

CHAPTER II
ENGLISH TEACHERS' DIFFICULTIES IN BLENDED LEARNING
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A. The Nature of Blended Learning

1. Definition of Blended Learning

In language teaching and learning, blended learning is becoming increasingly popular. The concept incorporates both online and in-person learning into a unified learning experience. As a result, students can access online and offline learning, complete activities, and participate in discussions. The teacher could provide feedback and communicate with the students in both online and offline ways. In the field of education, three definitions of Blended Learning are very important: a mix of in-person and online training, a technology combination, and a mix of methodologies. Blended learning combines traditional (face-to-face) learning with a web-based online approach (online teaching).

If the components are applied methodically and appropriate information is logically implemented, the blended learning technique can improve the effectiveness of the educational process in a changing paradigm of modern education. Blended learning, on the other hand, is a teaching and learning system that integrates numerous methods with an interactive platform to develop students' competence and skills.

Blended Learning, according to Littlejohn (2007:28-29) is:

- a. Access to a wide range of alternative computer resources, as well as institutional digital repositories, with a single log-in that customizes the 'blend' of learning you're presented;
- b. Online learning with instructors acting as facilitators and a focus on co-creation within a course with a lot of online collaboration;
- c. Downloading content to mobile devices, using podcasts and e-books as resources, taking and sharing notes in class via tablet PCs with wireless connections, and receiving course updates via text messaging

- d. Use a virtual learning environment (VLE) to access course materials and ask questions, whether on or off campus.
- e. Using hand-held voting devices to provide quick feedback to the lecturer and uploading notes to your personal blog (weblog) while the lecture is in process.
- f. Learning on a just-in-time basis via computer-based lessons;
- g. Using instant messaging and other informal "social computing" tools to communicate with study partners outside of class;
- h. Creating and publishing an e-portfolio of your work from many universities' courses;
- i. Integrated physical and virtual learning spaces that integrate and accommodate technology while focusing on student learning
- j. Successful and gratifying student-teacher relationships can be established and maintained through online communication without ever meeting face to face.

Students can view and ask questions about course materials utilizing a virtual Learning Environment whether they are on or off school, according to the statement of Littlejohn (2007). The term "blended learning" refers to the process of mixing online and in-person learning experiences when it comes to educating pupils. Learning becomes more meaningful as a result of the range of learning resources that may be gained through the usage of blended learning. Based on the foregoing, it can be stated that offline and online teaching have distinct advantages and challenges, and that teachers must always come up with new and engaging ways to educate, whether offline or online.

Blended learning can be defined as a combination of traditional learning and web-based online approaches, a combination of media and tools utilized in an e-learning environment, or a combination of a number of pedagogical approaches that are not necessarily dependent on the use of learning technologies. Students in a blended-learning course, for example, might attend a regular classroom class given by an instructor while

simultaneously working independently on online course components outside of class. In this situation, online learning experiences may replace or supplement in-class time, and students would study about the same subjects online as they would in class. Online and in-person learning experiences would be parallel and complementary.

2. Factor Causing Successful Blended Learning

There are five important factors that should be considered as significant elements while using the blended learning paradigm according to Fakhri Azmi (2016:14), which are as follows:

First, Teachers and students can engage in a virtual classroom meeting, also known as a face-to-face meeting, during live events. Second, students have their own set of rules for setting up online learning via the internet or a CD room. Third, collaboration is a place where students can interact with one another through conversation or other activities. Fourth, there is assessment, which is the time when pupils' learning progress is evaluated. Last but not least, Reference Material; everything has to do with improving learning transfer and retention.

When students and teachers connect directly through online learning, the teacher must give a URL to access online learning. The teacher then delivers online learning material. In addition, students can participate in virtual classes with their friends.

Five keys emerge as critical parts of the blended learning process, according to theories of blended learning of Carman (2005):

a. Live Events

Synchronous means that students and teachers are in a virtual classroom at the same time. Face-to-face learning occurs when students and teachers interact in a real learning environment. Then there's the online material, which is defined as interactive, internet-based, or CD-ROM instruction in which students perform activities autonomously, at their own skill level, speed, and on their own time.

b. Collaboration

Any situation or place in which students engage with one another.

