




IMPACT OF BLENDED LEARNING ON ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL IN PAKISTAN

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Blended Learning, English as Second language, Undergraduate Level, Pakistan	Blended Learning (BL), is a teaching approach that integrates face-to-face instruction with interactive online tools and resources. The research study was conducted to analyze students' satisfaction with approach of Blended Learning in the second language learning classrooms. The research study's objectives were to find out the impact of blended learning on the students' speaking practice and to find out impact of Blended Learning on students' listening practice. The simple random sampling technique was used in this study. In this regard, the data was collected from 317 undergraduate ESL students of different private and government universities in Lahore. After collection, data was encrypted in SPSS software version 22. The descriptive analysis of the collected data shows that most of the ESL students found BL supportive and helpful in learning English language and shows a positive attitude toward BL. The results offered important information from results of current investigation in reaching the conclusion wherein findings show that varying percentages of the students expressed their diverse sentiments regarding the blended learning as compared to the traditional classroom environments.
ARTICLE HISTORY Date of Submission: 29-07-2024 Date of Acceptance: 02-09-2024 Date of Publication: 04-09-2024	 2024 Journal of Social Research Development
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Email:	tamkeen25alisyed@gmail.com
DOI	https://doi.org/10.53664/JSRD/05-03-2024-05-49-56

INTRODUCTION

The evolvement of people relies on the quality of schooling which is the key element in evolvement in any society (Coccia, 2017). The blended learning known as the merge of traditional learning with online learning (Kwee & Santos, 2022). The blended Learning can be explained as the innovative combination of traditional classroom learning experiences with experience of online learning (Tao, Yu, Luo & Zhang, 2024). Blended Learning is mixture of traditional classroom learning and online

learning. Instead of differentiating two approaches to learning, there is a need to establish linking amid traditional instruction and modern-day technology (Hill, Chidambaram & Summer, 2016). In this regard, the blended learning combines traditional face-to-face classroom methods with online educational materials as well as interactive online activities (Kanuka, 2004). The blended learning represents a paradigm shift from traditional classroom methods to a hybrid model that combines face-to-face interactions with digital technologies (Graham, 2006). Initially conceived to exceed flexibility and understands diverse learning styles, blended learning has gained traction globally as advancements in technology and pedagogy continue to reshape educational practices (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

In Pakistan, the adoption of blended learning has been influenced by need to address educational challenges while leveraging the digital platforms to improve the learning outcomes. In this regard, understanding the framework and components of blended learning models is essential for desired setting in the particular context (Diep, Zhu, Struyven & Blicck, 2017). The blended learning, the pedagogical method that mixed traditional classroom approaches with online educational tools & interaction activities are increasingly adopted in language learning contexts in order to highlight potential barriers, like digital literacy gaps, lack of resources, resistance to change among students and teachers (Kintu, Zhu & Kagambe, 2017). This literature review aims to find out the impact of blended learning on learning of English as second language. Similarly, there is a need to examine the impact on students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels and how it correlates with language acquisition success. The integration of blended learning in the Pakistan educational institutions has been driven by the need to enhance learning outcomes and address challenges of large class sizes, limited resources, and varying levels of student proficiency. Ahmed, Mahmood and Khan (2019) have documented the increasing implementation of BL approaches in both the private and public universities in Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Blended Learning in (ESL) Education

This combination ensures a comprehensive language experience, promoting both communication skills and digital literacy. The effective implementation of blended learning in ESL involves careful consideration of digital tools and instructional methods (Kwak, Menezes & Sherwood, 2015). The selection of the appropriate technologies plays crucial role in enhancing language acquisition. For instance, online language learning platforms, virtual classrooms & interactive multimedia resources can be integrated into curriculum to reinforce language concepts and provide additional practice opportunities (Chen, 2018). The ongoing support for ESL students navigating the blended learning environment is another critical aspect of the successful implementation. Providing clear guidelines, technical assistance, and regular feedback ensures that learners can confidently navigate digital platforms and utilize the online resources to enhance their language skills (Ma, Ge & Hu, 2021). By examining the participants' performance level, Mumtaz come up with the conclusion that inductive approach is superior and more beneficial in facilitating acquisition of second language. This support structure is essential in fostering positive learning experience and minimizing potential challenges

as associated with the integration of technology in the ESL education (Dziuban, Moskal, Kramer & Thompson, 2015).

