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Assessing Teachers' Readiness to Implement Blended Teaching in the Classroom

The Case of EFL Teachers at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in didactics of foreign languages

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "Assessing Teachers' Readiness to Implement Blended Teaching in the Classroom." is my own work and all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by means of references. I also certify that I have not copied or plagiarized the work of other students or researchers partially of fully. In case any material is not documented, I shall be responsible for the consequences.

Signature Date

Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

To our beloved parents, whose love, encouragement and support were the source of inspiration and continuation,

Thank you.

To our sisters,

to our brothers and all

our friends,

we dedicate this work.

Lilia
Amira

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Abstract

The current study aimed at assessing teachers' readiness to implement Blended Teaching in the classroom. It sought to find out whether teachers of English at the department of English in Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel perceive Blended Teaching positively and support its integration in their courses. It also aimed at finding out the extent to which the target teachers are well prepared to successfully implement it. Therefore, it was assumed that teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel do have the required competencies and sub-skills of blending face to face and online instruction, hence, they are ready to implement Blended Teaching successfully. In order to achieve the underlined goals of this study and to confirm or refute this assumption, which was an adaptation of Graham, Borup, Pulham and Larsen's (2017) "Blended Teaching Readiness Survey" at Brigham Young University, was designed and administered to teachers. To this end, the target sample consisted of 25 teachers of English (both males and females); the sample was selected purposively because of its relevance to the research topic and aims. Data was analysed by using a quantitative approach. The results showed that teachers of English had a positive attitude towards blended instruction; they think that technology-based tasks are more effective than traditional ones, and that such type of instruction would permit them to explore new teaching strategies. It also revealed that teachers are not prepared yet to implement blended techniques in teaching English language. Interestingly, teachers did not master all the competencies required from blended teachers; they lack some competencies and vital sub-skills for an effective implementation of the newly adopted approach. That is why there is a constant need for particular training programmes and continuous professional development.

List of Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols

EFL: **E**nglish as a **F**oreign **L**anguage

BL: **B**lended **L**earning

BT: **B**lended **T**eaching

ICT: **I**nformation **C**ommunication **T**echnology

OL: **O**nline **L**earning

HL: **H**ybrid **L**earning

CD-ROM: **C**ompact **D**isc **R**ead-**O**nly **M**emory

US: **U**nited **S**tates

K-12: **K**indergarten to 12th Grade

ACE: **A**daptive **C**ommunication **E**nvironment

INACOL: **I**nternational **A**ssociation for **K**-12 **O**nline Learning

(N): **N**umber of Respondents

SA: **S**trongly **A**gree

A: **A**gree

D: **D**isagree

SD: **S**trongly **D**isagree

%: Percentage

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1. Background of the Study

The emergence of technology during the last decades led to significant changes on the level of many fields including the field of education. It has gradually introduced new approaches such as Online Learning, Hybrid Learning and Blended Teaching and learning. The latter focuses of inserting online technologies with face to face instruction to deliver courses. The so-called approach was quickly popularized and adopted by many institutions world-wide to ensure good learning and teaching quality; the latter has been proven by many researchers (e.g., Gilbert and Flores 2011, Brufee 1993, Garrison and Kanuka, 2004) who stressed that using ICTs enhances the teaching/learning environments.

Additionally, for the last three years, the world has witnessed an outstanding health alarm (COVID-19) which has reshaped many sectors including higher education and the Algerian universities were no exception; for that, there was a vast change in the system that highlighted the use of online interaction and technologies in combination with face-to-face teaching as a way to substitute full time face-to-face instruction. Therefore, blended teaching strategies were the most suitable choice. Moreover, factors like learners' diversity, different course delivery methods and the constant growth of students' number played a major role in the need to rely more on blended teaching methods for a better delivery of the content. According to Graham et al (2019, p. 6), the use of blended teaching techniques cannot be fully effective unless paired with suitable teachers' training and guidelines as they stated that: "To teach using effective blended methods, you need to be able to combine online and in-person learning activities strategically."

Pensky (2001, p19) claims that "today's students are no longer the people our education system was designed to teach". This premise, hence is the cornerstone of this study. The challenges of

today's teaching environment are based on the encroachment of technology where once the teacher reigned supreme. In a development unique to the 21st century, the collective consciousness of the Algerian student body wishes to transcend the physical barriers of the traditional classroom. For this reason, offers the Chronicle Research Service (2009) reports that the mass of students now seek access to the benefits and flexibility that technology offer, and which would inevitably lead to an asynchronous learning experience. The extant belief is that the utilization of varying degrees of technology in the classroom can and will lead to a more fulfilling learning experience. To answer this need, the Internet in particular has played a significant role in making education both easier on students as well as more accessible. Students are now able to fill in gaps in understanding by using a variety of sources and references available to them and by making use of various online services and educational programmes. The EFL subfield of education has similarly been influenced by this trend in classroom innovation.

2. Statement of the Problem

The advent of technology has reshaped several aspects of human life today, most notably education. In fact, technology has brought about major changes to the field of education under what is known as Blended Learning. English language teaching and learning has also been positively influenced by the incorporation of modern technologies. Therefore, blended approaches to teaching and learning tend to produce independent learners and effective communicators. Besides, they improve their four skills, abilities and selection of information. However, the success of the implementation of the new approach depends on various elements among which are teachers. The way teachers perceive Blended Teaching, and the degree of readiness they have to implement it affect the whole procedures of instruction as well as the final learning outcomes. Consequently,

the current study is an attempt to assess teachers' readiness to implement Blended Teaching in the classroom at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University- Jijel.

3. Research questions and Assumption

This study strives to answer the following questions:

1- How do teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University perceive Blended Teaching; what are the benefits and challenges of this approach?

2- Do teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University possess the necessary key competencies and sub-skills of Blended Teaching?

3- To what extent are teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University ready to implement Blended Teaching?

4- How can teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University become better blended teachers?

The aforementioned research questions led the researchers to the formulation of the following assumption that will be confirmed and verified for validity, thus, it is assumed that:

A: Teachers of English in Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University have the required competencies and sub-skills of blending face to face and online instruction, hence, they are ready to implement Blended Teaching successfully.

4. Research Methodology

This study is quantitative; it assesses teachers' readiness to implement Blended Teaching in the classroom. In order to investigate this topic, answer the underlined questions and verify the validity of the assumption, a "Blended Teaching Questionnaire", which was an adaptation of Graham et al,

(2017) "Blended Teaching Readiness Survey" at Brigham Young University, was designed and administered to 25 teachers of the department of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University representing the sample in the current research work. The obtained results were analysed, carefully interpreted and discussed so to draw some significant conclusions.

5. Research Significance

Since the use of Blended Learning in EFL classrooms and in several other contexts is growing, this study was conducted for the purpose of shedding light on teachers rather than learners; to identify their attitudes towards the new approach and its advantages and significance. Moreover, it explores the different models of Blended Teaching and how it facilitates the flow of the teaching process. By conducting this research, more light will also be shed on this new approach providing a clearer image of how 21st era teachers are dealing with the integration of the available modern and online technologies in a rapidly changing world where everything in every domain is constantly changing.

6. Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into two chapters; a theoretical chapter and a practical one. The first chapter includes two sections. The first one is entitled 'Blended Learning and Teaching: History and Definitions'. This section provides a general overview about bended learning and teaching. It includes a brief history of blended learning and it defines key concepts such as blended learning and blended teaching. It also distinguishes between this approach and similar approaches, and highlights the models of blended learning and teaching in addition to some adoption guidelines. The second section entitled 'Implementing Blended Teaching in English as Foreign Language Contexts' sheds the light on teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards Blended Teaching; benefits

and main challenges. Moreover, it explains the shifting roles in blended environments in addition to key competencies to implement Blended Teaching.

The second chapter represents the practical part of the dissertation. It explains the design of the study and the adopted methodology. It also provides a thorough analysis of data obtained by means of a questionnaire that was administered to teachers and discusses the obtained results. Finally, it exposes the limitations of the study and suggests some recommendations for a better implementation of Blended Teaching in Algeria.

Chapter One: Theorizing about Blended Learning and Teaching

Section One: Blended Learning and Teaching: History and Definitions

Introduction

The advent of technology has reshaped many sectors in today's' life, one of which is education. The inclusion of technology into this field has brought about new methods and educational approaches which contributed to the prosperity of both teaching and learning. Blended Learning is one of the growing educational concepts. It focuses on combining technology with face to face instruction in order to improve the teaching act and learning outcomes.

