technology (using online video via Moodle platform) as well as encouraged autonomous and collaborative learning.

Likewise, since the blended model offers the students an opportunity to recognise the content of the lesson at home, during class time students were actively participating in the class work. In comparison to the F2F class, most of the session is devoted for lecturing with a few practise, students do not find enough time to recognize all parts of the lesson. Whereas the blended classroom devotes most of the session for practice and problem solving (interacting, analysing, discussing.), with few lecturing whenever necessary, since it is in a video format.

Based on the previous facilities offered by the blended classroom, students' engagement was boosted. From their positive attitude to participate and to work in class individually or in groups, the students could reach an effective learning process. As we noticed, even those who did not watch the posted video, they were engaged because there was a collaborative work among the students. Also, as a result to the data provided by the checklist, it is prominent that timing division in the blended classroom differs from that in the traditional one. In other words, both began by 10 minutes for warming up the students.

On the one hand, in the blended classroom the teacher after that recapitulates the different ideas in the video in 10 minutes, and then students offered time from 30 to 35 minutes to do their tasks. Finally, the remaining minutes were allotted to teacher's remarks to end up the session. On the other hand, in the traditional classroom, about 35 minutes were devoted to teacher's talking time including presenting, explaining and answering the tasks' questions, whereas 15 minutes allotted for recognising the tasks and answering them.

Accordingly, we observed there was a kind of improvement in students' communicative competence in terms of fluency where students kept their flow of communication simultaneously with new and advanced words, unlike in F2F classroom where they speak less or with making pauses. Moreover, students used correct grammar rules, the appropriate tenses and also a well-formed structure of sentences and phrases.

Overall, as the blended classroom integrates an educational video as a tool for delivering the lesson using the virtual technology of Moodle platform which based on specific criteria (easiness, authenticity, pedagogic... etc.); therefore, students have the opportunity to check grammar rules, the pronunciation and vocabularies tackled that are used in the video, as well they become self-reliant learners . The findings proved that all these facilities originated from the advantages of combining an online with F2F learning method affected greatly the enhancement of students' communicative skills and autonomy.

3.4 Students' Questionnaire

3.4.1 Administration of Students' Questionnaire

As the main tool in our research work, a designed questionnaire administered to students to collect valuable data from their learning background. Therefore, we designed an online questionnaire for third year EFL students aimed at determining students' attitudes towards BL model as an approach to enhance their communicative competence. This students' questionnaire has been administered on April 11th, 2021 through the online application of "Google forms" via Face book group of third year students of M.K.U, Biskra but only fifty-three students have answered it. Thanks to those respondents who demonstrate their collaboration by providing us with valuable responses, so our research fulfilled through their perceptions and attitudes towards the integration of BL in EFL and its effect on their communication abilities.

3.4.2 Description of Students' Questionnaire

The designed questionnaire structure is based on the theoretical part of the present research work. It consists of two sections which involve twenty questions. All the questions are either close-ended where the students were asked to tick Yes/No, select the right answer(s), or open-ended questions in which the respondents had to justify their answers in their own words.

The two sections of the questionnaire are structured as follows:

Section One: Blended Learning

This section is devoted to gather information about the students' perceptions towards BL model, contains nine questions. The first two questions paved the way to know from the students the most used tool in delivering an online course by the teachers. The third question stands for students' views about the best method of learning (F2F, online learning or the combination of both methods). Questions from four to seven are set to collect information about students' impression towards the use of video as a pedagogical tool in their learning process, at the same time tackling both positive and negative aspects of this tool ,and hence arrive at the shortcomings of e-learning as well. Questions number eight, nine and ten aim at summarizing the norms of an effective BL model to the students, checking if their teachers apply those norms and so reach the result whether their communicative competence has increased or decreased through the teachers' application of BL norms.

Section Two: Students' Attitudes towards the Effect of Blended Learning on Students' Communicative Competence

The second section is dedicated for identifying the students' attitudes and views towards the effect of BL on their communicative competence. It encompasses ten questions (from question ten to twenty) that investigate students' communication in the oral session, tackling the teachers' feedback. It also inquires about the factors that affect the students' motivation and engagement to participate in the class. Besides, this part of the questionnaire tackles to determine if the students feel themselves autonomous learners since they are learning in their own pace .Eventually, this final section basically targets to explore the students' attitude to get maximum statistics in regards to the implementation of BL as a method in enhancing their communicative abilities.

3.4.3 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Blended Learning

Q1. Do your teachers post online courses via Moodle Platform?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	48	91%
b) No	5	9%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.1: Students' Responses about Teachers' Delivery of Online Courses via Moodle Platform

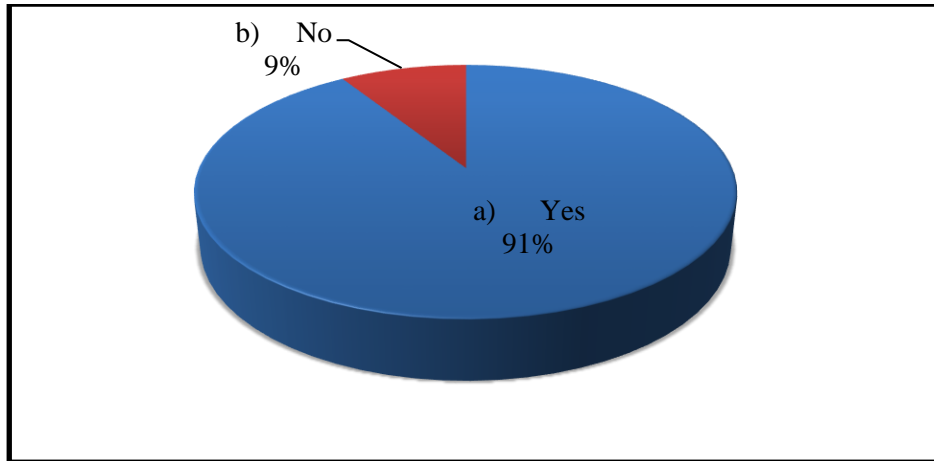


Figure 3.1: Students Responses about Teachers' Delivery of Online Courses via Moodle Platform

Results of item (3.1) reveal that the majority of the students (48), with a great percentage of 91%, confirm that their teachers do integrate e-learning mode to deliver courses using Moodle website platform. Conversely, only 5 respondents, who represent a few percentage of 9%; disconfirm that their teacher deliver online courses via Moodle. Subsequently, the overwhelming majority of the participants who respond with “Yes” were asked to answer the following sub-question to elucidate the findings.

If yes, how often do they use it?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Always	13	27%
b) Sometimes	28	58%
c) Rarely	7	15%
Total	48	100%

Table 3.1.1: The Frequency of Teachers' Online Courses Delivery via Moodle Platform

In order to reinforce the results, an additional question is asked about the frequency of teachers' delivery of online courses via Moodle. Table 3.1.1 above displays that, more than half of the students (58%) admitted that their teachers sometimes post online courses through Moodle virtual. This simply means that teachers are up to date to integrate e-learning sources as an effective teaching method to get their students involved in their learning process through suggesting recent online platforms. Likewise, 27% of students stated that their teachers always post online lessons. However, few percentages of 15% of respondents noted that their teachers rarely rely on online technology. This is probably due to the fact of unfamiliarity of some teachers with technology, unavailability of technology tools, or limited internet access problems. Therefore, we can deduce that teachers' online courses delivery varies from one teacher to another.

Q2. How do your teachers explain the same online courses in classroom sessions?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Video	17	32%
b) Video conference	28	53%
c) Audio	7	13%
d) No answer	1	2%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.2: Types of ICT Tools Teachers Use in the Explanation of Online Course in Classroom

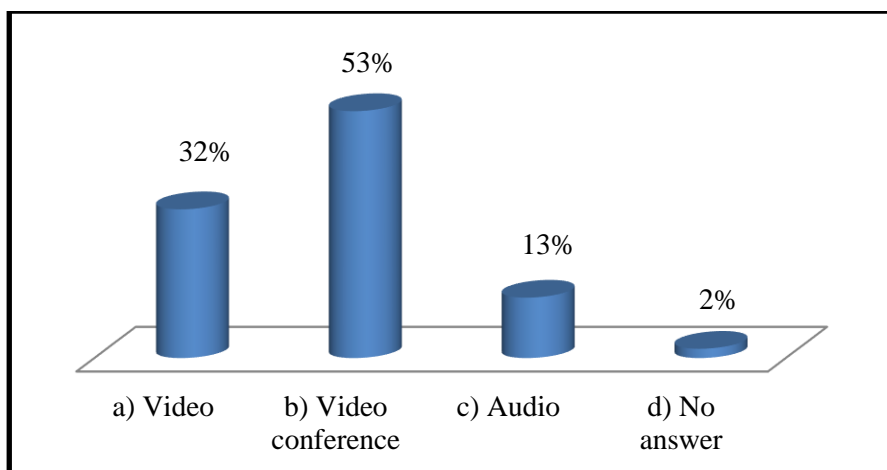


Figure 3.2: Types of ICT Tools Teachers Use in the Explanation of Online Course in Classroom

Table 3.2 and figure 3.2 indicate that the majority of students claimed that their teachers integrating video conference (53%) and videos (32%) as online sources to explain the lesson inside the classroom more than other ICTs. Whereas, 13% claimed that their teachers are using audio tools, meanwhile only one response which represents (2%) from the sample did not answer. As a result, we come across to say that EFL teachers prefer to use video more than audio format or other educational technology. This might imply the awareness of the teachers to the effectiveness of video tools in facilitating their teaching method, as well as boosting the students' motivation and learning process more than any other ICT source. According to the data presented earlier, the participants justified their answers as follows:

Students' justifications

a) For 'Via video'

- Its great way of teaching online. But you need to have active teacher. To present the lectures online. At least in the important modules.
- They post videos on YouTube
- They used to teach us via videos.

- The teachers explain the online courses in the classroom orally and via pictures, search paper, and videos.
- Teachers often post online courses or assignments through videos to enhance our understanding more than any other tools or documents.
- Some teachers bring videos to explain the lesson

b) For ‘Video conference’

- The teacher basically explains the lecture via video conference
- They post online courses
- They send the lectures then we meet online.
- They teach us online via video conference.
- Some of our teachers simply post their courses on Moodle and then we discuss them in classroom. Yet, others prefer to do so plus they prepare video conferences.
- They use video conference through zoom application.
- Usually it takes place in google meet
- They manage a online meeting for students and record this meeting then post it for students who couldn't attend the meeting
- We have zoom conference or via google meet
- They use google meeting
- They explain it via video meeting and if there is problem in understanding the course, they explain it.

Q3. Being a third year EFL student who have witnessed both Face to Face and E-Learning, which one do you like most? (Choose only one answer)

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Face to Face Learning	37	70%
b) E- Learning	4	7%
c) Both	12	23%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.3: Students’ Options for their Learning modes

As indicated in table (3.3), most of the students (37) who encompass the biggest portion of percentage (70%) choose traditional F2F learning. This indicates that students prefer F2F as a type of learning process more than the other types. Opting for F2F mode implies that students still prefer to learn traditionally in the presence of the teacher which find it helpful to overcome any kind of challenges that they may encounter immediately. It can be refers to the lack/absence of internet access too. Additionally, this might mean that they are more aware of this educational instruction compared to other instructions. 12 participants (23%) pointed out their choice to both F2F and online modes of learning. This significant percentage may also interpret that students enjoy learning in such environment to benefit from both F2F and virtual instruction as well. Whilst only four students (7%) declare that they would select online learning, which suggests that either they do not enjoy classroom time or they are employees; the fact that requires from them to attend classroom sessions.

Q4.Does your teacher integrate Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) during the oral session?

Option	Number	Percentage
c) Yes	29	55%
d) No	24	45%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.4: Teachers Integration of ICTs during Oral Sessions

As it is shown in table 3.4, most of the respondents, who are 29 students with percentage of 55%, respond with (Yes). While the rest 24 participants with percentage of

45% answer with (No) that their teachers integrate ICTs during oral expression. That is the majority pointed out that their teachers do use ICT tools in oral sessions.

Q5. Do your teachers post videos via Moodle platform?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	35	65%
b) No	18	35%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.5: Teachers’ Delivery of Online Videos via Moodle platform

Table 3.5 above indicates that the vast majority of the respondents who represent 34 students, with percentage of 65% respond with “Yes”, that is their teachers post online videos via Moodle platform as they may find it an effective way of teaching. Meanwhile, the remaining students 18, under the percentage of 35%, respond with “No”, i.e. they reported that their teachers do not integrate this method in their learning process; this may due to the same factors above-mentioned in item (3.1) (teachers’ unfamiliarity with technology, unavailability of technology tools, or limited internet access problems...) which affect negatively on their choice for this teaching/learning method.

Q6. Do you benefit from videos more than the other formats?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	37	70%
b) No	16	30%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.6: Students’ Option of Video Format

Students were requested to determine whether they benefit from learning the lesson through educational videos comparing to other formats or not. As it is shown in table3.6, the biggest portion of 70% from the participants (37) do confirm their benefit of receiving online video and appreciated it as an effective way to boost their motivation in learning. While 16 students who represent (30%) did not find this tool helpful. This may mean that learning through video format does not fit some students' learning style. The following sub-question is added to elucidate the positive as well as the negative factors influencing their choice of video format.