Role of BL in Acquisition of ESL

Different researches have explored that through BL language skills can significantly improve, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Chenoweth and Murday (2003) found that ESL students in blended learning settings showed significant advances in writing proficiency compared to those in traditional classrooms. Yang and Chang (2012) reported enhanced listening & speaking skills among ESL learners engaged in the blended learning environments. The blended learning in enhancing ESL acquisition Blended learning, combining traditional learning instruction with online educational activities, has emerged as versatile approach in ESL education. Zhu (2012) examined the role of technology in ESL students' satisfaction with BL. The study found that the integration of online learning tools, interactive simulations, and online assessments enhanced the technological aspect of learning. The positive impact of technology upon learning experience influenced students' perceptions and contributed to increased satisfaction. Mumtaz (2021) shares a valuable perception into the Productiveness of two different approaches of instruction in acquisition of second language. Two distinct method inductive and deductive approaches were compared. By the integration of the inductive learning approached into the environment of blended learning, teacher can increase the efficiency of the second language acquisition instructions, by engaging the students into an active meaningful learning.

Challenges & Limitations in Traditional ESL Approaches

The traditional ESL approaches have faced several challenges and limitations over the years, which have prompted educators and researchers to seek more effective and adaptive methodologies. In a study by Mahmood, Rehman and Awan (2019), it was found that the Pakistani students exhibited higher levels of participation and enthusiasm in blended learning settings. The use of multimedia resources and interactive activities helped to maintain student interest and foster a more engaging learning environment (Ahmad, Iqbal & Rao, 2023). This finding is consistent with global literature on blended learning. In this connection, factors like students' attitudes towards blended learning, prior experience with digital tools, and instructor's proficiency with technology are responsible for producing desired outcomes (Isda, Purwati & Imran, 2021). Despite the benefits, blended learning also presents challenges, particularly related to technology. Issues such as internet connectivity, digital literacy, and the availability of technological resources can hinder the effectiveness of blended learning (Liu, Magjuka, Bonk & Lee, 2010). Likewise, different assessment strategies used in the blended learning environments to measure language proficiency in different situations. Still, ongoing advancements in educational technology & increased accessibility are helping to mitigate these challenges.

Research Hypotheses

- H01: There is no significant difference between private and government students regarding the BL Approach on Speaking Practices
- H1: There is a significant difference between government and private students regarding the BL Approach on Speaking Practices

- H02: There is no significant difference between private and government students regarding the BL Approach on listening Practices
 H2: There is a significant difference between government and private students regarding the BL Approach on listening Practices

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As per the nature and requirements of study, the present study was the post-positivist paradigm. A survey of literature was organized to have a summary of the analytical framework to give a strong base of the study variables and to understand significance of research variable. The nature of study was descriptive, survey method was used and responses were collected on statements of a five-point Likert scale.

Research Instrument

The nature of study was quantitative and based on survey design. For data collection questionnaires were adapted from the study (Gökğöz, 2019) and (Chen, 2015). The questionnaire was based on 2 sections. The first section includes demographic variables i.e., (Gender, institute, program, and age of student). The second section involves the statements relevant to variable of study i.e., listening skills, and speaking skills.

Population & Sample

The population of the study was English department students of two different universities of Lahore, who were practicing the Blended Learning approach and fall into different socioeconomic statuses. In this linking, the students were selected through the simple random sampling from two different universities located in Lahore city namely the Government College University Lahore, and Minhaj University Lahore.

Data Analysis

After collecting quantitative data from participants, data was entered into SPSS (v20) and analyzed descriptively like frequency, percentage, mean and 70 standard deviation, and inferential statistics was used such as the t-test to compare the mean of students of a public university with students of a private university.

FINDINGS & RESULTS

Table 1 Comparison of Government and Private Students' Perceptions (T-Test)

Variables	Public		Private		t	p	95% CL	
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL
Scores	14.39	2.34	14.46	2.16	.21	.179	-.456	-.572

To find out significant difference of mean score between private and public institute students about impact of blended learning approach on speaking practices. The mean and SD value for students of public university is (M=14.41, SD=2.32), and for students of private sector is (M= 14.35, SD=2.14). The t-test value is t=.21 and significance level is p>0.05 as .186 is the outcome. Thus, null hypothesis is accepted as there is no significant difference in private and public university student's perception,

findings state that there is small means score gap amid their “perceptions on impact of BL approach on speaking practices.”