This chapter presents the history of Blended Learning, including the different definitions given by many researchers and the distinction between blended learning and similar approaches. This chapter, then, moves to cover key elements of Blended Teaching including different models and a set of guidelines for adopting the new approach in higher education.

1.1. Brief History of Blended Learning

Despite that Blended Learning (BL) is considered as a newly emerging approach to education, it is traced back in history to an era when modern technological devices did not exist. On 1840s', Sir Isaac Pitman was the first instructor to launch what is called today "Distance Education Course". He sent short texts to his students via mailed postcards and they were required to send them back to be graded and corrected (Pappas, 2015, para1). The development of BL is also credited to the emergence of online tools such as Moocs' Online Learning history which itself traced the development of learning technologies from 1960s' and refers to Ciscos' networking Academy in 1998 (Garrison & Kanuka 2004, pp95-105). The outburst of blended instruction was

mainly to overcome the shortcomings of the aforementioned online tools and utilize various delivery systems to ameliorate the learning outcomes and enhance learners' satisfaction. In the early 2000s, the term "Blended Learning" was coined by Paul Mayers of the BBC College of Journalism. According to him, the term has roots and it was used before this date. Yet, he established it to make it easier and accessible for his trainees. As Paul (2010) states:

> I needed a label for the new techniques I devised to help me train BBC staff. I was doing Internet research training, but I got fed up writing Web addresses on flip charts. I came up with a website to use during the course, a 'course companion.' This allowed trainees to click on links rather than have to read my handwriting. From there, I added exercises, then pre-course and post-course work. Then study material, tools that could be useful back in the work place, audio and video exercises, live examples, online treasure hunts. It became a very dynamic, imaginative way of staging a course, and soon other trainers were asking me help to build their own 'course companions.' This sort of training needed a name, so I thought of 'combined learning' as we used so many different sorts of media and techniques. That didn't sound right, so I came up with 'blended learning'. (Paul Myers 2010 as cited in Kitchenham 2011, p. xiii).

The term BL was quickly popularized later on, especially in education to count for certain types of learning delivery and those practices that has already emerged from previous times.

1.2. Definitions of Blended Learning

The advance of Information Communication Technology (ICT) has inevitably changed the basic concept of educational instruction to what is known as "Blended Learning and Teaching"; a modern way of learning and teaching which caters for the growing demands of the current era. However, it has been interpreted differently by researchers. Some researchers such as Graham,

Woodfield, Harrison (2013, pp 4-14) define BL as the combination of face to face and online teaching educational models. Oliver and Trigwell (2005, p.18), however, claimed that "the term Blended Learning simply requires two or more different kinds of things that can be mixed" and argued that "the breadth of integration means that almost anything can be regarded as BL". The aforementioned researchers are consistent in that BL is based on incorporating modern technological devices such as computers and mobiles into traditional classroom instruction in order to achieve a typical blended learning environment. Similarly, Garrison and Kanuka (2004, p.9) consider that BL is "the thoughtful integration of classroom face to face learning experiences with online learning experiences". Therefore, in spite of the frequent use of the term BL and its wide range of conceptions, the definition " blended learning environments combine face-to-face instruction with technology-mediated instruction (Graham, 2007, p.270) is the most incessant.

As reported by Graham (2006, p.3), BL is the result of combining two relatively different learning environments into one classroom; on the one hand, there is the simple yet highly relied on traditional learning environment or what is also referred to as "face to face instruction", on the other hand there is what he refers to as "distributed learning environments" that require the assistance of technology and grow very fast so that they hugely affect the possibilities of learning over the years.

Graham (2006, p.4) believes that although there is a huge number of functional definitions of BL, yet, they all fall back to being different variations of one common theme. The three most commonly used definitions according to him are what follow:

1) BL: Combining instructional modalities (or delivery media).

2) BL: Combining instructional methods.

3) BL: Combining online and face-to-face instruction.

Graham (2006, p.7) also goes as far as believing that with the way technology is growing so fast and being merged more and more into education is not only making it a crucial part of instruction, but also neglects the possibility of it not being included. Thus, he argues that this phenomenon is here to stay. In fact, Graham (2006, p.7) also believes that because of the importance given to BL, the word "blended" will no longer be needed to refer to it, which in turn highlights the prominent need to both understand and create effective learning experiences involving both traditional face to face instruction with computer assisted instruction.

1.3. Distinction between BL and Similar Approaches

1.3.1 Blended Learning versus Online Learning

The terms “Blended Learning” (BL) and Online Learning (OL) are sometimes used interchangeably, yet they are significantly distinct. Online learning, virtual learning, distant learning and e-learning, all stand for the same type of education which Gonzalez (2016) defines as:

> The creation and proliferation of the personal computer, globalization of ideas and other human acts, and the use of technology in exchanging ideas and providing access to more people. Audio, video, computer and networking technologies are often combined to create multifaceted instructional delivery system. The fundamental method to unite the distance learning instructor with the distance learner is the network. Networks suitable for distance learning implementation include satellite, cable modem, digital subscriber lines (DSL) and wireless cable. (p.186)

In other words, it is an instructional delivery system which includes any type of learning that takes place via internet; more specifically, to use various technological tools to deliver the content.

Regarding the time scale, OL was prior to BL, and it has grown rapidly because it caters for the needs of students who are unable to enroll in traditional classroom settings. Likewise, schools, universities and institutions which offer online programmes, courses, training or revisions increased in number because they could captivate considerable numbers of students from different regions in the world.

Although OL has fundamentally changed teaching and learning techniques, it had shortcomings which BL was founded to overcome. Both approaches adopt a rudimentary shift in instructional and delivery model of teaching which is characterized by the extensive use of technology tools. This implies that students are engaged with digital devices, while the teacher plays the role of a coach and mentor (Shorma,2019, p.326). Moreover, students are privileged with a sort of control over the time, place and the pace of learning which is not possible in traditional instruction. Nonetheless, these common features do not shade the constitutive differences between BL and OL: the nature of approaches, the application location, the method of learning, time of learning and usage of technology. BL model combines face to face instruction and online learning formats to deliver the content which makes self-paced work possible for students.

According to Ira Ehrlich, in his online portfolio" Online and Blended Learning Portfolio" (January, 2014), in this type of instruction, there are some typically arranged face to face meetings; the location of teacher and students is flexible during school hours, thus, the teacher communicates face to face and digitally and students learn under the teacher supervision sometimes or learn through online delivery the other times. In addition, the availability of internet is not mandatory. In contrast, online education in merely virtual; students do not have to physically attend classes

and learning is completely self-paced. Likewise, the teacher communicates digitally using different devices as audio and video recordings.

Based on what is mentioned earlier, OL is best suited in short-term training programmes which contain interactive tasks and training sessions. On the other hand, BL is best suited for long-term and more demanding instructional learning programmes because it aims at developing learners' different learning styles and meeting their growing needs and interests with the guidance of their teacher.

1.3.2 Blended Learning versus Hybrid Learning

Due to the increasing desire for multimodal approaches to learning, flexible education models were used inside English as a Foreign Language classrooms, hybrid and blended or fully blended classes have arisen as a way of combining face-to-face interaction and online tools (Caulfield, 2011, pp6-11). BL and Hybrid Learning both meant the use of technology to better the teaching experience and the learning outcomes in EFL classrooms. As a matter of fact, the term "Hybrid Learning" is often used interchangeably with BL due to the number of similarities (e.g the mix between technology and face-to-face instruction) shared by both approaches.

However, though the two concepts appear at first to be the same, each represents a different approach that is set to fulfil the needs of different groups of learners. Students and teachers in EFL programmes have to adapt to hybrid and blended classrooms in various ways including the use of integrated online classroom software, as well as open access to computers in addition to the traditional equipment used in face to face instruction. Hybrid Learning, on the one hand, ensures that students who are willing to learn through online mediums and students who wish to learn in a physical setting receive their education in their desired platform. However, BL interlaces the physical with the digital through the provision of classroom activities and assessments through

online integrated while retaining face to face tutorials for an optimal learning experience. This places a greater degree of responsibility and pro-activity on behalf of both students and teachers. Hence, it can be said that Hybrid Learning is an important element and integral part of BL (Caulfield 2012, pp. 6-11).