E-mail, online conversations, and online chat are just a few examples.

c. The amount of knowledge that the students have. To measure learning outcomes, pre-assessments may be used before real-class, previous knowledge discovery, and post-assessments may be used following scheduled or online learning sessions.

d. Everything that helps in the recognition and transfer of knowledge.

Another factor that cause successful blended learning has summarized by Al-Ayed & Al-Tit (2021), they developed the factors using some relevant works (e.g., Lim & Morris, 2009; Harris et al., 2009; Al-Zu'bi & Bani- Domi, 2012; Poon, 2013; Al-Fuhaid, 2015; Wang et al., 2015; Blicek et al., 2019, Riyami et al., 2019) to collect the data on human, institutional and learning variables.

Human factors will measure by students' sufficient knowledge, their ability to learn on their own, their familiarity with technological tools like computers and the Internet, their satisfaction with blended learning, faculty members' sufficient knowledge, their familiarity with traditional teaching methods, their familiarity with blended learning, and faculty members' related training. Institutional variables were measured by four dimensions, resources, faculty support, student support and blended learning effectiveness. Three evaluation criteria relating to motivation, interactions, and results were used to assess learning factors.

Variables	Dimensions	Item
Human Variables	Student variables	Sufficient knowledge Competency to learn independently Experience in using technological tools
	Faculty variables	Sufficient knowledge Experience in traditional teaching

		Experience in blended learning
		Faculty related training
Institutional Variables	Resources Student support	Finance, time and effort Student support to ensure high involvement
Learning Variables	Motivation	Student motivations
Adoption of blended learning	Administration adoption Faculty adoption	Technological and instructional support Faculty incentives and development

(Taken from Al-Ayed & Al-Tit, 2021)

3. Kinds of Blended Learning

According to Stalker (2012), most blended learning programs include one of four types: Rotation Model, Flex Model, A La Carte Model, and Enriched Digital Model. After that, there are four types of rotation models: Rotation Station, Rotation Lab, Flipped Classroom Model, and Individual Rotation Station.

a. Rotation Model

On a regular basis, a rotation model is constructed between offline and online learning. Several small groups or full-class coaching, community initiatives, individual tutoring, and pencil and journal assignments are among the learning tasks. Below are four rotation models to choose from:

1) Station Rotation

On a regular schedule, students shift between classroom-based learning mobilities. At least one Online Training Station is included in the rotation. Other activities could include small group or whole-class instruction, group projects, individual coaching, and pencil-and-paper homework. Those exercises can be done together by separating the class into small groups or one-by-one rotations.

2) Lab Rotation

Students rotate between the many brick-and-mortar school locations on a set plan. An online learning lab is one of these activities. Students rotate between set locations in the school rather than staying in one spot for a mixed course.

3) Flipped Classroom

Students rotate between face-to-face teacher-guided sessions at the school on a scheduled schedule during the regular school day in this cycle. Subject education and post-school materials are available online from a remote location. The flipped classroom concept allows students to accomplish their homework online at any time, choose where they get online content and direction, and track the intensity of their participation through online activities.

4) Individual Rotation

Students alternate between learning modalities on a predetermined, individual basis; one of these activities is online learning. Individual timetables are set by the teacher for each student. Students do not require to rotate through every station or modality provided.

b. Flex Model

The resources are delivered via the internet, students complete the learning process on their own, there is a flexible schedule across learning modes, and the record instructor is on-site in this model. A varied face-to-face technique will be used by the recorded teacher. There is also a flex model, which may include a professional face-to-face mentor who assists with online learning on a regular basis or may not include any face-to-face enhancement.

c. Self-Blend Model

The model suggests a setting that extends across the school. Students anticipate taking one or more online courses to aid their

regular professors and the online teacher. Students can attend online classes in the brick-and-mortar school or outside of it. Students enrol in particular individual online classes and receive supplementary instruction from face-to-face professors at a brick-and-mortar school.

d. Enriched-Virtual Model

This methodology ensures that all of the pupils in the class have a full school experience. Students divide their time between attending a traditional school and learning digitally using online materials and supervision throughout the term. This strategy enables pupils to avoid going to a traditional school on a regular basis.