Table 2 Comparison of Government and Private Students’ Perceptions (T-Test)

Variables	Public		Private		t	p	95% CL	
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL
Scores	19.09	2.89	19.48	2.72	-1.20	.378	-1.03	-.247

An “Independent sample t-test” was utilized to find out significant mean score dissimilarity between private and public university students’ Impact of BL Approach on Listening Practices. The mean & standard deviation value for public sector undergraduates is (M=19.09, SD=2.89), and for private sector undergraduates is (M= 19.48, SD=2.72). In this connection, the t-test value is t=-1.20 and the level of significance $p>0.05$ as .378 is the result. So, the findings prove that “There is a means score gap between private and public university students”. The impact of BL approach on the listening practices the perception held by the undergraduates at private as well as public institutes do not significantly different.

DISCUSSION

A study by [Gordeslioglu and Yuzer \(2019\)](#) highlighted the convenience and flexibility of the online listening tasks as perceived by the students. These findings can be related to the analysis of t-values concerning the perceptions of government and private university students on the Blended Learning (BL) approach impact on practice of listening. The high frequency of learners reporting improved listening skills aligns with broader recognition of BL’s effectiveness in enhancing these abilities. The general alignment in perceptions between government & private university students, as designated by non-significant p-values (greater than 0.05), suggests that students from both types of institutions recognize the benefits of BL in their listening practices. The current research findings aligned with a study by [Ahmed, Hussain, and Farid \(2019\)](#), which also reported high student desire for Continued Integration. The interest in e-learning at AIOU corresponds with the 54.9% of students who hope to continue mixing BL methods alongside traditional approaches, particularly in English conversation instruction. Despite some challenges, such as technological issues and mixed feelings about the time demands of online tasks, satisfaction and perceived benefits suggest that BL is a valuable approach in language education.

The preference for e-learning facilities indicates that students see value in the blending online and traditional educational methods. In conclusion, both sets of findings illustrate a clear preference among students for incorporating the online elements into their education. The benefits of blended learning and electronic learning environments are evident in terms of the comfort, reduced anxiety, improved attitudes, satisfaction, and desire for continued integration of these methods. The analysis of t- values indicated no significant mean score difference in satisfaction and comprehensions of the impact of BL on the speaking and harkening practices between government and private university scholars, with the p-values generally lesser than 0.05. This suggests a broad alignment in how BL is perceived across different types of the institutions, aligning with the findings of [Dziuban et al. \(2011\)](#) that BL can be effective across the different educational environments. Still, occasional significant

differences (p-values lower than 0.05) in the specific scripts indicate that institutional factors may occasionally impact pupil gestures and comprehensions. In this regard, these cases emphasize the need for further exploration to understand the nuances that how BL is enforced and entered in different educational settings.

CONCLUSIONS

The study provides an analysis of perceptions and impacts of blended learning among a different group of 317 ESL students, with a focus on speaking and listening practices. While online speaking tasks and listening, assignments are generally perceived as beneficial for improving language skills, students also encounter challenges, such as technological issues and the time-consuming nature of assignments. These findings underscore the importance of addressing barriers to the effectiveness & providing the adequate support to students to maximize the benefits of BL approaches. This study emphasized need for educators to consider students' diverse needs and preferences when designing and implementing BL activities. The study emphasizes the generally positive impact of BL on ESL students' speaking and listening practices, with strong preference for flexibility and convenience it offers. The findings also highlight the need for continuous improvement and support to address the different needs and preferences of pupils from different institutional backgrounds. To cut the short, the study underscores the multifaceted nature of students' experiences with BL approaches and the importance of considering various factors, such as demographic characteristics and technological proficiency, when designing and implementing BL activities. By addressing students' diverse needs and preferences, educators can enhance effectiveness of BL approaches and create more inclusive learning environments.

Recommendations

1. Future research could explore how socio-cultural variables such as language background, socioeconomic status and cultural beliefs influence the students' perceptions and experiences with blended learning approaches in language education.
2. Researchers may conduct longitudinal studies to track students' language learning outcomes & academic performance over time to assess the long-term efficacy and sustainability of the blended learning interventions.
3. Future researches may compare the implementation and blended learning's effectiveness in diverse educational settings and cultural contexts to identify the best practices and inform policy decisions.
4. Researchers may explore the role of training programs for teachers and career enhancing programs in developing the educators' abilities to execute effectively approaches blended learning in language classrooms.
5. Future researcher might investigate integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality & into blended learning models to develop student involvement and learning outcomes.

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