Technology enhanced courses act as a superset containing both blended and hybrid models. In essence, BL lends to no reduction in face-to face instruction time as contrasted with Hybrid Learning. Hybrid Learning replaced "in-person" time as in traditional settings with time spent outside of the classroom (i.e. at home) and online. According to Caulfield (2011, pp.6-11), the most essential component in the Hybrid methodology is experiential learning which refers to education gained outside the presence of the teacher. In this way "hybrid" does not simply mean a split between in-class and online learning but rather seeks to incorporate the outcome and the student based structures in multiple environments. Thus, it is better dichotomise "hybrid learning" as in-class and out-of-class activities.

Finally, BL may be considered a more dynamic method to transmit information than mere hybrid learning; while hybrid learning provides the option of online learning activities to students and the option of physical classroom-based activities to others, it fails to provide a link between the two. BL, on the other hand, allows for students to use the 'best of both approaches' so they benefit from both human interaction as well as technological mediation, although this requires a greater degree of commitment from teachers and students alike.

1.4. Blended Teaching

1.4.1 Definition

Blended Teaching is an instructional approach that uses digital strategies simultaneously with in-person instruction to deliver the content and practice on it. This blended approach to instruction mainly offers (1) improved learning effectiveness, (2) increased access and convenience, (3) greater cost effectiveness (Graham, 2006; p.252). Recently and due to COVID-19 disruptions, many educational institutions are using BT to up hold the teaching and learning act. In some blended classrooms, digital and face-to-face teaching may alternate according to a fixed schedule. For example, students might take one class on campus and another one entirely online. This approach is common in universities. Meanwhile, in a school classroom, blended teaching is likely to be more flexible. It simply means teachers can draw from a comprehensive toolbox of traditional and digitally enhanced strategies to best meet the needs of their students. (As cited in Jacksons' best website 'How to Use Blended Teaching in Your Classroom', 2020)

Strategically speaking, it is the appropriate blend of various elements, such as: social and teaching presence, the technology, the type of the task and assessment (Gerbic 2009, p.85). In the same vein of thoughts, Graham (2019, p.12) believes, BT effective "interplay between the 3 Ms, Media, Method and Modality". As he defines," Modality, or environment, in which learning takes place"; "Medias are the tools we use to teach our students: tablets, laptops, textbooks, whiteboards, etc"; "Method is how we actually use those tools and the affordance of the environment together to foster student learning". He further adds, "Blended teaching is an excellent way to provide access and flexibility to students' learning. For example, consider students who miss class time because they are ill or are participating in an extra-curricular activity. The integration of online learning options and in-person class activities could allow these students the flexibility they need to balance health and academics or academics and other activities that are a priority for them."

Furthermore, Discroll (2002, pp.1-2) focuses on the fact that BT is a mixture of old instruction and modern ways. She placed BT into four categories as follow:

1- To combine or mix modes of web-based technology (e.g., live virtual classroom, self-paced instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio and text) to accomplish an educational goal.

2- To combine various pedagogical approaches (e.g., constructivism, behaviourism, cognitivism) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology.

3- To combine any form of instructional technology (e.g., videotape, CD-ROM, web-based training film) with face to face instructor-led training.

4- To mix or combine instructional technology with actual job tasks in order to create a harmonious effect or learning and working".

1.4.2. Models of Blended Learning and Teaching

The definition of BL developed by Graham (2006, See Section One), noted above, depicts combining face to face elements with ICT elements. However, the ways in which these elements are combined and used in different environments are not identical; they lead to the construction of more than one blending model. One typology is provided by Staker and Horn (2014, pp.6-9). They subdivided blended learning and teaching into four models which are narrowed down from six original models. They are: (1) the face to face driven model, in which traditional instruction is mixed with online learning; (2) the rotation model, in which students rotate on a stable schedule which involves online stations and other classroom-based activities; (3) the flex model, in which online learning is the base of the endeavour meanwhile the teacher provides face-to-face support when needed; (4) the online lab model, in which students assist their traditional courses by

attending to additional online courses on-campus; (5) the self-blended model, in which students assist their traditional courses by taking additional online courses off-campus; and (6) the enriched virtual model; in which learning is mainly online with occasional face-to-face meetings. Staker and Horn (2014; pp.6-9) had made modifications on that model; they crossed out (1) and merged (4) and (5), this left them with four models: the rotation, flex, self-blended and enriched virtual models.

Another taxonomy is that of Graham (2006, pp.3-21) in which he suggests classifying blended learning and teaching models into four dimensions, four levels and three types. By four dimensions, he refers to space (face to face or virtual), time (synchronous or asynchronous), sensual richness (high, all senses/low or text only) and humanness (high human, no machine/low human, high machine). Another element of classification is generated by his consideration of four levels, i.e., activity, course, programme and institution. Most importantly, Graham came up with three different types of blends in relation to the purpose: **Enabling blends**, which focuses on the access and flexibility; **enhancing blends**, which aims at amplifying the traditional instruction and **transformative blends**, which seeks to change pedagogy.

The combination of technology course design approaches and traditional teaching methods in today's EFL classrooms is a demanding yet advantageous task for both teachers and learners. Along with the wide range of definitions blended learning embeds, it also holds a number of course design approaches that are suggested to be followed in order to meet with context-specific criteria whilst adding value to the classroom environment. Therefore, courses are designed in numerous ways extending from the infamous traditional instructions to adding extra online activities to an existing course or designing an altogether new course that involves blended activities.

For the matter of designing blended learning courses that are benifitial, three different course design approaches were conducted by Alammarry, Sheard and Carbone (2014, pp. 443-448):

(a) Low-impact blend: adding extra activities to an existing course

(b) Medium-impact blend: replacing activities in an existing course

(c) High-impact blend: building the course from scratch

a. Low-Impact Blend

This approach is described by Alammarry et al (2014, p.444) as the most effortless approach and that is because it endures adding online activities to an existing traditional course without necessarily removing any tasks that previously existed basing it to the "Course and a Half Syndrome", the instructors' tendency to add online activities to their courses without taking learning objectives into account which leads to extra efforts and extra tasks for their learners.

Low-Impact Blend is beneficial in so many ways; being relatively easier to conduct than other approaches as it helps teachers with less tendency to try blended learning to follow the method. Being an easy approach explains why it is also less time consuming. In a similar vein of thought and according to Alammarry et al, (2014, p. 444), the low impact approach allows teachers to directly involve new activities without consuming extra time in recreating their whole course. However, this approach also comes with a number of shortcomings. Firstly, in order to apply a low impact blended learning approach, instructors must have the needed technological knowledge. In his research Alammarry et al, (2014, p.444) lines a guide to the knowledge required from teachers to design a low impact approach and they are as follows:

- Identify which technological tool is needed to meet a specific pedagogical goal.

- Specify how the tool will be used to help student to achieve that goal.

- Enhance students' ability to use appropriate technological tools in the different phases of the learning process: Exploration, analysis and production

-Select and adopt technological tools that can allow them to identify their needs and resolve issues related to their own professional development.

However, when applying this approach there is a high risk of providing learners with two different courses one of them being the traditional face-to-face course and the second would be the online activity added by the instructor. Additionally, teachers will have to do extra work by only adding more online activities without taking the pedagogy and leaving the already existing tasks all that without having their efforts recognized as a result of inadequate compensation by administrators.

b. Medium-Impact Blend

This approach simply means replacing existing activities in a face-to-face course with online activities. Almmarry, Sheard and Carbone (2014, pp. 445-446) refer to this approach as a way for teachers to gain more confidence in using BL inside their classrooms as it allows opportunities for teachers to experiment different approaches without eliminating the whole course they traditionally had and to be useful especially for those who do not fear experimenting and adding changes to their courses. Also, for this approach to be well applied, confidence and technological knowledge are required. If the teacher wants to design a well-planned course that guarantees balance between online and face-to-face teaching, pre-planning and good planning are also required along with observation and evaluation of the course. Moreover, this approach does not condone guidelines as how much of technology based tasks are needed as that is influenced by many aspects including the nature of the course.

c. High- Impact Blend

For this approach, Alammarry et al, (2014, pp.447-448) go to explain that by following this lane, the teacher would have to build a course from scratch, thus, redesigning a face-to-face module into a blended one. According to them, this approach is outcome-based as the learning outcomes are defined before the instruction takes place by focusing on what students need and how to achieve it before planning the course. The benefits of this course include allowing a well planned combination of online and face-to-face teaching as the teacher would have the chance to look through their strengths and weaknesses before designing his/her course in order to guarantee a maximum of benefits.