Please, specify your reason(s)?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) You can watch it whenever you want	24	45%
b) You can stop and rewind it several times	15	28%
c) Listening to native speakers (authentic material)	7	13%
d) Facilitate the topic understanding in a short time	2	4%
e) Time-consuming	0	0%
f) Upload problem	0	0%
g) Poor-quality video	0	0%
h) Internet connection problems	0	0%
i) Different reasons	5	10%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.6.1: Reasons behinds Students' Option of Video Format

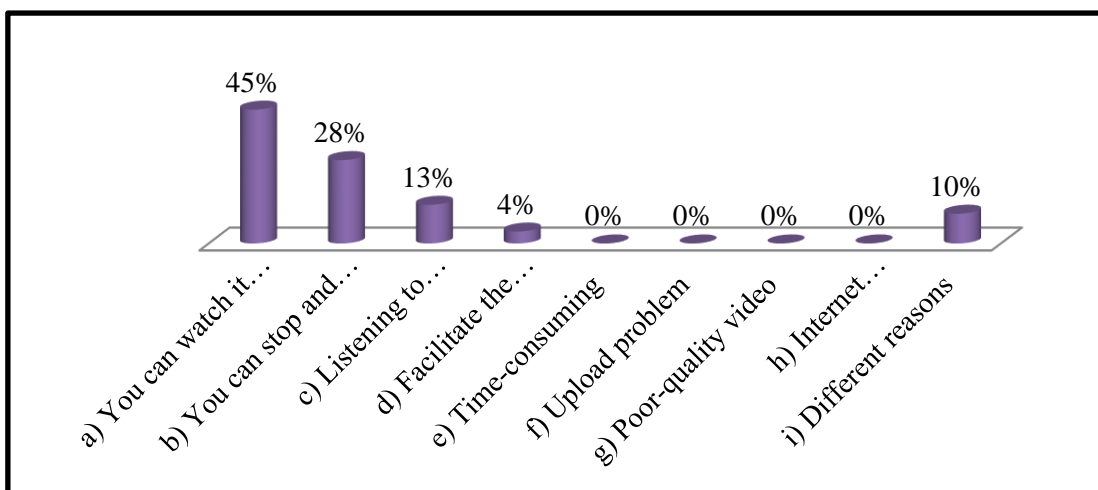


Figure 3.3: Reasons behinds Students’ Option of Video Format

As we notice in table and figure 3.6.1 above, all the students appreciate watching the lesson through online videos for many reasons. 24 students (45%) justified their choice of this tool as they can watch it several times. 15 participants (28%) because they can stop and rewind it whenever it is necessary and needed. Also, 7 students opted for “Listening to native speakers (authentic material)” as a reason of appreciating the lesson in online videos. Only 2 students (4%), however, chose video since this tool “Facilitates the topic understanding in a short time”. Whilst (5) of the respondents (10%) stated different reasons. Below the answers of the students who went with option (i):

Q7.Do you face difficulties during online learning?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	32	60%
b) No	21	40%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.7: Factors Affecting Students’ Online Learning

The purpose behind the above question is to discern EFL students' difficulties during their online learning. On the one hand, 60% participants find that they encounter many hindrances when they learn online. On the other hand, 40% (21 students) indicate that they do not really encounter serious difficulties while learning online. One may deduce different reasons behind the students' hurdles which refer mainly to their lack of internet proficiency knowledge, limited internet access or even unavailable tools for learning online.

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

SA: Strongly agree, **A:** Agree, **N:** Neutral, **D:** Disagree, **SD:** Strongly disagree

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
a) E-Learning courses have to be simple, direct, easy and general.	58%	32%	8%	2%	0%
b) E-Learning course should not exceed 10 minutes in a video form	40%	28%	19%	13%	0%
c) E-exercises delivered by the teacher should be clear and simple.	55%	34%	11%	0%	0%
d) Teachers have to facilitate the method of E-assessment	51%	47%	2%	0%	0%
e) E-assessment includes: yes/no questions – choice questions	36%	41%	15%	8%	0%
f) E-assessment should serve the level of average students	51%	16%	13%	0%	0%
g) E-assessment contains phases	18%	51%	21%	0%	0%
h) Face to Face session should tackle the same E-course but only the difficult points	57%	37%	6%	0%	0%
i) Face to Face assessment must include the difficult points discussed in the class	59%	32%	9%	0%	0%
j) Teacher in Face to Face courses should tackle difficult, complicated and debatable issues	56%	40%	2%	2%	0%
k) Both teachers and learners have to search about debatable issues.	49%	42%	9%	0%	0%

Table 3.8: Extent of Students' Agreement/Disagreement with the Following Statements

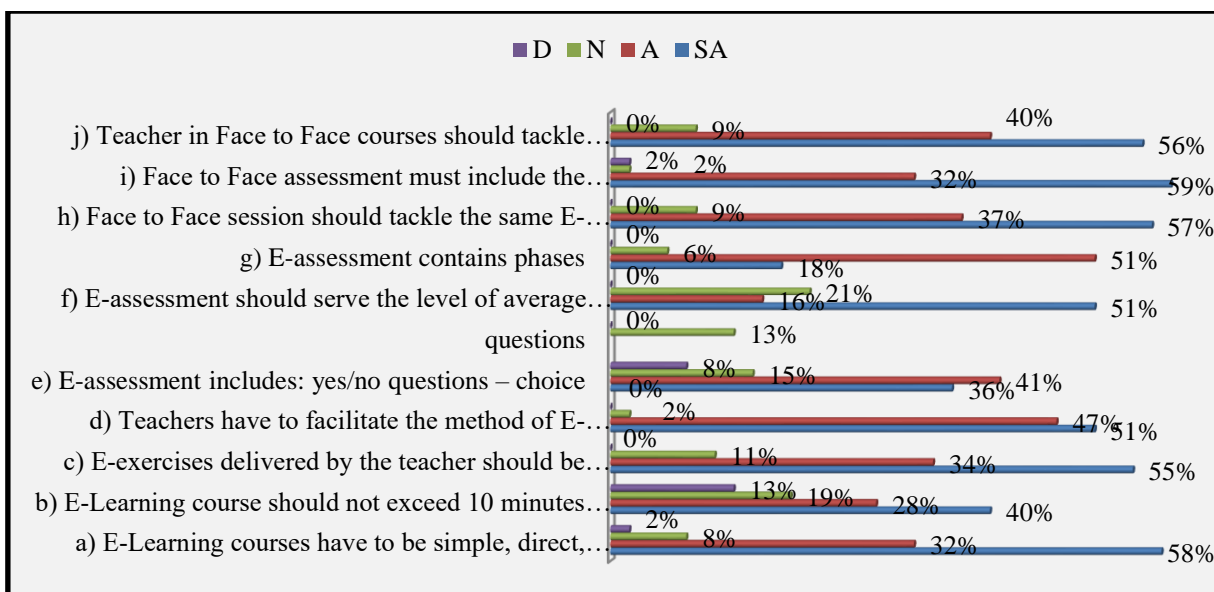


Figure 3.4: Extent of Students' Agreement/Disagreement with the Statements

This question aims at eliciting the students' views about the statements mentioned above in the table (3.8). As we observe in table and figure (3.8), most of the participants are agree/strongly agree with the designed statements. Accordingly, in statement (a) for instance which is about E-Learning courses that have to be simple, direct, easy and general; 58% of the respondents which represent the biggest portion do strongly agree with the statement, 32% agree with it, and 8% are neutral. While the opposed view "disagree" only 2%, and none of the participants displayed strongly disagree response.

Q9. Are your teachers using the norms of Blended Learning?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	21	40%
b) No	30	56%
c) No answer	2	4%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.9: Teachers' Application of Blended Learning Norms

Based on the above-mentioned table (3.8) which summarizes the norms of an effective BL model, the students were asked to determine whether their teachers are implementing the designed norms or not. As table (3.9) reveals, more than half of the participants declare that their teachers are not using the norms of BL model in their teaching method. 30 respondents who represent (56%) confirmed that their teachers do not apply the norms of BL during their learning process. Whereas, 21 participants with the percentage of 40% demonstrated that their teachers implement the designed criteria effectively. Besides, only 2 students (4%) were neutral. It may confirm that the students are aware of the basic norms of BL which are not applied by all EFL teachers. This might also imply that most of the teachers are not using BL effectively with its basic norms.

If yes, do you think that your communicative competence has increased or decreased?

An additional question was asked to the students in order to determine their views about whether their communicative competence increased or decreased since their teachers are using the norms of BL successfully. The results show that a significant majority of the students confess that their communicative abilities improved when the teachers use BL norms. So we can state that BL is an effective approach which proves its efficiency in boosting the students' communicative competence. The following comments represent the respondents' justifications about increased or decreased communicative competence when applying the norms of BL by teachers.

Students' justifications

a) For 'Yes'

- Because Although I do most of learning process by myself away from the teacher or other students. My communicative competence actually increased due to

frequent interaction with the teachers or other students whether online or at the university.

- I think in class or at home it's the same online courses help more so we can work and do our works
- My communicative competence has increased because of using new methods of learning like platform "teams" or video conference using by teachers.
- It increases because of reading books and doing some research
- My communicative competence has increased little bit because I Got rid of panic attacks that system helped me in this situation but learning the courses it's difficult to learn in that system
- Increased in many points
- I see that my communicative competence had increased because I rely on myself more than before
- I definitely became more competitive when it comes to debates and discussions. As some courses were in video format, I was able to take notes comfortably and make pause the video and do my own research and form my own understanding of the topic at hand. All and more without having to worry that I might've not heard the teacher properly or that I haven't taken good lecture notes. And so, I was able to retain more information which led to me being more confident in the classroom.
- Yes, it helps to increase our competence
- To some extent my communicative competence has become better
- Of course, it increased because dealing with such techniques help us a lot to understand more.
- Yeah it somehow increased because it allows us to express our opinions freely
- Increased, because blended learning teaches learners to be autonomous and search for missing or not-well-understood information.
- Increase, because People learn best when they have some control over their learning.
- My communicative competence has increased because combining both face to face and E learning promotes and increases the level of comprehension of the lessons which leads to learn new words, knowledge and provides you with the ability of how to use these words and this knowledge.
- Increased by working so hard to improve my abilities
- It has increased for sure

- Through blended learning I feel that my communicative competence increased largely because of its advantages on the learners, especially those who work. They feel themselves autonomous learners as they not always obliged to attend f2f sessions.
- "I won't deny, it did increase thanks to some teachers, only few.

b) For 'No'

- Decreased since we studied 3 sessions in each module which is not enough to understand a whole semester in such short time with such pandemic.
- Decreased. Last year was better than this year. Covid-19 situation is main reason too.
- They do not insist on communicative competence's aspects. They do not even make sure if the student understood the idea or not.
- Decreased because we barely use the language outside classroom
- Due to the situation of COVID, the learning teaching process does no longer function well
- It somehow decreased since I didn't have enough time to process most of the information during online and face to face sessions
- My communicative competence has decreased
- Decreased, because we can't answer questions and get answers directly or discuss examples and have an apprenticeship relationship between us and the teacher.
- Have accomplished what a real teacher should accomplish in my whole 3 years of studying at the university (to train our minds to learn the information not just to pass the exams), in my opinion teachers have imaginary goals, goals that don't match at all with what they give, after all you can't give 0 effort and expect to receive a total of 100 result and i think it's clear who's the giver and who's the recipient. "

Section Two: Students' Attitudes towards the Effect of Blended Learning on Students' Communicative Competence

Q10. "Speaking is the most difficult skill to be mastered for the majority of English learners who still incapable in communicating in English orally." (Al Hosni, 2014.p3).

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Agree	45	86%
b) Disagree	8	14%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.10: Extent of Agreement/Disagreement with the Difficulty of Speaking Skill

The aforementioned table 10 displays that the overwhelming majority of the students (45) with the percentage of 86% agreed upon the difficulty of mastering the speaking skill, while 8 respondents with the percentage of 14% showed their disagreement towards the statement mentioned previously.

Q11. Which language skill(s) do you prefer most?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Speaking skill	38	72%
b) Listening skill	8	15%
c) Reading skill	3	6%
d) Writing skill	4	7%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.11: Frequency of Students' Preference of Language Skills

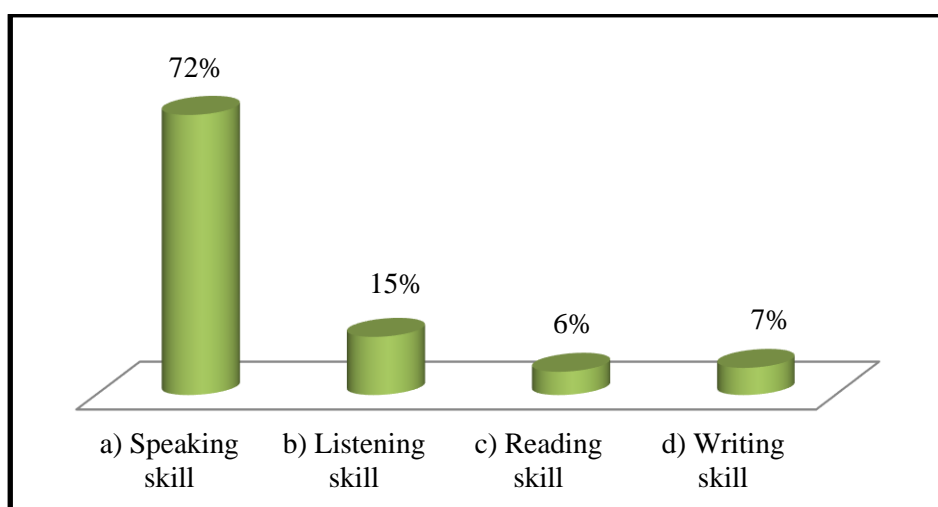


Figure 3.5: Frequency of Students' Preference of Language Skills

Findings of table and figure 3.11 that represent the frequency of the students' preference of language skills show that the absolute majority of the respondents (38) with the highest percentage of 72% affirmed their positive attitude towards speaking and appreciate it as a language skill. The remaining three skills are distributed in low percentages as follows: 15% for listening, 6% for reading, and 7% for writing skill. The essential reason behind the students' great appreciation of speaking compared to other skills may be due to the fact that speaking allows them to communicate verbally as well as to practise the English language effectively in different contexts.