4. Advantages of Blended Learning

Thorne (2003) state some of the advantages of blended learning:

- a. Learning may be more targeted, focused, and delivered in manageable portions at the right moment.
- b. The tutor can be contacted by the students.
- c. Students get the opportunity to interact with one another.
- d. Learning materials are readily available;
- e. A variety of strategies can be applied by maximizing various technology.
- f. It is possible to construct it on top of other off-the-job provisions.
- g. possibility of greater spatial and temporal flexibility compared to the traditional format.
- h. variety of didactic teaching approaches.
- i. student gets the opportunity to master the necessary knowledge and skills in a convenient format.
- j. reduction of financial costs for learning without losing the advantages of the traditional approach.

5. The Disadvantages of Blended Learning

Thorne (2003) has summarized the disadvantages of blended learning:

- a. Get started on both the web and the ground.
- b. Establish support networks, which should include both technical and coaching help.
- c. Encourage students to announce their online learning engagement so that they are not disrupted.
- d. Encourage students to identify their preferred learning style and to develop a learning environment that suits them, whether at work or at home.
- e. Encourage pupils to share and support one another's accomplishments.
- f. Design learning that is engaging, visually appealing, and considers different learning styles.
- g. Combine online and traditional learning methods

6. Difficulties of Blended Teaching

Teaching is a great profession, but it is also a difficult job. The job of instructors has significantly changed throughout time in the modern era with the introduction of new teaching approaches and the manner that digital and smart learning has penetrated the area of education. A teacher today has the difficult duty of staying current with innovations and advancements in the fields of medicine, education, science, art, and other fields. They must therefore periodically update their knowledge and abilities, which is a top priority today.

A teacher is also an educator. They have the chance to make a significant impact on the pupils, but this opportunity also presents a number of difficulties. Teacher difficulties are the barriers and hardships teachers face in successfully teaching students in their classrooms (Khazanchi et al., 2021).

The difficulties in blended learning, Kaur (2013):

a. Technical challenges

Technology on networks is not one of the technical difficulties. Instead, they focus on employing and supporting the right technology to ensure the program's success. The following technical difficulties must be overcome:

- 1) Ensuring that participants can effectively use the technology
- 2) Refusing to use technology merely because it is accessible.

b. Organizational challenges

Although management frequently believes that blended learning is the best approach for training programs, it frequently ignores the fact that this is a complicated process that requires consideration beyond a single program. Among the organizational difficulties are:

- 1) Dispelling the myth that online training is less effective than traditional classroom instruction
- 2) Redefining the facilitator's role
- 3) directing and observing participant development

c. Instructional design challenges

When learning technologies are introduced, the focus is frequently on the technology implementation, leaving too little time and money for the design of the real necessary material to produce a successful program. The problems of instructional design include:

- 1) Looking at how to teach, not just what to teach
- 2) Finding the optimum delivery method for the performance goals.
- 3) Ensuring participant commitment and follow-through with "non-live" components
- 4) Maintaining engaging online offerings rather than only "talking at" people.
- 5) Ensuring that the blend's various components are coordinated.

B. Previous Related Studies

Previous research of the teacher's difficulties on blended learning is limited. However, the researcher has found some related papers on teacher's difficulties that have been conducted by the number of researchers. The researcher considered those researches can be additional and valuable sources of information.

Hidayah et al., (2021) conducted a research entitled "Pembelajaran Blended Learning pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19". The result of this research is the indicators that affect the smoothness of blended learning are: teacher and students must understand the technology itself, internet network must be stable and content or learning instruments must exist. Meanwhile, the obstacles faced by the school in online learning are: first, teachers and students still do not understand about online learning, the internet network is less stable. The types of online learning that can be used by teachers and students are by using google classroom and whatsapp (WA) because using zoom or google meet is still not possible with the unstable signal conditions and the economic conditions of students who are less able to buy internet quota.

Khaerunnisa (2020) conducted a research entitled *Evaluasi Penerapan Blended Learning Pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di SMPIT Ibadurrahman: Studi Kasus di Kelas VII Akhwat*. Another study was conducted by (Raes et al., 2020) a study about A systematic literature review on synchronous hybrid. One of the difficulties has been that teachers were obliged to drastically alter their teaching methods. They must be able to deliver a high-quality learning experience to both in-person and remote students. Raes et al. (2020) point out that the technological competency of the teacher has a significant impact on students' educational experiences.

Therefore, in the present study, the researcher also conducted a study of English teachers' difficulties in blended learning. The differences between this study and those previous studies are the sample in this research, place and also the time differences.