As in the previously mentioned approaches, hight impact blend also requires a well technology knowledgeable teacher; in order to apply this approach, a teacher is required to be confident and at a high level of digital competency to replan a whole new course from scratch.

1.5. Adopting Blended Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

By invading the field of education, ICTs provide a wider range of options and innovative modalities which pushed it forward. Eventually, blending technology with regular instruction became essential on a higher rate especially in higher education institutions. In 2002, the president of Pennsylvania State University expressed his belief that blended learning was "the single greatest unrecognized trend in higher education" (Young, 2002, p. A33). Later on, studies in 2002 predicted that 80-90% of higher education courses would become blended in the coming years. Indeed, by 2004, 45.9% of the United States (US) institutions were adopting blended programs and courses. More and more institutions continued to embrace it until 2011 when scholars depicted "the explosive growth of blended learning" and declared blended learning' potential to become the "new normal" in higher education (Norberg, Dziuban, &Moskal, 2011, pp. 207-08).

Adopting a new instructional approach on the institutional level requires careful examination and solid platform to attain the desired goals. Thus, Graham, Woodfield and Harrison (2013, pp.4-14) conducted a research on six US institutions of higher education while adopting BL in order to propose a reliable framework to provide guidelines on how to systematically implement BL and BT. This framework embodies three categories: **Strategy** (i.e., refers to the BL related issues such as its definition, policies, degrees and potentials of implementation, and purposes of BL), **structure** (addresses issues relative to the frameworks which facilitate the implementation such as technological, pedagogical and administrative matters) and s**uppo**rt (includes the issues relating to the efforts that an institution makes to facilitate the implementation of BL designs in addition to the technological, pedagogical support). Table 1 illustrates the framework to adopt this new approach. (Graham et al, 2013, p.7)

Table 1: Blended Learning Adoption Framework

Category	Stage 1—Awareness/Exploration	Stage 2—Adoption/Early implementation	Stage 3—Mature implementation/growth
Strategy			
Purpose	Individual faculty/administrators informally identify specific BL benefits	Administrators identify purposes to motivate institutional adoption of BL	Administrative refinement of purposes for continued promotion and funding of BL
Advocacy	Individual faculty and administrators informally advocate	BL formally approved and advocated by university administrators	Formal BL advocacy by university administrators and departments/colleges
Implementation	Individual faculty members implementing BL	Administrators target implementation in high impact areas and among willing faculty	Departments/colleges strategically facilitate wide-spread faculty implementation
Definition	No uniform definition of BL proposed	Initial definition of BL formally proposed	Refined definition of BL formally adopted
Policy	No uniform BL policy in place	Tentative policies adopted and communicated to stakeholders, policies revised as needed	Robust policies in place with little need for revision, high level of community awareness
Structure			
Governance	No official approval or implementation system	Emerging structures primarily to regulate and approve BL courses	Robust structures involving academic unit leaders for strategic decision making
Models	No institutional models established	Identifying and exploring BL Models	General BL models encouraged not enforced
Scheduling	No designation of BL courses as such in course registration/catalog system	Efforts to designate BL courses in registration/catalog system	BL designations or modality metadata available in registration/catalog system
Evaluation	No formal evaluations in place addressing BL learning outcomes	Limited institutional evaluations addressing BL learning outcomes	Evaluation data addressing BL learning outcomes systematically reviewed
Support			
Technical	Primary focus on traditional classroom technological support	Increased focus on BL/online technological support for faculty and students	Well established technological support to address BL/online needs of all stakeholders
Pedagogical	No course development process in place	Experimentation and building of a formal course development process	Robust course development process established and systematically promoted
Incentives	No identified faculty incentive structure for implementation	Exploration of faculty incentive structure for faculty training and course development	Well-established faculty incentive structure for systematic training and implementation

N.B. (Graham et al, 2013, p.7)

Within those categories, three stages of adoption are inserted to manifest how institutions shift from initials and interest in BL and BT to their adoption. These stages are as follow:

Stage 1, Awareness/exploration; in this stage institutions do not follow any strategy in implementing BL, they rather shape awareness about the available or limited support for its integration in their classes.

Stage 2, Adoption/early implementation; this stage the institution adopts BL strategy and starts experimenting new policies and practices to strengthen the implementation.

Stage 3, Mature implementation/growth; in this stage the institution finally established efficient BL strategies, structures and practices.

To sum up, Blended Learning and Teaching have a promising potential, yet schools or institutions nowadays find it difficult to detach from traditional education and to incorporate ICTs into their settings. It is not solely about incorporating technology into the process of learning and teaching, but about selecting the best techniques and pedagogical methods to deliver the content efficiently. As Isakson (2002, p.14) claimed, achieving the required consistency of the mix depends on elements as context, the nature of the subject, the geographical distribution of teachers and learners, the technological environment, the type of learners and a whole range of factors related to culture, technology and economy.

Conclusion

Blended Learning and despite the ambiguity surrounding its appropriate definition is considered to be the future of education as mentioned in the literature. In fact, many educators argue that the reason blended learning is on its way to gain the future of education is because it gives teachers the

opportunity to dive into its wide range of conceptions and details to find the one that suits their particular classroom and learning goals. Additionally, the flexibility of blended teaching models is another way for teachers to be creative when it comes to what they want their learners to achieve from the course submitted to them. In many educational contexts, thus, the results proved how desirable it is to include technology in interplay with traditional face-to-face courses.

Section Two: Implementing Blended Teaching in English as Foreign Language Contexts

Introduction

Prior to the existence of BL trends, teaching foreign languages used to adhere to traditional approaches such as the Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method, which relied heavily on teaching English through rigorous training in translating the target language and learning its grammatical rules. Eventually, technology began to dominate EFL instruction, and marked significantly positive results in terms of the learning outcomes, flexibility and motivation. In this section, the focus is on teachers; their attitudes towards BT and their shifted roles in the new contexts, in addition to the skills, key competencies, benefits and challenges.

2.1. The Benefits of Implementing Blended Teaching

In today's educational systems, EFL teachers and course designers have developed a number of tools and approaches to facilitate the flow of the teaching process by modifying the classroom atmosphere; one of those approaches is Blended Teaching. BT serves at enhancing learners' engagement in the material at their own pace.

BT can lead to improved teaching, increased access as well as flexibility. Recently, it has remarkably overcome face to face traditional teaching for it proved that certain learning objectives are achieved better in environments where BT and technology are present. Additionally, many

authors such as Glibert and Flores (2011, p.253) have stood by the belief that BT is an attempt to coalesce all of the best elements of online and on-ground instruction into a" super-hybrid" of sorts, one that delivers a rich skill set and a valuable educational experience to student. Furthermore, not only EFL teachers rely on blended teaching but it goes as far as every other teaching domain as Kristen Picket puts it "blended learning allows us to evolve our teaching and learning efforts into the next generation. It is driven by the innovative and creative ideas that we as educators have for our classrooms. This approach gives us the means to reach the students who are often less likely to raise their hands and find a voice in the classroom". (As cited in 'Blended Learning Toolkit' Website, 2020). Moreover, teachers are entailed to apply technology for the sake of developing skills such as critical thinking as well as career and technology skills. Some other researches were conducted for the purpose of studying the instructors' perception of blended learning resulting in what generally appeared as a positive attitude expressing the need to develop their own personal proficiency in skills that requires the use of technology. In other words, most EFL teachers adopt a positive attitude towards blended learning and are favourable for utilizing the maximum technological devices that are available. In fact, teachers' perception of BT is a major anticipator of the use of new technologies in instructional settings. Thus, the success of this endeavour depends largely on the correlation between teachers' use of blended teaching and its' benefits; Having positive perception towards BT and being ready to implement it as should can assist the achievement of the targeted outcomes.

The literature related to blended learning constantly proved how viral the role of blended learning is to create an appropriate learning environment for both the instructor and his learners; among the several studies, Rovai and Jordan (2004, pp. 2-9) conducted an investigation by comparing three educational courses: traditional, blended and fully online to examine the difference in the sense of community in each of the courses hypothesizing that blended learning

would prove to be the most accurate; for that they used the three methods to instruct different groups of learners dividing the time throughout one semester. Students who were exposed to a blended learning course indeed measured highest in terms of community skills; higher than those who were exposed to a fully online course and the ones who were taught in a traditional way.