Q12. Do you find difficulties when speaking with your classmates and your teachers?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	32	60%
b) No	21	40%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.12: Students' Opinions about Difficulties while Speaking in Class

As it is displayed in table (3.12), a significant percentage of students (60%) avow that they encounter difficulties when speaking with their classmates or their teachers. On the other hand, the remaining respondents (40%) assert that they did not face any hurdles while communicating. Therefore, the respondents elucidated their answers by reporting the reasons behind this problem in the following item (item 3.13).

Q13. What are the reasons behind your communication difficulties? (You may select more than one choice)

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Incorrect pronunciation	0	0%
b) Lack of fluency	1	2%
c) Incorrect use of grammar rules	0	0%
d) Lack of vocabulary	2	4%
e) Lack of practice	1	2%
f) Fear of making mistakes	1	2%
g) Fear of facing teacher/classmates	0	0%
h) Boredom and lack of motivation	0	0%
i) Lack of self-confidence	1	2%
j) problem of anxiety	4	7%
k) Lack of knowledge	0	0%
l) All of them	5	9%
More than one reason	38	72%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.13: Factors behind Students' Communication Difficulties

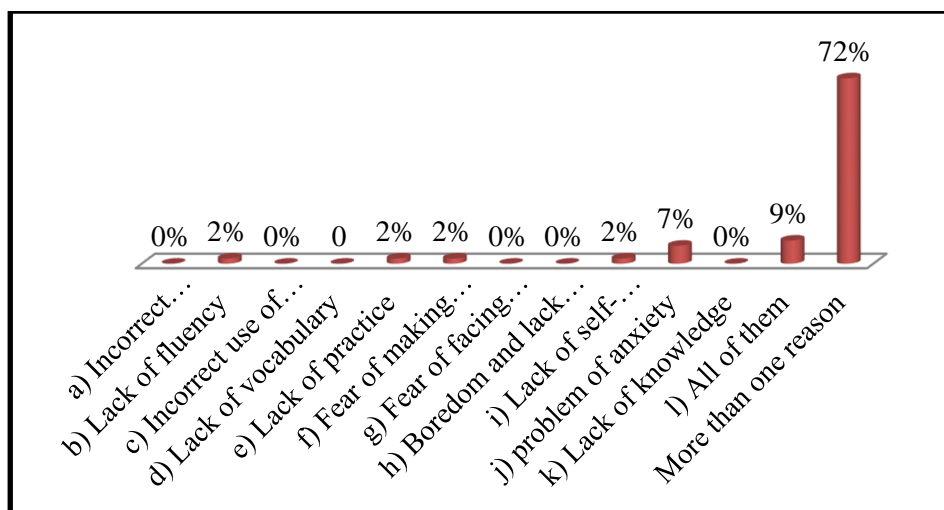


Figure 3.6: Factors behind Students' Communication Difficulties

According to the participants' answers showed above, most of the students (72%) stated that they there is no one specific reason behind their speaking problems or referred it back to all the mentioned hinders (9%). Few students, however, specified their problems. In this sense, we notice that 4 respondents who represent (7%) stated that anxiety is the main problem, while 4% (2) of the answers went for the lack of vocabulary. Besides 4respondents chose lack of frequency, lack of practice (1%), fear of making mistakes (1%), and lack of self-confidence (1%) as hurdles they face.

Q14.How often do you participate in oral expression sessions?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Always	20	38%
b) Sometimes	28	53%
c) Rarely	5	9%
d) Never	0	0%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.14: Frequency of Students' Participation in Oral Sessions

Relying on the table (3.14), the rate of participation in EFL classrooms is quite different among students. 53 %of the students do not always participate in the class and their participations occur sometimes depending on specific factors that will be discussed in the following item (3.15). 38%of the whole population pointed out that they always participate. This means that they are constantly present throughout the variety of classroom tasks and discussions. However, only 9% (5 students)of the answers indicate the number of students who rarely participate in the oral sessions.

Q15. Which of the following aspects affect your motivation or engagement to participate in oral classes? (You may select more than one choice)

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Type of tasks	9	17%
b) Classroom atmosphere	10	19%
c) Teaching method	17	32%
d) Teaching materials	5	9%
e) Teacher's feedback	4	8%
f) All of them	8	15%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.15: Aspects Affecting Students' Motivation and Engagement in Oral Session

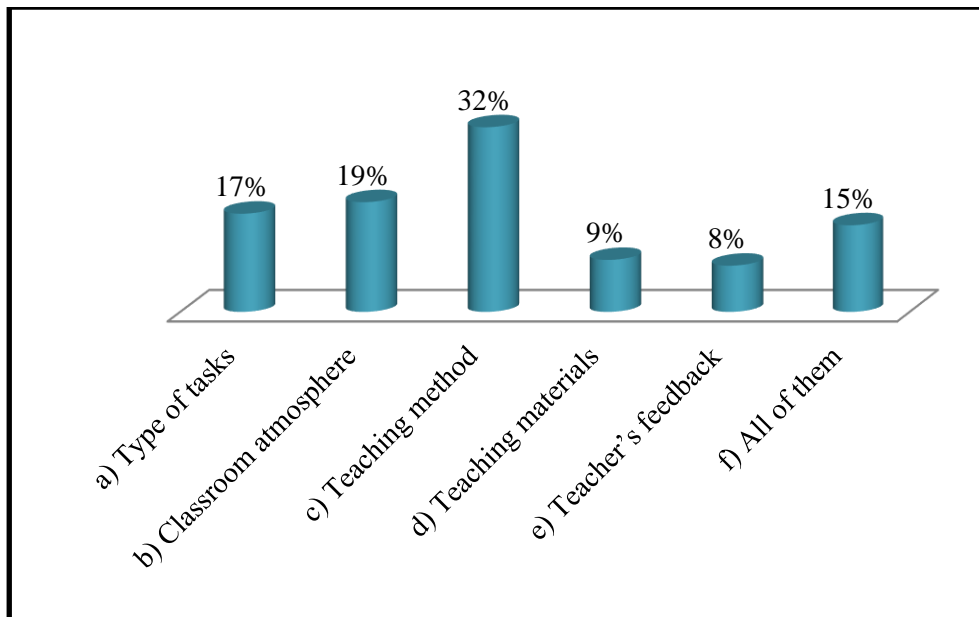


Figure 3.7 Aspects Affecting Students' Motivation and Engagement in Oral Session for Effective Communication

This additional question was asked to have insights about the factors that may affect students' motivation and engagement in oral sessions to communicate effectively. From the table and figure (3.15) we recognize that the rate of 32% of students, which represent the highest percentage, state that teaching method affects their motivation, 19 % refer it back to classroom atmosphere. In addition, 9% select teaching material and 8% teachers' feedback factor. Whilst eight respondents (15%), who choose option (f), reported that all the mentioned factors contributed in affecting their motivation and engagement to communicate effectively in oral session. This might imply that students' motivation and engagement in classroom depends relatively on various factors

Q16. How do you consider the time allocated to oral expression classes to communicate effectively in English?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Sufficient	14	26%
b) Not sufficient	39	74%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.16: Degree of Satisfaction about Time-Allocation in Oral Sessions

From the aforementioned table we can notice that 74 % of the students, which is a great percentage, are not satisfied about the number of sessions or the time allotted for teaching oral expression. However, 26% are found it sufficient so they are satisfied. The reason behind students' dissatisfaction may be because they do not have enough time to speak. In other words, students may need more sessions devoted for oral classes to speak more and to enhance their communication skill in English language.

Q17. How often do you receive feedback from your oral expression teacher?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Always	7	13%
b) Sometimes	32	60%
c) Rarely	14	27%
d) Never	0	0%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.17: Frequency of Teachers' Feedback in Oral Session

Relying on the data indicated in table (3.17), we notice that most of the respondents (32) who represent (60%) pointed out that they sometimes receive feedback from their oral teacher. While, 14 students who represent (27%) stated that the teacher rarely provides them with feedback. On the other hand, 7 participants with the percentage of (13%) asserted that they always receive feedback from their oral expression teacher, whereas no one from the participants declared that their teacher never yields them with feedback. Students showed their dissatisfaction about the frequency of the teacher’s feedback. This may be due to the fact that the teacher does not have enough time to provide students with feedback frequently.

Q18. Do you think that receiving the teacher’s feedback in oral expression session depends on? (You may select more than one choice)

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Time-allocated	17	32%
b) Learners’ motivation	17	32%
c) Numbers of the learners	19	36%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.18: Factors Influencing Teachers’ Feedback in Oral Sessions

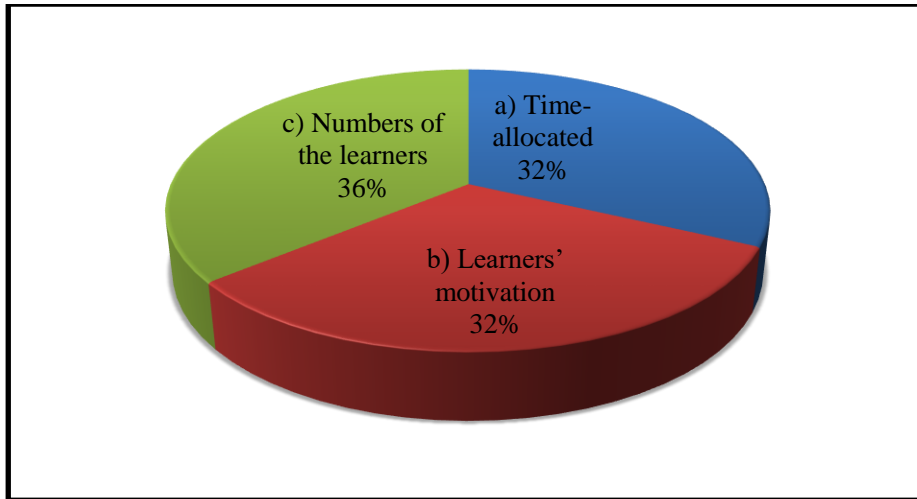


Figure 3.8: Factors Influencing Teachers' Feedback in Oral Sessions

In order to elicit the main factors which may affect the teacher's feedback in oral sessions, another extra question was asked to the participants. As it is indicated above in table and figure (3.18), the percentages are to some extent approximate. Statistics show that 19 respondents with the percentage of (36%) declared that teachers' feedback depends more on the number of the learners in the class, i.e. classrooms with low number of learners may receive more feedback from the teacher and vis-versa. On the other hand, other 17 participants, with percentage of (32%) considered that learners' motivation as the main cause; also similar rate (32%) was oriented to time-allocation in influencing the teachers' feedback. The below factors are suggested by students to answer the following sub-question:

If there are others, please tell us

- The absence of the tools we can use in studying
- Both of learner's motivation and the number of students
- Learners' needs.
- Focus on what teacher said and read books
- Well, I've seen some teachers who never give feedback to their students mainly when they make mistakes in speaking usually.
- Numbers of the learners

- Learner's styles.
- Personally, I haven't had the chance to witness a class discussion or a play or a debate in oral class. All I've witnessed were presentations and the time was not sufficient to ask questions. So, based on my experience I'd like to recommend that the teacher gives feedback based on impromptu mini-presentations. Each student has to present a certain topic on the spot; the teacher can assess the students based on their preparedness and speech.

Q19. Since you are learning in your own pace, do you feel that you are autonomous learner?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	33	62%
b) No	20	38%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.19: Learning in One's Pace Evolves student's Autonomy

Table (3.19) displays the students' opinions of about whether they feel themselves as autonomous learners. The vast majority of students (62%) pointed out that they learn independently and they are responsible of their own learning, whilst 20 respondents who represent (38%) disconfirmed the aforesaid statement (3.19) claiming that "they still need the teacher to guide them". This might suggest that students are conscious of the fact that the blended classroom is an opportunity to boost their abilities and thereby, they can govern their time and space. Therefore, they can be more engaged and make decision about what and how they want to learn. Some of the students' comments are:

Students' justifications

a) For 'Yes'

- Actually I consider myself an autonomous because I have learned most of what I know of grammar and pronunciation until this year by myself because in college they teach us only the curriculum of several sciences but not the real English language's rules and grammar.
- You have to depend on yourself, especially in the university. The teacher can Just show you the way.
- I search for more information that is not included in the lessons provided by teachers.
- "I do rely on internet tools and readings to improve my learning skills."
- I actually find myself more into taking charge of my own learning because being an autonomous learner give you the ability to develop more ideas and vocabulary and discover things and do something beneficial independently.
- It's much more comfortable and less worrisome so much that the motivation to study develops quickly and studying and learning became a part of my daily routine.
- I started depending on myself more , searching by myself , learning by myself , asking questions , and answering them by thinking and doing research , focusing more on the difficult aspects, using different methods of research , unlike , when the teacher was giving us everything , I think it's good if we stay studying like that but face to face , like the teacher give us only the main points and we do the job . That may increase our knowledge and capacities.
- I don't like being ordered or have several tasks that I'm not interested in ...I prefer self-learning because this process of self-learning makes me feel like completely motivated and totally responsible of the whole process.
- I don't rely solely on the teacher's information I search more. And try to find the simplest explanation for it.
- I can improve my level based on the feedback I receive from teachers, develop my vocabulary and try to understand difficult lessons myself
- I feel self-confident which boost me to become autonomous learner

b) For 'No'

- I still need the teacher to explain some vague and difficult points
- I guess I still need a teacher to guide me
- Autonomy does not depend only on learning in your own place but also on its outcomes, do we really obtain good results when studying alone.