Furthermore, perhaps one of the most important benefits of BL provides for EFL teachers is time management; in many reports, teachers agreed that by using blended learning methods they needed less time to conduct their course to fit their students' needs without the extra time it usually takes them. Having a group of learners also means having to deal with their individuality when it comes to learning; some may not be as outgoing as others nor as open to ask questions or interact; for that, blended learning helps teachers to avoid classroom limitations by fostering multiple approaches that the teachers can divide among the learners. Collaborative learning (Brufee, 1993 p.3) is also one of the major positive experiences BL provides for EFL classrooms as the learners will be allowed to interact with one another as much as they do with their instructors.

Moreover, in a study conducted by Satar and Akcan (2010; pp. 153-172), a number of English teachers were examined over the course of 20 weeks by exposing them to blended environments after training them both pedagogically and technically; the teachers were instructed to complete journal entries and write on an online forum in order to reflect their journey; the results of the study proved that the teachers in question had a positive attitude towards the use of blended learning as they received an adequate training before applying the approach.

2.2. The Main Challenges of Implementing Blended Teaching

Blended instruction is regarded as the favourable and newly emerging approach of content delivery. However, although blended environments offer innovative methods, richness and flexibility, it has been a source of concern for many years. According to Hofmann (2011, pp.12-

13), teachers are often reluctant when it comes to inserting technology mediated devices into their classrooms because they find themselves facing technical, organizational and instructional design challenges.

Firstly, technical challenges consist of selecting the appropriate technological devices, tools and techniques which assure the success of the program. It is not about focusing merely on getting technology to function. Technical challenges include;

- To guarantee that learners can successfully use technology.
- To not use technology abundantly just because it is available (Hofmann, 2011 pp.12-13).

Secondly, organizational challenges consist of the settings and management of the environment to suit the blending nature of the course. It includes:

- Changing the current mindset which claims that BL is not as effective as traditional teaching.
- Reconsidering the role of the facilitator.
- Guiding learners and observing their progress (Hofmann,2011 pp.12-13).

In addition, instructional design challenges consist of giving sufficient time and attention to design the actual content, and not focusing only on the implementation of technology. It includes;

- Examining the ways to teach not only the content.
- Choosing the best delivery medium to attain the learning objectives.
- Ensuring that the blending elements are coordinated (Hofmann, 2011 pp.12-13).

Furthermore, Graham (2006, pp.14-16) identified the following limitations which can hinder the implementation of blended learning;

- **Live interaction:** Adopting BL entails using online devices as a tool to interact; subsequently, face to face interaction between teachers and learners is reduced. This transition can affect the experience of teachers who feel more comfortable with direct interaction or learners who prefer traditional ways of instruction.

- **Self-regulation:** When BL is chosen as an approach to pursue the learning and teaching experience for the innovative ways that it offers, they are not aware that their choice can affect the whole process. BL approaches imply that a learner should rapidly become an intrinsically motivated and self-regulated learner.

- **Cultural adaptation:** Since BL provides a wide range of global learning materials, they must be customized to ensure that these materials are relevant to the local culture of both teachers and learners. Hence balance must be maintained between global and local culture.

- **Balance between innovation and production:** To establish balance between innovation and production is very important because utilizing highly sophisticated tools can be an obstacle to their effectiveness and can also limit learners' production.

- **Internet access and user adoption:** Limited internet access is a real issue when it comes to adopting BL especially in developing countries. Yet, considerable numbers of teachers and learners there are familiar with using technology in association with BL (Atef and Medhat, 2016; p.358)

2.3. Shifting Roles in Blended Environments

A successful implementation of any educational approach depends on teachers because their role in the teaching/learning endeavour is pivotal especially in blended environments. Graham, Henrie, and Gibbons (2013, pp.2-4) explained, "Well-established scholarly domains have common terminology and widely accepted models and theories that guide inquiry and practice, while researchers in less mature domains struggle to define terms and establish relevant models". In other words, when teachers perceive BL correctly and succeed in explaining it and defining the exact methods to implement it, this contributes positively to the whole process. Thus, the role of teachers in BL is different from their role in traditional classroom instruction, it is wider and more complex; it requires them to shift from being the provider of knowledge to guiding the process of knowledge acquisition.

Borup, West, Graham, and Davies (2014, pp. 107-129) used various frameworks which were developed in k-12 online schools and blended learning environments in higher education to generate the Adolescent Community of Engagement (ACE) framework. The latter identified some ways in which teachers, parents and peers could engage with students to raise their level of engagement. Using the initial publication of the ACE framework, authors and their colleagues conducted a number of studies in which they applied this framework in different settings to form a clear understanding of teachers' responsibilities at a full-time online charter high school (Borup, Graham, 2014 p.118). These case studies assisted in reshaping a clearer framework in addition to identifying the role of teachers in such environments. The following are the responsibilities identified upon these case studies:

1-Orienting: aiding learners to understand the system, techniques, expectations and strategies for learning online.

2-Instructing: providing learners with guidance and feedback which enhances their understanding the flow of the course.

3-Organising and designing: providing learners with suitable learning environment and learning activities that promote the act of learning.

4-Nurturing: setting up a warm and close relation with learners to make them stress-free.

5-Facilitating communication: encouraging communication between learners, parents and other stakeholders.

6-Monitoring and motivating: observing learners' progress and motivate them to be more engaged in the learning environment.

2.4. Key Competencies to Implement Blended Teaching

Quality blended teaching is based on a set of interrelated competencies that teachers should bring together as they implement blended pedagogy in their classes. In 2018, Graham, Borup, Short and Archambault attempted to set a new model in which the main competencies required from teachers are described. This model, the "Blended Teaching Competency Model", demonstrates a logical order concerning the nature of competencies where a teacher should first have the exact foundations (technological literacy, digital citizenship and dispositions) that enable him/her to fearlessly engage in using modern online technologies, then planning blended activities and assessment that facilitate peer interaction, student-teacher interaction and student-content interaction. Moreover, the teacher should be competent enough to implement the blended assessment, evaluate and provide feedback to learners until he/she is able to effectively manage blended environments and routines.

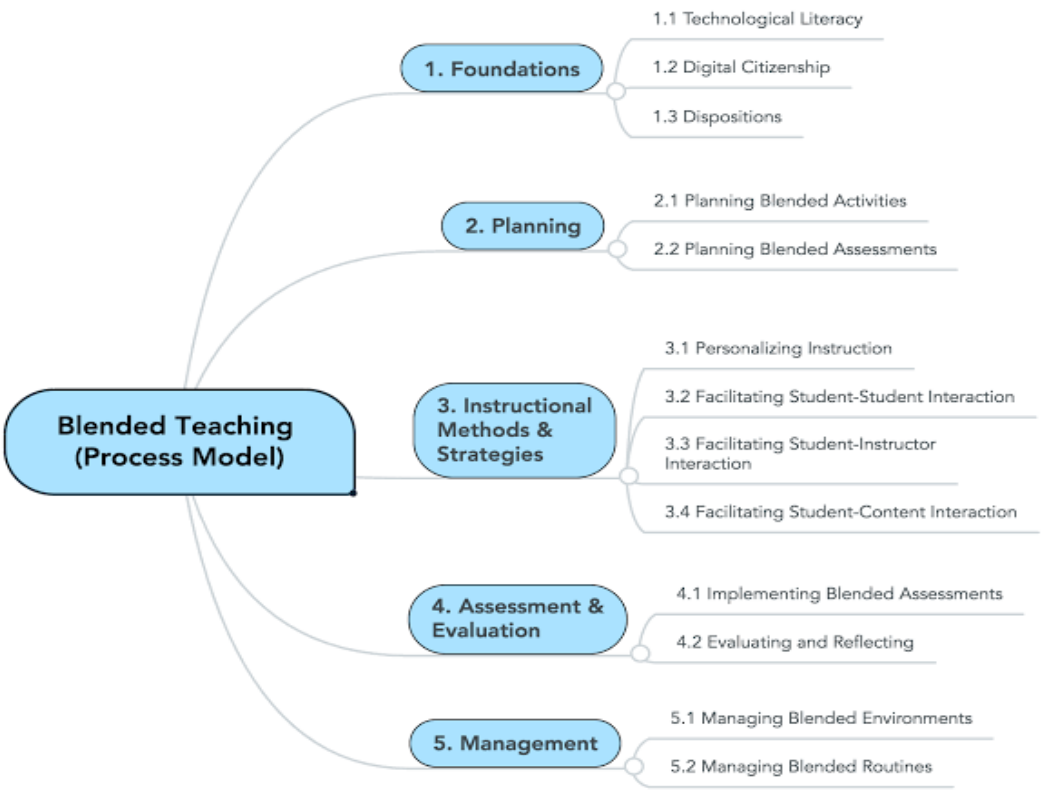

Figure1: ***Process Model for Blended Teaching Competencies*** *(Adapted from Graham, Borup, Short and Archambault, 2018 .p.)*

Later on, in the book entitled K-12 Blended Teaching, Graham, Borup, Short and Archambault (2019), have outlined four competencies that, according to them, represent the pillars of blended teaching that make teachers effective in blended environments as illustrated in the figure bellow;

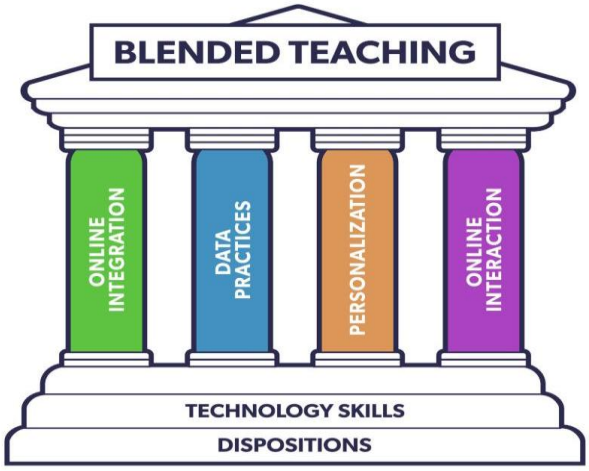

Figure4: ***Blended Teaching Competencies (2019, p. 11)***

2.4.1 Online Integration

Effective integration of online learning objectives and activities together with in-person teaching approaches is an essential part of BT. Both online and in-person practices have strengths and weaknesses and it is up to the teacher to fill in the gap and combine the best of the two worlds.

Additionally, in this high-tech world, teachers have a variety of devices and online technologies to choose among in order to plan their courses effectively, all they need is to develop their strategies by choosing the appropriate blended teaching models.

According to Graham (2019, pp.28-35), the BT models are structures of patterns that help teachers to organize online and in-person learning activities for a blended classroom. How a course is structured depends on many factors including the physical learning environments, the school access to technology, the age and ability of students. Moreover, online integration is not only about choosing modern technologies and developing appropriate strategies to blend in-person and online activities; yet, when designing a blended classroom, teachers need to blend different versions of interaction, i.e., student-content, student-teacher and student-student interactions.

Furthermore, as Graham puts (2019, p.39) it; the activities should be integrated in such a way that the online activities support the in-person activities and vice-versa. That is why there is a constant need for evaluation of the blended activities. Blended teaching is more than simply digitizing what teachers always do; it is about using technology to have a meaningful impact on students learning by changing 'how teachers teach and how students learn' (2019, p.47). Finally, an important part of online integration is managing the use of online technologies so that teachers succeed to manage their blended classrooms.

2.4.2 Data practices

Data in blended teaching means categorizing information such as: assessment results, frequency of attendance and engagement, etc, in order to determine where students are in their understanding of learning objectives, why students are where they are, how we can help them get where they need to be and when they are finally there. In other words, data helps us tell and direct the story of student achievements (Graham 2019, p.69). As far as assessment results are concerned, data gathered might help teachers to quickly see how well teachers or students have mastered the learning objectives; whether they have achieved a mastery level, near mastery or they need more significant remediation or interaction. Accordingly, students may be grouped in three groups; (Graham, 2019, p. 101)

-Homogeneous groups: consist of students who are all at the same level. This can include students who are all at mastery and will be working at enrichment activities, students who are near mastery and need to work on the same activities together to get mastery, and students who are in remediation and need to meet with the teacher.

-Heterogeneous groups: are made up of students who are all at different levels. This usually includes a mixture of students who are at mastery and near mastery working together to improve

their understanding of the materials. The mastery student learns the material better by teaching the near mastery students and the near mastery students near the small groups tutoring.

-Mixed groups: combine homogeneous and heterogeneous groups to personalize instruction. This common station rotation where some groups may work together, while other groups complete online learning activities or meet with the teacher.

In addition to performance data, attendance and participation data can tell a lot about students' performance and how they spend their time. This may help in improving this learning by informing students learning goals, improving learning activities and improving assessments and learning materials.

2.4.3. Personalization

According to Graham (2019, p.115), the term personalization is often confused with terms like differentiating and individualizing for the similarity they share. However, personalization advocates for two main ideas, allowing students to have some control over their own learning experience and customizing the experience to fit individual students' needs; in contrast to differentiating which involves the teachers' control over the significant decisions about the five main dimensions of this phase: Goals, Time, Place and Path. Therefore, in an effective blended learning classroom, the teacher will mix the two concepts by allowing learners to have control over the learning experience while maintaining his role as a guide for their decisions.

The International Association for K-12 Learning Online (INACOL) defines personalization as follows: "Personalized learning means tailoring learning for each student' strengths and, needs and interests including enabling student voice and choice in what, how, when and where they learn to-to provide flexibility and support to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible." (Cited in

Charles et al p.116). Although personalization can be done without relying on technology, the latter plays a role in facilitating and adding more flexibility to the five dimensions of personalization. Moreover, including digital technologies in personalizing the learning experience helps in creating, sharing and tracking learners' goals in a more efficient way, it provides students with independence and supports doing multiple tasks in different timelines which therefore provides the teacher with more flexibility. Digital technologies also provide different tracking of individual student mastery, gives access to learning resources in and outside the classroom in addition to helping the teacher to recommend learning ways and recourses for learners and make decisions about future learning activities.

2.4.4 Online Interaction

In their book, Graham, Borup, Short and Archambault (2019, pp.155-185) advocate for the belief that communication is a very crucial part of the relationship between the teacher and the learner and that interaction should be given importance in both face-to-face and online settings. They argue that teachers who follow a traditional face-to-face approach tend to pay attention to certain students at the expense of others because some learners are usually more dominant than others. When participating in a class discussion some students can wait for a long time before receiving their chance to speak or even not get that chance at all giving that the time provided for an in-class discussion is always limited. Additionally, even students who get their chance to participate may not be able to fully speak their minds as time would not allow it. Another common disadvantage of in-person class discussions is the fact that some students are introverted and not comfortable enough to share their ideas with others not mentioning students who are not as fast do develop ideas as others or students with special needs. In contrast, classes that follow blended techniques are therefore a way to combine the online and the in-person worlds and cater for the

disadvantages of both approaches by following strategies that would combine what is better and more effective from both worlds.

2. 4.4.1 Types of Interaction

In 1989, Michael Moore (as in Graham et al, 2019) defined three different types of learning interactions: (1) student-content; the engagement between the student and the material, (2) student-instructor; the opportunities students get to apply what they learned, demonstrate the new knowledge they gained as well as receive feedback; (3) student-student, when students get the chance to interact with one another.

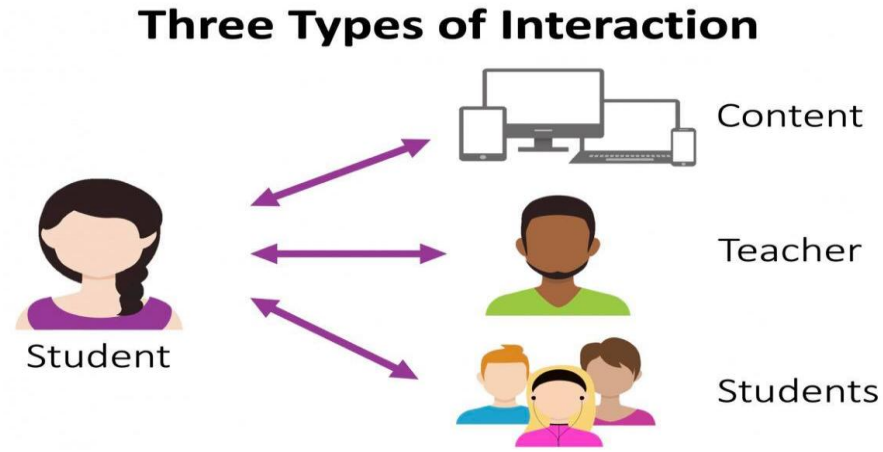

Figure 2: ***Common types of Interaction (2019, p. 40)***

Given how important time and flexibility management is for the success of a classroom discussion, online interaction combines between all the three types at once which is a critical factor in helping students gain the interaction and the experience they were expected to without restrictions.