- Learning in my own pace is not enough to be an autonomous learner because I need to manage the time required according to certain lesson or solve certain problem in specific time and that's what's make me that I somehow do not feel I'm an autonomous learner.
- I still bound to the curriculum and to the teachers' method

Q20. What is your attitude towards Blended learning as a method to enhance communicative skills?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Positive	43	81%
b) Negative	10	13%
Total	53	100%

Table 3.20: Students' Attitudes towards the Effect of Blended Learning Method in Enhancing their Communicative Skills

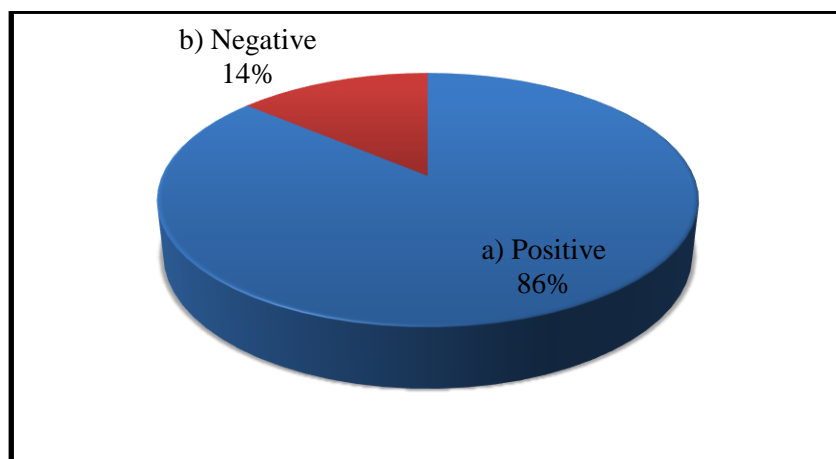


Figure 3.9: Students' Attitudes towards the Effect of Blended Learning Method in Enhancing their Communicative Skills

The aim of this question is to elucidate the students' attitudes towards the effect of Blended learning in enhancing their communicative competence. Table 3.20 and figure 3.20 indicate that 43 students, who represent the biggest portion, with the percentage of 81% showed their positive attitudes towards mixed learning method; whilst only 10 students, with the percentage of 13%, demonstrated their negative view about the method. Therefore, we can deduce that the absolute majority of the students confirm that BL is an effective and beneficial approach that fosters students' communicative competence.

Any other comments and further suggestions, please mention them

To sum up, we have asked the students to help us with additional comments, opinions or suggestions. One of the respondents reported that teachers should give more attention to the communicative skills and pronunciation aspect of EFL students and provide more oral education sessions, because other skills can be improved out of school but speaking skill and pronunciation require everyday practice and it is hard to find means to do so. Others appreciated the blended approach particularly the way of delivering the lessons in a video format because of its helpful aspects for learners; so that, they welcomed BL to be applied in all modules. Moreover, they stated that it would be helpful and beneficial if it is managed by teachers in the right way by balancing both F2F and e-learning, besides explaining the online courses posted in a video format instead of uploading them to the platform without explanation.

3.4.4 Discussion of Students' Questionnaire

Relying on the findings obtained from the questionnaire that was delivered to third year students in order to conduct our research work, we deduce that the overwhelming majority of the students do appreciate BL as a method of learning to enhance their communicative abilities. Likewise, we notice that the vast majority of the respondents

asserted their benefit from online videos more than other educational format. The findings also denote that the majority of the students manifest their willingness towards F2F in-class instruction more than online learning.

We can infer that human interaction provides a feeling of social connectedness not available in virtual communication; i.e., e-learning is used to aid students' learning but it should not be used to replace the valuable interaction between teachers and students. Perhaps, a possible solution to this discomfort is to create a BL environment that actually provides more teacher-facilitator interaction, in other words, redefining the mixed learning towards a larger classroom component. Furthermore, though most of them stated that their teachers did not apply the norms of BL effectively; but their communicative competence increased as BL method often helps them to learn in their own pace and consider themselves autonomous learners. This implies that students recognize the significant impact of BL's integration on their autonomous learning.

Likewise, most of them agree that more than one reason contributes to their communication difficulties, besides learner's anxiety and also the lack of vocabulary. This latter problem requires a proficient speaker that should be fluent, accurate, and has enough vocabulary knowledge. To conclude, the results achieved from the administered questionnaire reveal that the students demonstrate positive attitudes towards BL as an effective and helpful approach to foster their communicative competence.

3.5 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.5.1 Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire

EFL teachers at M.K.U were also invited to participate in the administered questionnaire in order to collect more data to carry out this research. The current

questionnaire has been administered online on April 15th, 2021 as a Google form via teachers' e-mails at the level of Biskra University, department of English. However, only 10 out of 49 teachers have answered this questionnaire. Thanks to those respondent teachers who have demonstrated their cooperation by providing us with valuable responses as well as showing their attitudes towards the implementation of BL approach in EFL classes to improve the students' communicative skills.

3.5.2 Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The designed questionnaire for teachers comprises three sections; each section includes different types of questions. Most of the questions are open-ended aiming at qualitative results. Moreover, the sample of this questionnaire is regarded as a real situation representative of Algerian EFL teachers, the fact which makes the nature of the findings more tangible.

Section one deals with the background information of the teachers including gender, age, and teaching experience. However, section two of the teachers' questionnaire is devoted for teachers' perceptions about BL as a teaching/learning method. Eventually, the third section of the questionnaire is dedicated for teachers' attitudes towards the effects of BL on students' communicative competence. In this part, teachers have been asked about different items related to their students' communicative abilities and BL model.

3.5.3 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: Personal Information

Q1.How long have you been teaching English at university?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) 1-5 years	2	20%
b) 5-10 years	4	40%
c) More than 10 years	2	20%
d) No response	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.23: Teachers' Experience in Teaching English at University

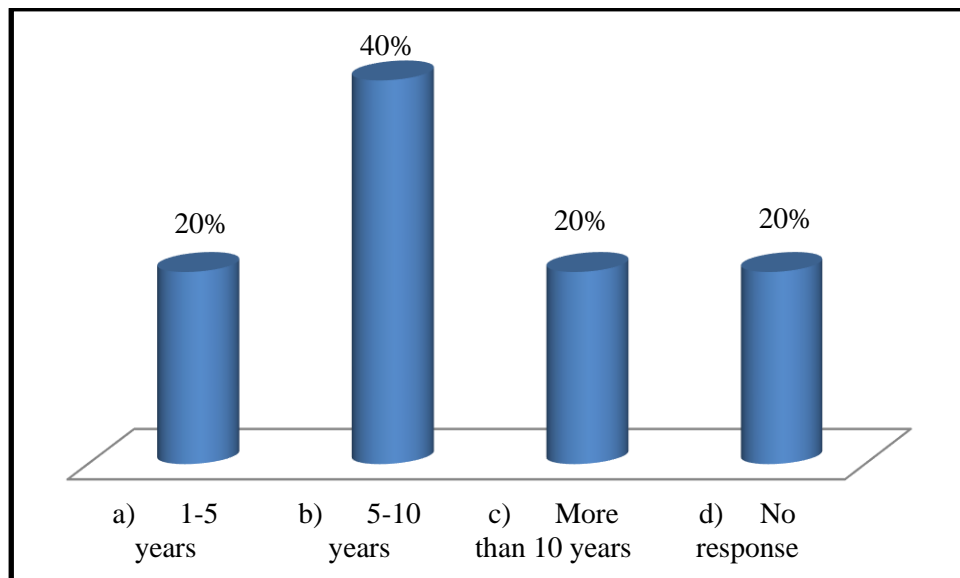


Figure 3.10: Teachers' Experience in Teaching English at University

Results showed that, the teachers' experience in teaching EFL is varied; that is teachers' experience from 5 to 10 years encompasses the percentage of 40%, which represent the highest rate, while from 1 to 5 years (20%) and more than 10 years (20%). Besides, the remaining 20% of the respondents did not answer this question.

Section Two: Teachers' Attitudes towards Blended Learning Model

Q2. Do you use Moodle platform to deliver online courses?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	7	70%
b) No	1	10%
c) No response	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.24: Teachers' Delivery of Online Courses via Moodle Platform

Table 3.24 reveals that most of the teachers post online courses via Moodle platform. The biggest portion of percentage (70%) from the respondents, who are seven teachers, affirmed their integration of online courses' delivery. Whereas, only one participant stated that he/she did not post online courses via moodle. Eventually, 20% of the participants (2) did not respond. We can say that the majority of EFL teachers are applying e-learning mode and virtual websites in EFL teaching. An additional question is added for those who answered with "Yes" to elucidate how teachers explain online courses in class sessions. Some of the teachers' comments are as follows:

If yes, do you explain the same online courses in classroom sessions? Please, state how?

- We try to match between the online lectures and classroom lectures to facilitate the learning process.
- I explain the content and answer questions about comprehension
- Yes. I explain deeply in class
- We just deliver the contents to the students using the platform.
- I try to make the online lessons comprehensive. However, it could not replace face-to-face lessons.
- Yes, I often post online courses via moodle platform, then at class we discuss the topic.

Q3.Do you deliver videos via Moodle platform?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	6	60%
b) No	2	20%
c) No response	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.25: Teachers Delivery of Online Videos via Moodle Platform

Teachers at were requested to determine whether they deliver online courses in a video format via Moodle virtual. The findings in the table above (3.25) show that the vast majority of the participants respond with “Yes”; 6 teachers who represent the percentage of 60% do affirm their use of educational videos as e-learning courses posted through Moodle website. Meanwhile, two teachers (20%) respond with “No”. The rest 2 teachers (20%) are neutral. In order to discern the frequency of implementing this method of learning, another question was asked to the participants. Accordingly, the majority of the participants who respond with “Yes” were asked to answer the following sub-question:

If yes, how often do you do that?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Always	5	83%
b) Sometimes	1	17%
c) Rarely	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 3.25.1: Frequency of Online Video Delivery

Table 3.25.1 above displays that, the absolute majority of the teachers (83%) reported that they always post online videos through Moodle. Likewise, 17% of respondents stated that they sometimes post online videos. However, none of the teachers claimed that they rarely use this teaching method. This simply means that most of the teachers are up to date to integrate online sources such as video as an effective teaching method to get their students involved in their learning process through suggesting recent online platforms.

Q4. How many students respond positively to online videos?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) All of them	0	0%
b) Most of them	6	60%
c) Few of them	1	10%
d) None of them	0	0%
e) No response	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.26: Teachers’ Responses about Students’ Attitudes towards Online Videos

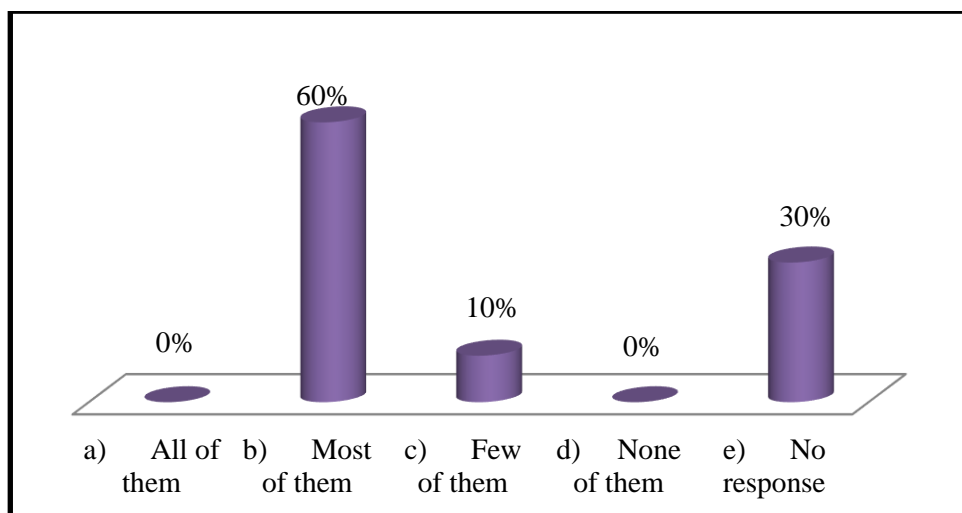


Figure 3.11: Teachers’ Responses about Students’ Attitudes towards Online Videos

As it is shown in table and figure (3.26), the highest portion of 60% of the respondents reported that most of the students demonstrate their positive attitudes towards the process of posting online courses as a video format. On the contrary, only one respondent who represent the percentage of 10% claimed that few students respond positively to online video delivery. The remaining teachers (30%), however, preferred not to answer this inquiry.