Conclusion

To conclude, blended teaching is gradually becoming part and parcel in EFL classrooms. It surmounts traditional face to face instruction in many regions of the world especially that learners and teachers could finally develop a positive attitude towards it and accommodate to blended environments. It opens up new horizons for innovative techniques and methods to teaching. Therefore, improvement is witnessed on high rates in terms of the learning outcomes and the results obtained in blended environments, which made this recently founded educational approach favourable for many. Nevertheless, blended teaching carries along a range of transformations especially in teachers' roles and responsibilities; where they shift to monitors and instructors at the same time, meanwhile they have to assess the issues they face and attempt to stop or remedy them for a steady progression in the blended delivery. Teachers have an essential role in the teaching endeavour; they can be the reason of massive success or failure, thus, they have to be ready to incorporate technology into their classrooms and modify all that is to be modified such as techniques, methods to deliver the content in order to assure better implementation and outcome.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

The present chapter holds the practical part of the study. It covers the methodological approach followed starting with a description of the data collection procedures, population and the main tool used to conduct this research. Then it presents the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained from the research instrument. Finally, an overall discussion and analysis of these results is conducted in attempt to answer the research questions and verify the validity of its hypothesis.

1. Data Collection Procedures

In an attempt to assess teachers' readiness to implement BL in EFL classrooms, a questionnaire for teachers was designed as the main tool of this study. Brown (2000) defined questionnaires as "any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting form existing answers" (as cited in Dörniey, 2003.p. 6). By using questionnaires, teachers' perceptions, practices and most importantly their readiness to implement Blended Learning and Teaching could be easily identified.

2. Research Population and Sample

To conduct this study, the target population consisted of all teachers of English in the department of English in Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University of Jijel. The sample then was selected to consist of 25 teachers in the same department. The questionnaire was administered to assess teachers' readiness to implement Blended Teaching in the classroom.

3. The Administration and Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was delivered to teachers at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel hand in hand. All the participants (25 teachers) have received the questionnaire and were asked to fill it out. This questionnaire, "Blended Teaching Questionnaire", was an adaptation of Graham, Borup, Pulham and Larsen (2017) "Blended Teaching Readiness Survey" at Brigham Young University which was developed to measure the understanding of how previous traditional and online teaching experience contributed to blended teaching competencies. It begins with an introductory paragraph that clarifies the topic and aim of the study. It contains 14 questions grouped into 4 sections. These questions are a mixture of close-ended questions where teachers are asked to tick either "yes" or "no", and open-ended questions in which teachers are requested to justify or manifest their opinions. It also includes three "four-point-Likert Scale" questions in which teachers are asked to rate their agreement/disagreement with many statements concerning the benefits and

challenges of incorporating BT in their courses, and their ability/inability to perform their teaching practices. This questionnaire is organized as follows:

-Section One: General Information (Q1 to Q6)

This section includes general questions about teachers' gender, age, teaching experience and their familiarity with technology-based instruction.

-Section Two: Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes Towards Blended Teaching (Q7 and 8)

This rubric attempts to investigate teachers' awareness about the benefits and challenges of BT and assess the nature of their attitudes towards this approach.

-Section Three: Teachers' Readiness to Implement Blended Teaching (Q9)

This section aims at investigating EFL teachers' readiness to implement BT in their classes through referring to various factors such as students and online technologies.

-Section Four: The Importance of Teachers' Training and Professional Development (Q10 to Q14)

This is the last section in the questionnaire; it investigates whether teachers receive any type of training with regards to the use of ICTs and the integration of blended approaches and the extent to which training and continuous professional development is crucial to acquire the necessary skills and sub-skills of teaching in the new fashion.

4. Analysis of the Blended Teaching Questionnaire

In this section, data gathered from the questionnaire submitted to 20 EFL teachers in Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia university of Jijel is analyzed and displayed. It is worth mentioning here that the sample consisted of 25 teachers but five of them either refused to answer or did not

return the questionnaire back (i.e., the response rate was 80 %) . The questionnaire is divided into sections that covered different aspects of the current research work.

Section1: General Information

Q1: What is your gender?

The aim of this question is to know the participants' gender in order to check whether it may influence their use of online technologies and their attitudes toward Blended Teaching and Learning.

Table 2

Teachers' Genders

Options	Number of Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	2	10 %
Female	18	90 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 2 above shows that 18 teachers (90 %) who participated in the study are females, whereas two (10%) of them were males. In fact, out of 33 EFL teachers at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia university- Jijel, only 10 are male teachers.

Q2: How old are you?

From 25-45 From 46-65

This question about teachers' age aims at finding to which group (young adults or old adults) do participants belong in order to find whether or not there is a link between their age and the use of modern technologies.

Table 3

Teachers Age

Options	N	(%)
25-45	19	95%
46-65	1	5%
Total	20	100 %

As regards teachers' age, ***table*** 3 shows that 19 teachers (95%) are aged between 25 and 45 whereas only one out of the 20 teachers (5%) belongs to 46 to 65 age range. As indicated in the table, "young adults" represent the larger group of participants knowing that only one teacher belongs to the "older adults" category in using technology.

Q3: How long have you been teaching English?

Concerning this question, the researchers think there is a relationship between teachers' experience and their perceptions about adopting Blended Teaching, as it may also have an impact on their competencies of blending face to face and online instruction.

Table 4

Teachers' Experience in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Teaching Experience (Years)	N	(%)

From 1-10	7	35%
From 11- 20	13	65%
More than 20	0	0%
Total	20	100 %

As shown in ***table 4***, 65 % of the surveyed teachers have a teaching experience that ranges from 11 to 20, i.e., they are experienced teachers. The rest of them (35%) represent those who are either novice or relatively experienced. None of the participants spent more than twenty years in EFL teaching. Hence, it can be said that participants may share some common beliefs and attitudes towards Blended Teaching and they may be familiar with implementing BT approaches.

Q4: Are you familiar with using technology-based teaching?

Yes ☐ No ☐

The aim of this question is to check whether or not the target teachers have already introduced some tech-based teaching methods to their traditional teaching of English. This may help in figuring out the degree of comfort when using modern devices and online technologies.

Table 5

Teachers' Familiarity with using Technology-based Teaching

Options	**N**	**(%)**
Yes	17	85%
No	3	15%
Total	20	100 %

The results shown in ***table*5** indicate that only three participants (15%) are not familiar with the use of technology-based teaching whereas 17 of them (85%) are already familiar with using ICT in their teaching. What may be deduced is that the majority of EFL teachers at the department of English know the ABCs of integrating different types of modern and/or online technologies into their teaching what may facilitate the adoption of the so-called Blended Teaching.

Q5: Are you familiar with mixing technology with face to face interaction?

Yes ☐ No ☐

The previous question was asked to know whether the participants use modern technologies such as computers, tablets…in their traditional classrooms, but this questions aims at finding whether those participants blend technology (online teaching) with in-person teaching; two different modalities of instruction *(See the literature review)*.

Table 6

Teachers' Familiarity with Mixing Technology with Face to Face Instruction

Options	**N**	**(%)**
Yes	11	55%
No	9	45%
Total	20	100 %

The participants in this question split into almost two equal halves; 55% of them reported that they are familiar with blending the traditional approach, i.e., face to face teaching, with new approaches based on the integration of online technology, whereas 45% of teachers said that are not familiar with doing so, yet. Thus, not all experienced teachers implement Blended Teaching

though many of them confirmed their familiarity with integrating technology into their traditional classrooms.

Q6: Are you supportive/ enthusiastic about the use of online technologies in your course?

The aim of this question is to know where teachers stand on the implementation of online technologies, i.e., to know whether they encourage their use or not.

Table 7

Teachers Attitudes towards the use of Online Technologies

Options	**N**	**(%)**
Yes	18	90%
No	2	10%
Total	20	100 %

***Table* 7** shows that 90% of participants (18 teachers out of 20) are supportive of inserting online technologies inside EFL classrooms and are enthusiastic about BT, whereas only two teachers (10%) do not really support the idea of using online technologies in EFL classrooms.

Section Two: Teachers' Perceptions and Attitudes about Blended Teaching

This section consists of two rating questions and each question comprises a set of statements. Teachers in both questions were invited to rate their agreement so as to better understand their attitudes and perceptions about the benefits and the challenges of Blended Teaching and Learning.