Q5.Do you think that your students benefit from videos more than the other formats?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	7	70%
b) No	1	10%
c) No response	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.27: Teachers' Views about Students' Benefit from Videos

When the teachers were asked about their opinions whether the students benefit from learning through online videos more than other formats or not, the vast majority of the respondents (70%) affirmed the statement. Conversely, only one of the participants, under the percentage of (10%), pointed out the opposite viewpoint. Besides, two of the participants (20%) did not show response to the question. We can deduce that most of the students prefer posting online lesson through a video tool compared to other formats, as they have been experienced its efficiency in fostering their communication and their learning process as a whole. It may also due to awareness of the students to the advantages of learning through videos such as: authenticity, simplicity, easiness, not time-

consuming...etc. Eventually, the participants were requested to elucidate their answers, so they explained them as follows:

Please, explain how

- You can share a lot of information in a short video in addition videos make understanding easier because they show the reality of thing
- They will be exposed more to native speakers
- They do feel interesting in teaching through videos.
- It is obvious; they can support the learning process.
- A short online video would be more beneficial for students to understand the topic quickly and easily than any other tool such as printed documents...

Q6. Which way do you find it more helpful for you as a teaching method? (Tick only one choice)

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Face to Face Learning	1	10%
b) E- Learning	2	20%
c) Both	7	70%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.28: Teachers Perceptions towards the Most Helpful Mode as a Teaching Method

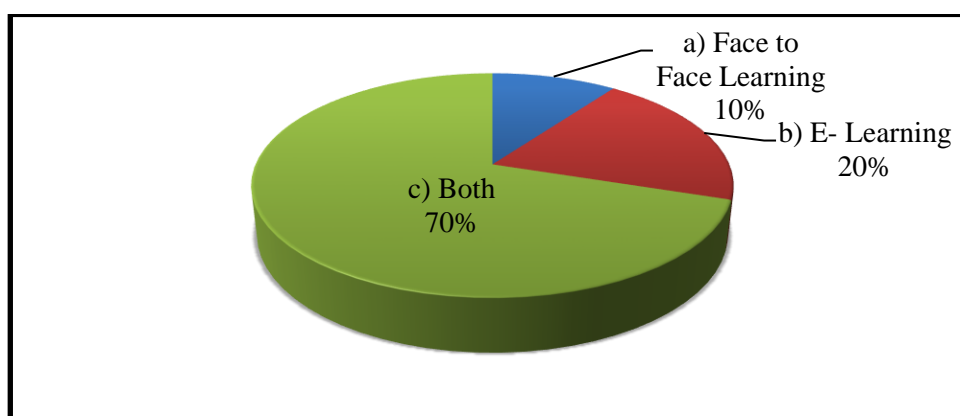


Figure 3.12: Teachers Perceptions towards the Most Helpful Mode as a Teaching Method

As far as this question is concerned, the overwhelming majority of the teachers (70%) declared their great tendency towards BL, i.e. the combination of both F2F and online learning as a teaching method. However, 20% of the respondents claimed their preference to e-learning as well as one of the teachers (10%) opted for F2F learning; he/she justified: “Because some face to face teaching acts cannot be replaced by online teaching + affective side of teaching is missing”. The reason behind teachers’ choice of BL may refer to the benefits provided by this method as flexibility, centeredness, interaction, accessibility and active learning... The fact which may prove the effectiveness of BL compared to other modes of teaching since it integrates the best of both traditional classroom and electronic learning in teaching/learning process. The participants, who supported the implementation of both methods, justified their responses in the following comments:

Please, justify

- Both teaching methods are effective in transmitting the data.
- E-learning bridges for an effective F2F learning
- It depends on the circumstances.
- Each one can help learners to learn better.
- The integration of online learning and F2F classroom would enhance students’ communicative competence and thus their language learning as a whole.

Q7.What are the main challenges that may face teachers and students during online learning? (You may tick more than one choice)

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Teachers' and students' negative attitudes towards E-Learning	0	0%
b) Inappropriate Classroom atmosphere	0	0%
c) Insufficient time	0	0%
d) Absence/lack of ICT tools	0	0%
e) Internet connection problems	1	10%
f) More than one challenge	9	90%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.29: Teachers' Responses about Students' Online Learning Challenges

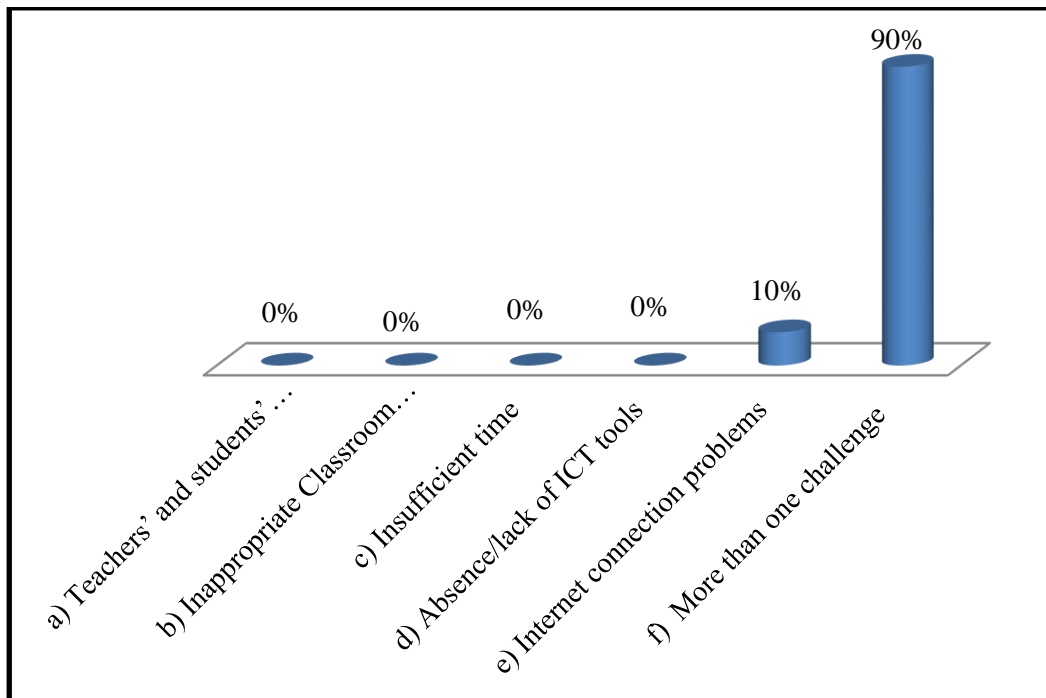


Figure 3.29: Teachers' Responses about Students' Online Learning Challenges

Respondents were requested to determine the main challenges that may encounter them and their students during online teaching/learning process. Table and figure (3.29) indicate that there is not a specific hinder which may face teachers or students while using e-learning mode, but many factors are interfering to this problem. Precisely, the highest percentage (90%) of the participants confirmed this fact, 10% associated the problem to limited internet connection. Whereas, none from the participants chose other suggested challenges.

Q8.To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
l) E-Learning courses have to be simple, direct, easy and general.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
m) E-Learning course should not exceed 10 minutes in a video form	25%	50%	0%	25%	0%
n) E-exercises delivered by the teacher should be clear and simple.	88%	12%	0%	0%	0%
o) E-assessment includes: yes/no questions – choice questions	12%	63%	0%	25%	0%
p) E-assessment should serve the level of average students	50%	38%	12%	0%	0%
q) E-assessment contains phases	38%	62%	0%	0%	0%
r) Face to Face assessment must include the difficult points discussed in the class	50%	26%	12%	12%	0%
s) Teacher in Face to Face courses should tackle difficult, complicated and debatable issues	25%	63%	0%	12%	0%
t) Both teachers and learners have to search about debatable issues.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%

Table 3.30: Extent of Agreement/Disagreement with the Following Statements

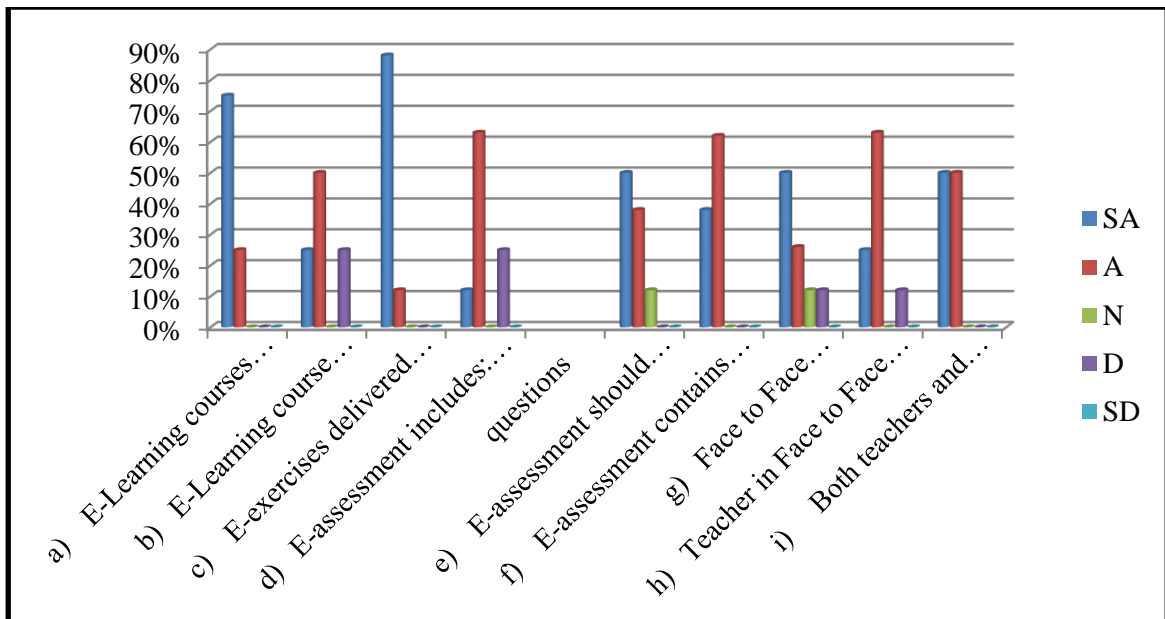


Figure 3.30: Extent of Agreement/Disagreement with the Following Statements

NB. “The points discussed in the table are summarizing ‘the norms’ of Blended Learning modal.”

The purpose of this question is to elicit the teachers’ viewpoints about the statements mentioned above in the table (3.8).As we notice in table and figure (3.30), most of the participants are agree/strongly agree with the designed statements. Accordingly, in statement (a) for instance which is about E-Learning courses that have to be simple, direct, easy and general; 75% of the respondents, which represent the biggest portion, do strongly agree with the statement, and 25% agree with it. On the contrary, none of the participants displayed negative responses “disagree/strongly disagree or neutral”.

Q9. Do you use these norms of Blended Learning?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	6	60%
b) No	2	20%
c) No response	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.31: Teachers' Responses about the Use of Blended Learning's Norms

Relying on the above-mentioned norms, table (3.31) summarizes the norms of an effective BL model. The teachers were asked to determine whether they are implementing the norms of BL model effectively in their teaching process or not. As table (3.31) reveals, the majority of the participants affirm their regular application of the designed norms. Six (6) respondents who represent (60%) asserted that they constantly implement the norms of BL as a teaching method. On the other hand, two (2) participants with the percentage of 20% disconfirmed their use of these criteria. Meanwhile, the remaining participants who are two teachers (4%) were neutral. This might imply that most of the teachers, but not all of them, are using BL effectively with its basic norms. Probably, the main reason behind this fact due to the teachers' consciousness to the BL approach as it has been used largely in the Algerian universities, particularly during the epidemic of COVID-19, so that teachers acknowledged the effectiveness of this method when it is applied with its basic norms. Nevertheless, there are some teachers who do not apply the suggested norms as they are possibly still unfamiliar to them. Additionally, the participants were invited to respond the following sub-question:

If yes, do you think that students' communicative competence increase or decrease if you use theses norms effectively? Please tell us how?

An additional question was asked to the teachers in order to determine their perceptions about whether their students' communicative competence increased or decreased when applying the norms of BL model. The majority of the respondents claimed that the communicative abilities of their students improved whenever they implement BL's norms effectively. So we can state that BL is an effective approach which proves its efficiency in facilitating teaching/learning process, particularly in boosting the students' communicative competence. The participants justified their answers as follows:

- It enhances their ability to communicate better with their environment.
- Even I have experienced few experiences in online teaching but I believe it is a good way to motivate learners to share, discuss and collaborate while communicating with the instructor or mates.
- It is actually increased.
- In all situations, students' communicative competence depends on the content and approaches delivered and assigned to them to raise their CC.
- Of course, it is increased.
- Of course the students' communicative competence will increase if these norms of BL would be applied effectively by teachers.

Section Three: Teachers’ Attitudes towards the Effect of Blended Learning on Students’ Communicative Competence

Q10. How do you find developing students’ communication abilities via BL?

State why, please.

Option	Number	Percentage
a) An easy task	3	30%
b) A hard task	5	50%
c) No response	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.32: Teachers’ Perceptions about Developing Students’ Communicative Abilities via BL

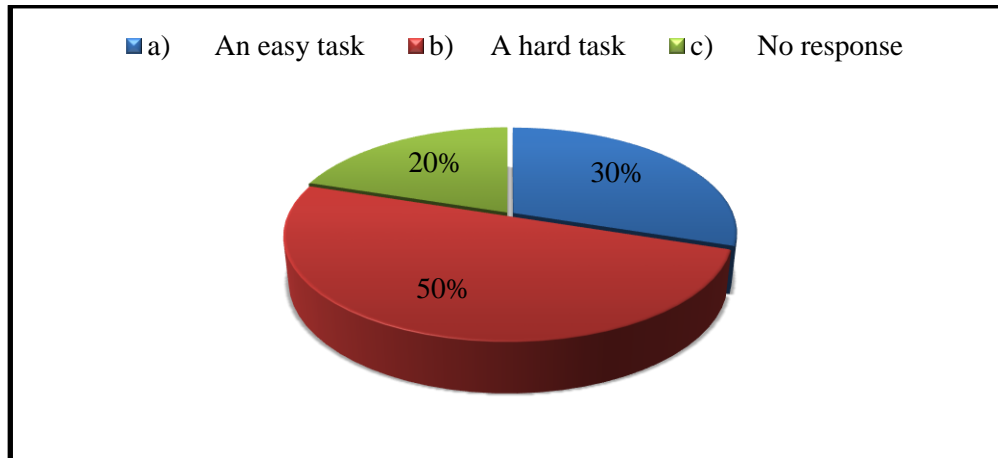


Figure 3.32: Teachers’ Perceptions about Developing Students’ Communicative Abilities via BL

The given table and figure (3.32) diverge between a higher percentage of 50% and 30%. The former do assert that developing the students’ communicative competence through BL approach is a hard task. Whereas, the latter (3 teachers) disconfirm with such a statement, the rest of the respondents (20%) show no response to the question. The

participants were requested to justify their answers; so the comments below are illustrating their justifications:

State why, please.

a) For ‘An easy task’

- It depends on how well you master the methods.
- The two ways of teaching are helpful to improve learners' CC.

b) For ‘A hard task’

- As a teacher I need more time to make learners achieve good communicative skills, the number of learners in the classroom also can affect the quality of teaching.
- Shortage of time, lack of the continued feedback...
- The strategies used are different and the outcome entails the procedure.
- Developing students' communicative skills is not an easy task as many factors integrate in this process.

Q11. Which of the following aspects your students are weak in and they need to be improved? (You may tick more than one choice)

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Pronunciation	1	10%
b) Grammar rules	0	0%
c) Vocabulary	5	50%
d) Communication skills	2	20%
e) Social and cultural rules of English language	0	0%
f) All of them	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.33: Teachers’ Responses about Students’ Hinders during Learning Process

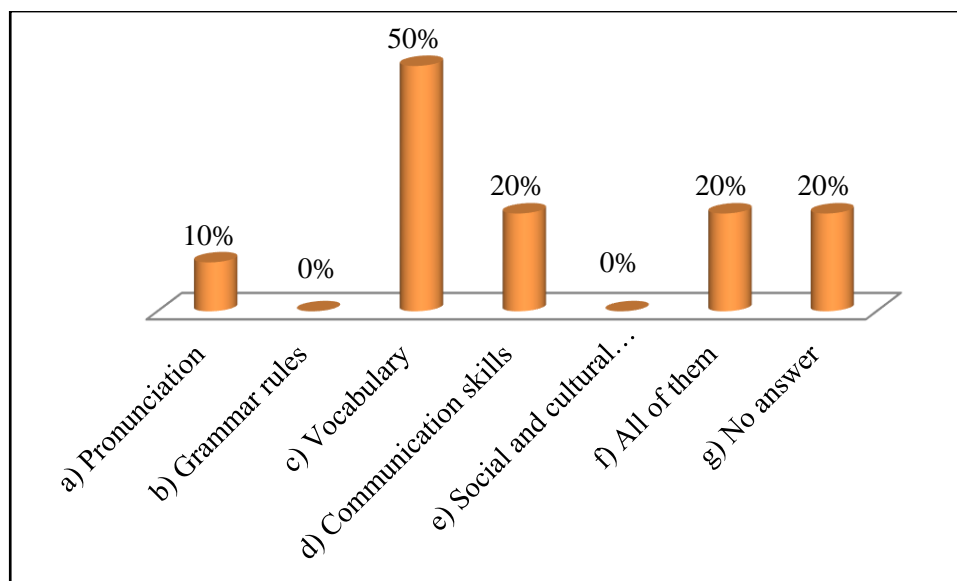


Figure 3.33: Teachers' Responses about Students' Hinders during Learning Process

From the aforementioned table and figure (3.33) we notice that half of the teachers (50%) report that the main reason behind their students' weakness is "vocabulary". While the other half is distributed as follows: 20% of the answers return to the lack of communication skills, one (1) respondent with the percentage of 10% pinpoints that incorrect pronunciation is mostly a basic hurdle for their students, and finally two remaining participants (20%) claim that all the above factors mentioned in the table are affecting the students during their learning process. As the findings show, each participant mentions a specific problem. The reason of the teachers' choices may be due to students' personalities or lack of their practice to perform the English language.

Others, please specify

When the respondents were asked to add other factors that the students are mostly weak in and they need to improve them, one of teachers reported: "Accuracy, critical thinking, synthesizing, evaluation, and analysing" are also among the aspects requiring improvement.

Q12. How do you often evaluate your students' communicative competence?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Very good	0	0%
b) Good	5	50%
c) Average	3	30%
d) Poor	0	0%
e) No answer	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.34: Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Communicative Competence

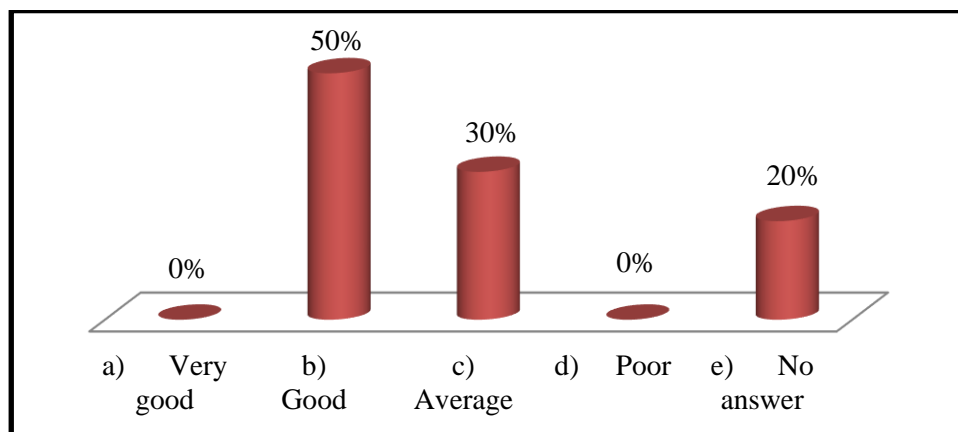


Figure 3.34: Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Communicative Competence

This question aims at eliciting the teachers' evaluation of their students' level in terms of communicative competence. The results indicate that half of the respondents (50%) declared that the overall level of the students' communicative abilities is "Good", 30% of the participants stated that their level is average. However, none of the teachers reported that the students' communicative abilities are "Very good" or "Poor", whilst two respondents who represent 20% displayed no response to the question.

Q13.How often do you provide your students with feedback in the classroom to encourage them to communicate?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Always	2	20%
b) Sometimes	6	60%
c) Rarely	0	0%
d) Never	0	0%
e) No answer	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.35: Frequency of Students’ Feedback to Boost their Communication in Classroom

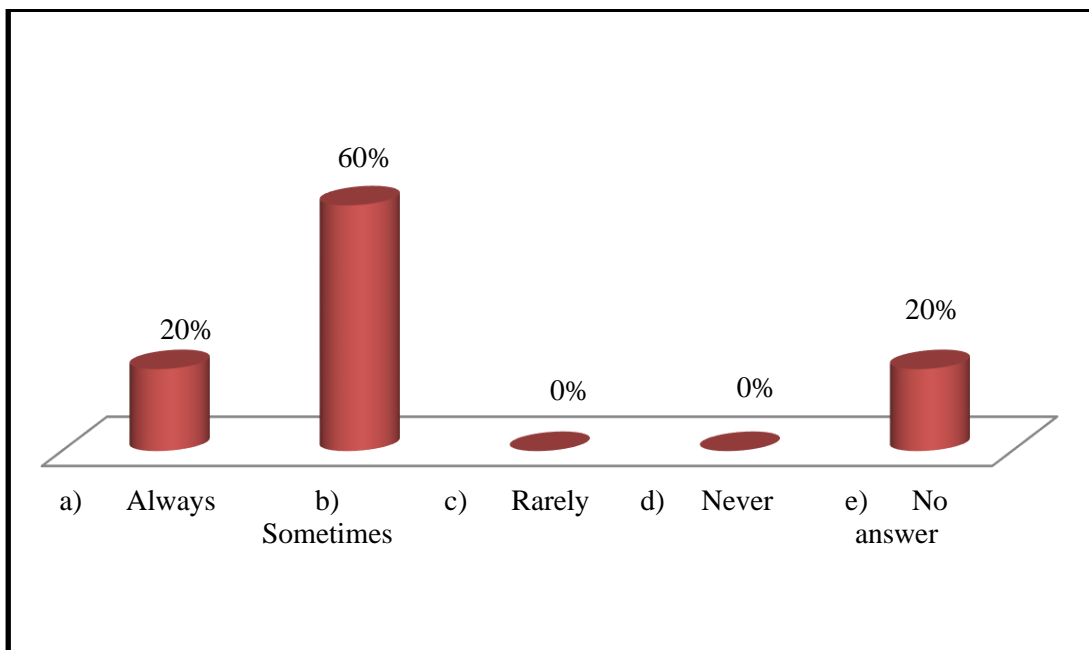


Figure 3.35: Frequency of Students’ Feedback to Boost their Communication in Classroom

Based on the data indicated in table and figure (3.35), we observe that most of the respondents (6) pointed out that they sometimes provide their students with feedback in order to boost their communication in the classroom. While, two teachers who represent

(20%) stated that they always yield them with feedback. Whilst, no one from the participants declared that they never/rarely give their students feedback in the class. Lastly, the rest of the participants (20%) did not answer this question. We can state that EFL teachers, through their experience, acknowledge the importance of providing their students with immediate feedback in the classroom in order to enhance their motivation and thereby, fostering their communication abilities to perform the English language.

Q14. Do you integrate Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) during the oral session?

***If “yes”, what kind of ICT do you use to enhance your students’ communication abilities? (You may tick more than one choice).**

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Internet	1	10%
b) Voice chat	1	10%
c) Mobile phone	0	0%
d) Data show	3	30%
e) Videos	3	30%
f) PC’s	0	0%
g) All of them	0	0%
g) No answer	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.36: Kinds of ICTs Integrating to Enhance Students’ Communication Abilities

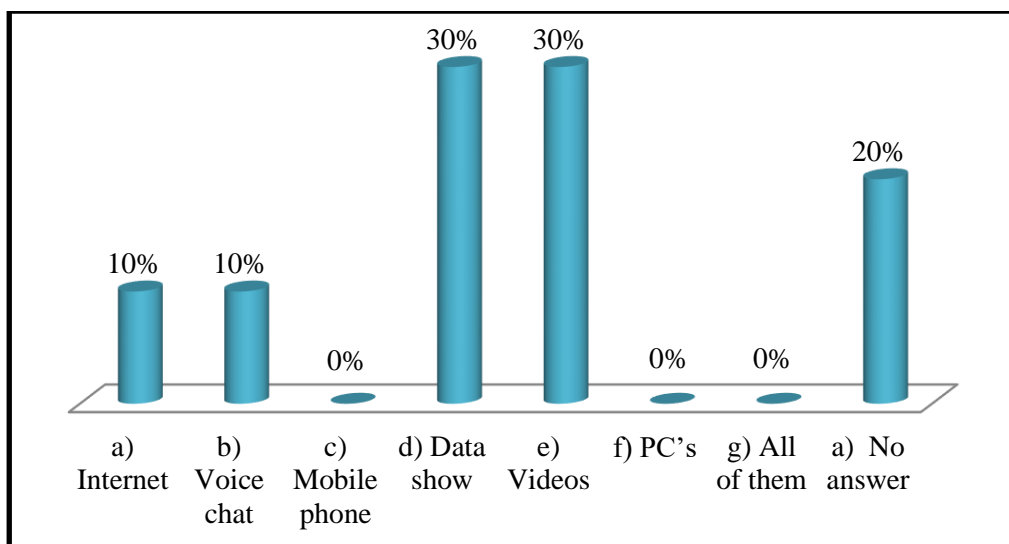


Figure 3.36: Kinds of ICTs Integrating to Enhance Students' Communication Abilities

This question aims at eliciting information about the types of ICT's used by the teachers in order to enhance their students' communicative competence in oral sessions. The results obtained showed that the majority of teachers are mostly integrating "Videos" and "Data show". Precisely, 30% assisted on using "Videos" and with an equal percentage (30%) of the respondents confirmed their use of "Data show". On the other hand, some teachers (10%) opted for "Internet", and others (10%) chose "Voice chat" as a helpful tool to develop students' communication abilities. However no one among the participants declared their integration of "PC's" or "Mobile phone". Actually, the remaining participants (20%) preferred not to answer. Subsequently, one can infer from the above-mentioned results that teachers are using different technological tools during their oral teaching to foster their students' communication skills, but with more focus on the integration of videos and data show as they prove their efficiency in facilitating teaching/learning process.

Q15.To what extent do you think that using E-Learning with Face to Face Learning can enhance the students' communication skills? Explain more, please.

This question is set to explore the teachers' viewpoints to get clear insights and accurate findings about the topic under study in a real-context situation. Precisely, this question aims at investigating teachers' attitudes towards the impact of combining F2F with online learning, namely "blended learning", on EFL students communicative competence. The respondents answered the question in the comments below:

- To a good extent.
- Both are complementary
- Students will be exposed more to native speakers + e-learning will be considered the 1st to the lesson
- It can help to readjust the teaching strategies to balance content retention and understanding.
- Again, both of them they can motivate learners. Moreover, they can compensate the weaknesses in one if the teaching ways
- BL is an effective approach of learning since it combines the best ways of both virtual and F2F learning.
- BL is the best approach of learning because it combines e-learning and F2F classroom.

Please, feel free to add any comments or suggestion. Provide us with other suggested ways to develop EFL learners' communicative competence when integrating Blended learning approach.

To conclude, we have invited the participants to provide us with further additional comments or suggestions. Most of the teachers demonstrated their appreciations towards BL approach in enhancing students' communication abilities, so below is a summary of some teachers' comments and suggestions:

- BL approach is part of the overall eclectic methodology used by teachers when it is needed to adapt the course to a given situation. So it helps enhancing students' communicative competence.
- . The questions are well-written and very clear. Good Luck in your research work.
- Till now, no other approach of learning could prove its efficiency in teaching/learning process more than BL, especially during the epidemic of COVID-19.
- Practice makes perfect.

3.5.4 Discussion of Teachers' Questionnaire

Corresponding to the students' answers, the finding indicated that teachers likewise confirm that the implementation of BL model in the classroom is extremely effective to consolidate their teaching process and especially for EFL students to improve their communicative competence. In fact, the absolute majority of the teachers 'viewpoints reflect that they are familiar to the use ICTs' devices in delivering their lessons such as educational videos, data show... In this sense, they affirm that they widely deliver online courses through Moodle platform, particularly in a video format more than other teaching aids (documents, textbooks...) as the students prefer this way of learning and respond positively to online videos. Moreover, when they asked about the most helpful method of teaching, most of them agree that the combination of both online and F2F in class modes are useful and effective. Nevertheless, they reported that "F2f teaching acts cannot be replaced by online teaching in which the affective side of teaching is missing."

As noticed from their opinions, the vast majority of teachers agree on the designed norms of an effective BL course. Thus, they assert their considerable application of these norms which boost the students' communicative competence.

Therefore, the teachers demonstrate their positive perceptions towards BL as it motivates their learners and make them more engaged in learning English as foreign language and so facilitates the teaching/learning process as a whole.

Conclusion

To conclude, the current chapter was dedicated to the field work to carry out our research. We opted for two data collection tools; classroom observation checklist and questionnaires for both students and teachers. In the light of the findings obtained from the overall results of this empirical study, it is essential to state that BL represents an effective approach in teaching English, which proves its efficiency on the students' communicative competence and learning autonomy as well. Both students and teachers responded positively to the method and appreciate its effective norms in teaching/learning process. Eventually, all the results have been discussed in order to answer the research questions and to confirm the suggested hypothesis.

General Conclusion

We have attempted throughout this research work to investigate the effect of BL model on EFL students' communicative competence. In this context, the present study encompasses three chapters. The first two chapters were devoted for the theoretical framework about BL and communicative competence. The first chapter tackled several issues related to the BL including its definitions, historical background, components, main characteristics, its modes and models, its advantages and challenges, besides to other elements. However, the second chapter was dedicated for communicative competence. In this chapter we yielded several data about communicative competence covering its definition, its historical background, components, models, an overview about communicative language teaching (CLT) approach and its methodological framework, in addition to the effect of technology on EFL learners' communicative competence as well as implementation of technology in EFL classroom.

On the other hand, in the third chapter we carried out a classroom observation with a representative group during oral expression session for the sake of investigating students' communicative competence in both traditional F2F session and blended classroom. Furthermore, we submitted two questionnaires for students and teachers as well, in order to elucidate their attitudes towards BL model in enhancing EFL students' communicative competence. This practical part endeavours to offer the analysis of the findings acquired from the two data gathering tools. Accordingly, this study led us to reinforce and confirm the hypothesis which stated that students' communicative competence would be improved if their teachers use BL in teaching EFL effectively as well as BL facilitates the teachers' evaluation by motivating the students to search more about the topic; likewise, BL urges student' autonomous learning.

Overall, this research sheds light on the importance of implementing BL in EFL classes and also investigates the different teachers and students' attitudes towards the method. This latter would facilitate teaching /learning process and enable the learners to communicate appropriately inside and outside the classroom and thereby, improve their autonomous learning. Hence, fostering students' motivation and engagement; by integrating technological tools via online websites (posting online educational videos through Moodle virtual) which make them active rather than passive participants in EFL learning. As a result, we can confirm that the implementation of BL would maximize EFL learners' communicative competence.

Pedagogical Recommendations

Relying on the analysis of the obtained data, a number of pedagogical recommendations are put forward:

For Teachers:

- Teachers are required to renovate their methods/strategies of teaching to achieve better learning objectives and stepping forward a professional improvement.
- Teachers are advised to adopt BL model to adjust their teaching process with recent demands that emphasize learner-centred approach instead of teacher-centeredness.
- Teachers need to learn thoroughly about BL approach and its norms to be applied effectively, understand its implementation to overcome constraints that may encounter and search for the adequate solutions.
- Teachers need to proceed to an intensive training in order to overcome the deficiency of technology- practice.

- Teachers are advised to keep up-to-date with modern technology and seek a maximum of educational attainments; they need to reconsider their views towards the incorporation of internet and the use of online resources in their teaching.
- Teachers are required to be aware of their students' needs and abilities and choose the suitable blend for them.
- Teachers are requested to urge their students to learn the course through online videos, as an educational ICT tool, by raising their consciousness about the benefits of receiving the content at home.
- Teachers are advised to provide their students with immediate feedback during the classroom session or even online in order to boost students' engagement, motivation and learning outcomes too.
- Teachers are required to be flexible in their teaching. That is, they need to change occasionally the classroom atmosphere from ordinary session into mixed learning climates, so that using such a method would enhance students' communicative competence inside and outside the classroom and thereby, improve their learning autonomy as well.

For learners

- Students are advised to be “technology literate”, i.e. they need to be trained on how to conduct an online research. Thereby, students save time and make good use of online resources.
- Students are requested to be serious and interested in terms of watching the videos and listening to the tracks before class time.
- Students are required to follow teacher's instructions so that they can do their activities easily.

- Students are invited to show their collaboration with their teachers for a successful implementation of BL method; they need to interact actively, also to be motivated and mobilized to become responsible and take charge of their learning.
- EFL students need to be aware of the importance of adopting such harmonious mixture, whereby they enrich their vocabulary repertoire, and hence improve their communicative interaction.

Limitations of the Study

The current study attempted to investigate the effect of BL in enhancing EFL students' communicative abilities and to elicit their attitudes along with the teachers' views towards the proposed method. Nevertheless, we had encountered some hinders that prevented us from getting more adequate data. One limitation of this study is that it was limited only to one class (group) observation which was due to time constraint. Normally, the classroom observation of this research was supposed to be carried out with third year EFL students but because of time limitation, we obliged to change the sample into second year students to accomplish this work. Moreover, students' non-regular attendance led us to work with fewer participants. Furthermore, only few EFL teachers responded to the questionnaire as they were busy and time was limited.

References

- Abbas.L. (2014). *Applying Blended Learning to English Communication Courses 101 and 102 at BZU/ Palestine (Case Study)* (Doctoral dissertation, Birzeit University).
- Al Obaydi.L.H. (2020, February 3). Teaching and Learning English in EFL context: Blended learning is the choice. Retrieved from <https://inspire.jpik.com/teaching-and-learning-english-in-efl-context-blended-learning-is-the-choice/>
- Bath, D., & Bourke, J. (2010). *Getting started with blended learning*. ISBN: 978-1-921760-24-2
- Bonk, C. J., & Graham, C. R. (2012). *Handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs*. San Francisco, USA, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- British Council. (2013). *Blended learning in English language teaching: Course design and implementation*. Retrieved from British Council 2013 Brand and Design/D057 10 Spring Gardens London SW1A 2BN, UK
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). San Francisco, USA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Canale, M. & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches of second language teaching and testing. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Catherine Nicholson. (2019, September 24). Page catherine-Nicholson : Blogs [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://www.thevirtualtrainingteam.com/blog/author/catherine-nicholson>
- Celce-Murcia, M., Dornyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1995). *Communicative Competence: A Pedagogically Motivated Model with Content Specifications. Issues in Applied Linguistics*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2928w4zj>

- Christopher Pappas. (2015, October 8). Discover the best collection of eLearning articles, concepts, software and eLearning resources [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://elearningindustry.com/>
- Desurmont.A, Forsthuber.B and Oberheidt.S. (2008). *Levels of Autonomy and Responsibilities of Teachers in Europe*. Retrieved from <http://www.eurydice.org>
- Fakhir.Z. (2015). *The Impact of Blended Learning on the Achievement of the English Language Students and their Attitudes towards it* (Doctoral dissertation, Middle East University).
- Ferdig, R. E., & Kennedy, K. (2014). *Handbook of research on K-12 online and blended learning*. USA: Lulu.com.
- Garrison, D., & Kanuka, H. (2004). Blended learning: Uncovering its transformative potential in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 7(2), 95-105. doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2004.02.001
- Hockly, N. (2018). Blended learning. *ELT Journal*, 72(1), 97-101. doi:10.1093/elt/ccx058
- Hymes, D. (1971). *On communicative competence*. Philadelphia. Philadelphia University Press.
- Kaur, M. (2013). Blended learning - Its challenges and future. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 93, 612-617. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.09.248
- Labbal. (2006). *A diagnostic evaluation of EFL students' competence in communication and the need of Integrating pragmatic insights to develop oral performance* (Master's thesis, Mohamed Khider ,Biskra).
- Lalima, D., & Lata Dangwal, K. (2017). Blended learning: An innovative approach. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(1), 129-136. doi:10.13189/ujer.2017.050116

- Listiana, N., & Jaharadak, A. A. (2019). Blended learning as instructional media: Literature review. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, *1167*, 012066. doi:10.1088/1742-6596/1167/1/012066
- Mayadas, F. (1997). Asynchronous learning networks: A Sloan Foundation perspective. *Online Learning*, *1*(1). doi:10.24059/olj.v1i1.1941
- McGee, P., & Reis, A. (2012). Blended course design: A synthesis of best practices. *Online Learning*, *16*(4). doi:10.24059/olj.v16i4.239
- Okaz, A. A. (2015). Integrating blended learning in higher education. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *186*, 600-603. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.086
- Ololube, N. (2013). *Advancing technology and educational development through blended learning in emerging economies*. CA: IGI Global.
- Pardede, P. (2012). Blended learning for ELT. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, *2*(3), 165. doi:10.33541/jet.v2i3.54
- Patrick, S & Sturgis, C. (2015). *Maximizing Competency Education and Blended Learning: Insights from Experts*. International Association for K–12 Online Learning (iNACOL).
- Picciano, A. G., Dziuban, C., & Graham, C. R. (2014). *Blended learning: Research perspectives*. New York & London: Taylor & Francis.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. New York: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS.
- Sriarunrasmee, J., Techataweewan, W., & Mebusaya, R. P. (2015). Blended learning supporting self-directed learning and communication skills of Srinakharinwirot University's first year students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *197*, 1564-1569. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.111

- Stacey, E., & Gerbic, P. (n.d.). Introduction to blended learning practices. *Effective Blended Learning Practices*, 1-19. doi:10.4018/978-1-60566-296-1.ch001
- Stein, J., & Graham, C. R. (2014). *Essentials for blended learning: A standards-based guide*. Routledge.
- Synchronous Vis-a-Vis Asynchronous Learning: A Blended Approach. (2018, December 1). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338555406_Synchronous_Vis-a-Vis_Asynchronous_Learning_A_Blended_Approach
- Understanding the Different Blended Learning Models. (2016, August 2). Retrieved from <https://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/blended-learning/understanding-different-models-blended-learning>
- Vandermolen, R. M. (2010). *The examination of the implementation of blended learning instruction on the teaching and learning environment in two west Michigan school districts* (<http://commons.emich.edu/theses/296>) (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. (<http://commons.emich.edu/theses/296>)
- Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Teaching language as communication*. Oxford University Press.

Appendices

Appendix A

Classroom Observation Checklist

Teacher: _____ **Date:** _____

Observer: _____ **Time:** _____

Class observed: _____ **Session:** _____

Group: _____

Aspects to be observed	Characteristics	Yes	No
Classroom atmosphere	➤ The setting is well organized and comfortable for students to participate appropriately.		
	➤ Classroom is equipped with the needed technological materials.		
	➤ Classroom's seating is arranged for effective interaction.		
	➤ Classroom is suitable for students to undertake their tasks.		
	➤ Classroom is not well arranged because of the large number of the students.		
	➤ Teacher uses Moodle to deliver his course.		
	➤ Teacher depends largely on video to introduce his lesson by attracting student's attention.		

Teacher's integration of online video	➤ Teacher relies on video to motivate his students to communicate effectively.		
	➤ Teacher manages his class: -Teacher talking time is sufficient and appropriate. - Time allocated to the students is sufficient. - Time allocated to the activities is sufficient.		
	➤ Teacher provides students with immediate feedback.		
	➤ Teacher uses traditional teaching materials only.		
	➤ Teacher does not provide students with immediate feedback		
	➤ Teacher integrates E-Learning method along with traditional Face to Face Learning.		
	➤ The integration of E-Learning facilitates the teaching process and the way the teacher presents lessons.		
Students' reaction to online video during F2F session	➤ Students show interest in the topic presented through video.		
	➤ Students show a positive attitude in doing their tasks. They respond to teacher's instructions and feedback.		
	➤ Students have already learnt the lesson through video at home before the classroom session. Therefore, they are more interacted and motivated.		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students seem bored and unmotivated during the session. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students show responsibility in their learning. 		
Students’ Communicative Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students’ prior knowledge of the topic through online video enhancing their understanding and their communication in the class session. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students participate actively in the classroom discussion. They are dynamic and more engaged. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students show a degree of fluency using advanced vocabularies in their communication. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students communicate effectively during the classroom session. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students seem passive. The classroom is teacher-centered. 		
<p>Comments:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>			

Appendix B

Questionnaire for Third Year EFL Students

Dear Students

The following questionnaire is dedicated to collect the relevant data to our Master research work about **“The Effect of Using Blended Learning in Enhancing EFL Learners’ Communicative Competence”** at the Department of English, Biskra University. Thus, you are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire. Your contribution will be of a great importance for the accomplishment of our research work. Please tick (✓) in the appropriate box (es) or write a complete statement whenever necessary.

Thank you in advance for your effort, time and collaboration.

Blended Learning: (mixed or hybrid learning) is a flexible approach to education, which combines traditional in-classroom (face to face) learning and proper implementation of innovation technology (online learning), by involving students in both offline and online interactions to facilitate language learning.

Prepared by:

NOUGA Karima

Supervised by:

Mrs. BENZIDA Yasmina

2020-2021

Section One: Blended Learning

Q1: Do your teachers post online courses via Moodle Platform?

- a) Yes b) No

→If yes, how often do they use it?

- a) Always b) Sometimes c) Rarely

Q2: How do your teachers explain the same online courses in classroom sessions?

(You may select more than one answer)

- a) Via video c) Audio
b) Video conference d) Others

✓ Please, justify

.....
.....
.....

Q3: Being a third year EFL student who have witnessed both Face to Face and E-Learning, which one do you like most? (Choose only one answer)

- a) Face to Face Learning
b) E- Learning
c) Both

Q4: Does your teacher integrate Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) during the oral session?

- a) Yes b) No

Q5: Do your teachers post videos via Moodle platform?

- a) Yes b) No

Q6: Do you benefit from videos more than the other formats?

- a) Yes b) No

✓ **Please, specify your reason(s)?** (You may select more than one answer)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) You can watch it whenever you want | <input type="checkbox"/> | e) Time-consuming | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) You can stop and rewind it several times | <input type="checkbox"/> | f) Upload problem | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Listening to native speakers (authentic material) | <input type="checkbox"/> | g) Poor-quality video | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Facilitate the topic understanding in a short time problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | h) Internet connection | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q7: Do you face difficulties during online learning?

- a) Yes b) No

Q8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a) E-Learning courses have to be simple, direct, easy and general.					
b) E-Learning course should not exceed 10 minutes in a video form.					
c) E-exercises delivered by the teacher should be clear and simple.					
d) Teachers have to facilitate the method of E-assessment.					
e) E-assessment includes: yes/no questions – choice questions.					
f) E-assessment should serve the level of average students.					
g) E-assessment contains phases.					
h) Face to Face session should tackle the same E-course but only the difficult points					
i) Face to Face assessment must include the difficult					

points discussed in the class.					
j) Teacher in Face to Face courses should tackle difficult, complicated and debatable issues.					
k) Both teachers and learners have to search about debatable issues.					

NB: The points discussed in the table above are summarizing “the norms” of Blended Learning model.

Q9: Are your teachers using the norms of Blended Learning?

- a) Yes b) No

→If yes, do you think that your communicative competence has increased or decreased?

Please justify

.....
.....
.....

Section Two: Students’ attitudes towards the effect of Blended Learning on Students’ Communicative Competence

Q10: “Speaking is the most difficult skill to be mastered for the majority of English learners who still incapable in communicating in English orally.” (Al Hosni, 2014.p3).

- a) Agree b) Disagree

Q11: Which language skill(s) do you prefer most? (You may select one / two only)

- a) Speaking skill c) Reading skill
b) Listening skill d) Writing skill

Q12:Do you find difficulties when speaking with your classmates and your teachers?

- a) Yes b) No

Q13: What are the reasons behind your communication difficulties? (You may select more than one choice)

a) Incorrect pronunciation	
b) Lack of fluency	
c) Incorrect use of grammar rules	
d) Lack of vocabulary	
e) Lack of practice	
f) Fear of making mistakes	
g) Fear of facing teacher/classmates	
h) Boredom and lack of motivation	
i) Lack of self-confidence	
j) problem of anxiety	
k) Lack of knowledge	
l) All of them	

Q14: How often do you participate in oral expression sessions?

- a) Always c) Rarely
b) Sometimes d) Never

Q15: Which of the following aspects affect your motivation or engagement to participate in oral classes?(You may select more than one choice)

- a) Type of tasks d) Teaching materials
b) Classroom atmosphere e) Teacher's feedback
c) Teaching method f) All of them

Q16: How do you consider the time allocated to oral expression classes to become communicatively competent in English?

- a) Sufficient b) Not sufficient

Q17: How often do you receive feedback from your oral expression teacher?

- a) Always b) Sometimes c) Rarely d) Never

Q18: Do you think that receiving the teacher's feedback in oral expression session depends on? (You may select more than one choice)

- a) Time-allocated c) Numbers of the learners

- b) Learners' motivation

✓ **If there are others, please tell us**

.....
.....
.....

Q19: Since you are learning in your own pace, do you feel that you are autonomous learner?

- b) Yes b) No

✓ **Explain more, please**

.....
.....
.....

Q20: What is your attitude towards the Blended learning as a method to enhance communicative skills?

- a) Positive b) Negative

Please, feel free to add any further comments, suggestions or opinions

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your time and collaboration

Appendix C

A Questionnaire for Teachers of English at Biskra University

The following questionnaire is dedicated to collect the relevant data to our Master research work about **“The Effect of Using Blended Learning in Enhancing EFL Learners’ Communicative Competence”** at the Department of English, Biskra University. Therefore, you are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire. Your contribution will be of a great importance for the accomplishment of our research work. Please tick (✓) the appropriate box (es) or make complete statements whenever necessary.

Prepared by:

NOUGA Karima

Supervised by:

Mrs. BENZIDA Yasmina

2020-2021

Section One: General Information

Q1: How long have you been teaching English at university?

- a) 1-5 years b) 5-10 years c) More than 10 years

Section Two: Teachers' attitudes towards Blended learning Model

Q2: Do you use Moodle platform to deliver online courses?

- a) Yes b) No

→If yes, do you explain the same online courses in classroom sessions?

✓ Please, state how?

.....
.....
.....

Q3: Do you deliver videos via Moodle platform?

- a) Yes b) No

→If yes, how often do you do that?

- a) Always b) Sometimes c) Rarely

Q4: How many students respond positively to online videos?

- a) All of them c) Few of them
b) Most of them d) none of them

Q5: Do you think that your students benefit from videos more than the other formats?

- a) Yes b) No

✓ Please, explain how?

.....
.....
.....

Q6: Which way do you find it more helpful for you as a teaching method? (Tick only one choice)

- a) Face to Face Learning
- b) E- Learning
- c) Both

✓ **Please, justify**

.....
.....
.....

Q7: What are the main challenges that may face teachers and students during online learning? (You may tick more than one choice)

- a) Teachers' and students' negative attitudes towards E- Learning
- b) Inappropriate Classroom atmosphere
- c) Insufficient time
- d) Absence/lack of ICT tools
- e) Internet connection problems

✓ **Others, please specify**

.....
.....
.....

Q8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
l) E-Learning courses have to be simple, direct, easy and general.					
m) E-Learning course should not exceed 10 minutes in a video form.					
n) E-exercises delivered by the teacher should be clear and simple.					
o) Teachers have to facilitate the method of E-assessment.					
p) E-assessment includes: yes/no questions – choice questions.					
q) E-assessment should serve the level of average students.					
r) E-assessment contains phases.					
s) Face to Face session should tackle the same E-course but only the difficult points					
t) Face to Face assessment must include the difficult points discussed in the class.					
u) Teacher in Face to Face courses should tackle difficult, complicated and debatable issues.					
v) Both teachers and learners have to search about debatable issues.					

NB: The points discussed in the table above are summarizing “the norms” of Blended Learning modal.

Q9: Do you use these norms of Blended Learning?

a) Yes

b) No

→If yes, do you think that students' communicative competence increase or decrease if you use these norms effectively?

✓ Please tell us how?

.....
.....

Section Three: Teachers' attitudes towards the effect of Blended Learning on Students' Communicative Competence

Q10: How do you find developing students' communication abilities via BL?

- a) An easy task b) A hard task

✓ State why, please (you may provide us with other options)

.....
.....
.....

Q11: Which of the following aspects your students are weak in and they need to be improved? (You may tick more than one choice)

- a) Pronunciation d) Communication skills
b) Grammar rules e) Social and cultural rules of English
c) Vocabulary f) All of them

✓ Others, please specify

.....
.....
.....

Q12: How do you evaluate your students' communicative competence?

- a) Very good b) Good c) Average d) Poor

Q13: How often do you provide your students with feedback in the classroom to encourage them to communicate?

- a) Always b) Sometimes c) Rarely d) Never

Q14: Do you integrate Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) during the oral session?

→If “yes”, what kind of ICTs do you use to enhance your students’ communication abilities? (You may tick more than one choice)

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| a) Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> | e) Videos | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Voice chat | <input type="checkbox"/> | f) PC’s | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Mobile phone | <input type="checkbox"/> | g) All of them | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Data show | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Q15: To what extent do you think that using E-Learning with Face to Face Learning can enhance the students’ communication skills?

✓ Explain more, please

.....
.....
.....

Please, feel free to add any comments or suggestion. Provide us with other suggested ways to develop EFL learners’ communicative competence when integrating Blended learning approach.

.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your time and collaboration

ملخص الدراسة

يعتبر التحول النموذجي من التدريس التقليدي إلى بيئة الإنترنت تحديًا للعديد من المعلمين في التعليم العالي. وبالتالي، فإن إدخال كلا الوضعين في نهج واحد حاسم وهو "التعلم المدمج" قد غير وجه التعليم للأفضل. لذلك، تحاول هذه الدراسة التحقيق في تأثير نهج التعلم المدمج على الكفاءة التواصلية لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بإجراء دراسة حالة على طلاب السنة الثالثة (ل.م.د) في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة محمد خيضر، بسكرة. علاوة على ذلك، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استنباط مواقف الطلاب والمعلمين تجاه "التعلم المدمج" كنهج تعليمي في تحسين الكفاءة التواصلية للطلاب وتعزيز التعلم المستقل داخل وخارج الفصل الدراسي أيضًا. نفترض في الدراسة الحالية أن التكامل الفعال لطريقة التعلم المدمج من شأنه أن يعزز كفاءة الطلاب في التواصل ويسهل الأمور لتقييم كل من المعلمين وكذلك فهم المتعلمين. من أجل تأكيد أو رفض هذه الفرضية، تم استخدام طريقة وصفية نوعية لتحقيق هذا العمل البحثي باستخدام طريقتين لجمع البيانات: قائمة معاينة الملاحظات العينية داخل الفصل التقليدي وجهاً لوجه وأيضًا داخل الفصل الدراسي المختلط، وتم إجراء استبيانين. الأول على ثلاثة وخمسين (53) طالب من طلاب السنة الثالثة، لغة الإنجليزية، والثاني على عشرة (10) مدرسين في جامعة بسكرة. من أهم النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من خلال تحليل المعطيات، أن قدرات الاتصال لطلاب السنة الثالثة قد تحسنت بشكل إيجابي بسبب نهج التعلم المدمج. كما تكشف نتائج الدراسة عن المواقف الإيجابية للطلاب والمعلمين تجاه تأثير التعلم المدمج على الكفاءة التواصلية للمتعلمين وكذا استقلالية التعلم وبالتالي فإننا نفترض أن تطبيق هذا المنهج في الجامعات الجزائرية قد يعزز مهارات التواصل للطلبة كما يطور التعلم الذاتي لهم. أخيرًا، تم طرح عدد من التوصيات لكل من المعلمين والمتعلمين لتعزيز التنفيذ الفعال للتعلم المدمج في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم المدمج ، الكفاءة التواصلية ، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، السنة الثالثة.