A/ Benefits of Blended Teaching

Q7: Rate your agreement with the following statements:

(SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree)

The aim of this question, which comprises 10 statements, was to identify teachers' perceptions about the benefits of Blended Teaching, the newly adopted approach by universities world-wide as a result of COVID19 pandemic. Teachers, hereby, would rate their agreement with the given statements.

Table 8

Teachers' Perceptions about the Benefits of Blended Teaching

	Statements	Frequency (Percentage)			
	Scale:	SA	A	D	SD
1	Technology based tasks are more effective than traditional ones.	5 (25%)	8(40%)	7 (35%)	0 (0%)
2	Online technologies allow students and teachers to do things that would be difficult or impossible in classrooms without online technologies.	1(5%)	13(65%)	5(25%)	1 (5%)
3	Teachers would explore new teaching strategies that blend in-person and online learning.	2(10%)	16(80%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
4	Students will have better learning experiences when teachers and students participate in online discussions.	7(35%)	10(50%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)
5	Online technologies improve peer to peer interaction.	4(20%)	9(45%)	5(25%)	2 (10%)
6	Online technologies improve teacher-learner interaction.	4(20%)	11(55%)	3(15%)	2 (10%)
7	The learning outcomes are achieved better through the incorporation of technology and modern methods rather than fully relying on traditional ways.	5(25%)	7 (35%)	6(30%)	2(10%)

8	Students learn better when technology allows them to adjust the speed of their own learning.	7(35%)	10(50%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)
9	Online technologies positively trigger learners' motivation.	3(15%)	13(65%)	2(10%)	2(10%)
10	Online technologies positively trigger teachers' motivation.	1(5%)	13(65%)	4(20%)	1(5%)

The findings presented in ***table 8*** show that the majority of teachers (90%) agree (*10% SA + 80% A*) that when they blend their teaching, they would explore new teaching strategies that combine in-person and online instruction. In addition, more than 65 % of them have the firm belief that online technologies positively trigger both teachers' and learners' motivation. Moreover, 75% (*55% A+ 20% SA*) of them agree that online technologies improve teacher-learner-interaction and 88 % *(50% A+35% SA)* are positive that students will have better learning experiences when teachers and students participate in online discussions. Whereas, fewer teachers (2-8 teachers) with a percentage that ranges from 5% to 35% disagree or strongly disagree on that technology based tasks are more effective than traditional ones and that the learning outcomes are achieved better through the incorporation of technology and modern methods rather than fully relying on traditional ways.

Generally speaking, the target teachers are positive about the benefits that Blended Teaching would bring to their classes. This positive attitude may justify their supportive position and enthusiasm about using online technologies in their courses (As in Table 7 where90% of participants (18 teachers out of 20) were supportive of inserting online technologies inside EFL classrooms and were enthusiastic about BT).

Q8: Rate your agreement with the following statements:

(SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree)

The aim of this question, which consists of 6 statements, is to identify teachers' perceptions about the main challenges faced by EFL teachers in their implementation of BT.

Table 9

Teachers' Perceptions about the Challenges of Blended Teaching

	Statements Scale:	Frequency (Percentage)			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	Blended teaching is labour-intensive and to a high standard of quality.	3(15%)	15(75%)	2 (10%)	0(0%)
2	The use of online technologies involves an increase in teaching tasks and working hours.	3(15%)	12(60%)	3(15%)	0(0%)
3	Managing students in online environment is quite difficult.	7 (35%)	10(50%)	3 (15%)	0(0%)
4	Teaching materials in blended contexts would quickly become irrelevant if they were not updated and revised.	1 (5%)	15(75%)	4 (20%)	0 (0%)
5	Selecting inappropriate technology tools, devices and techniques may hinder the achievement of the learning outcomes in blended environments.	10(50%)	10(50%)	0(0%)	0 (0%)
6	In blended contexts, teachers may stress the implementation of online technologies at the expense of the course content.	3 (15%)	15(75%)	2(10%)	0 (0%)

The results displayed in the table above show that the majority of teachers (90%) "agree" and "strongly agree" that Blended Teaching is labour-intensive and to a high standard of quality and that teaching materials in blended contexts would quickly become irrelevant if they were not updated and revised. The same percentage of participants (90%) also agreed that in blended

contexts, teachers may stress the implementation of online technologies at the expense of the course content. Furthermore, 60% of teachers agree that the use of online technologies involves an increase in teaching tasks and working hours, while (50%) of them agree that managing students in online environment is quite difficult and that selecting inappropriate technology tools, devices and techniques may hinder the achievement of the learning outcomes in blended environments. Whereas, fewer teachers (20%) disagree that the teaching materials in blended contexts would quickly become irrelevant if they were not updated and revised and only (15%) of them disagree that managing students in online environments is difficult.

Section Three: Teachers' Readiness to Implement Blended Teaching

Q9: Rate your ability to do the following:

The aim of this question is to measure teachers' mastery of the four key competencies of blended teaching highlighted by Graham, Borup, Short and Archambault (2019).

A. Online Integration

Table 10

Assessing Teachers' Readiness to Implement Online Integration

	Competencies/Abilities	Scale:	Number (Percentage)			
			Very High	*High*	*Low*	*Very Low*
1	Effectively combine online instruction with in-person instruction.		0 (0%)	8(40%)	11(55%)	1(5%)
2	Evaluate the strengths and limitations of online and in-person activities for your students.		1(5%)	10(50%)	9(45%)	0(0%)

3	To use digital tools to monitor students' activity and performance in order to enhance their learning experiences.	0 (0%)	9(45%)	10(50%)	1 (5%)
4	Determine when it is most effective to interact with students online and in-person.	3(15%)	9 (45%)	8(40%)	0(0%)
5	Help students manage their class related online accounts and passwords.	2(10%)	9(45%)	8(40%)	1(5%)
6	Provide clear procedures and instructions for transitioning between online and in person activities.	0(0%)	9(45%)	10(50%)	1(5%)
7	Establish procedures for how students should seek help when learning with online technology.	3(15%)	7 (35%)	10(50%)	0(0%)
8	Establish guidelines that help students use online time wisely.	3(15%)	8(40%)	9(45%)	0(0%)

Based on the gathered data, it can be noticed from ***table*10** that more than 55% of teachers said they fail to effectively combine online instruction with in-person instruction while 40 % of them claim they are able to do so and, thus ready to integrate BT. About 55% of the respondents said they are able to evaluate the strengths and limitations of online and in-person activities for their students in contrast with a portion of 45% who indicated their inability to fulfil this task. Another percentage that ranges from 45% up to 60% is that of teachers who are ready to use digital tools to monitor students' activity and performance and also to determine when it is most effective to interact with them online and in-person, in contrast to another group of teachers (40% to 55%) who admitted that they lack those skills. Moreover, about 55% of teachers in this study said they are able to help students manage their class related online accounts and passwords, while 45% fall short behind in helping their students. Furthermore, about 45%- 50% of the target teachers show their readiness to provide clear procedures and instructions on how to transition between online and in-person activities, and how their learners would seek help when learning with online technologies and how to use online time wisely, whereas, from 50% to 55% of the teachers lack

the skills to perform those tasks. Finally, with regards to helping students use online time wisely, 55% of the teachers said they can establish guidelines to help student in this area whereas 45% of them are not ready to do so, yet.

B. Data Practices

Table 11

Teachers' Ability to Implement Data Practices

	Competencies/ Abilities	Number (Percentage)			
	Scale:	*Very High*	*High*	*Low*	*Very Low*
9	To facilitate online interactions with and between students.	3(15%)	5(25%)	11(55%)	1(5%)
10	Help students guide their own learning progress using online and offline assessment data.	2(10%)	4(20%)	14(70%)	0(0%)
11	Use technology tools to monitor students' participation Level (e.g., time on task, attendance, logins, frequency of activity, etc.)	1(5%)	8(40%)	10(50%)	1 (5%)
12	Determine which groups or individual students need additional instructional support.	2(10%)	9(45%)	10(50%)	1(5%)

Data displayed in this table indicate teachers' readiness to make use of the online information they gather about their students in implementing BT successfully. About 60% of those teachers are not able to facilitate online interactions with and between students. Fewer teachers (about 30%) are able to help students guide their own learning progress using online and offline assessment data, while 70% of them are unable to raise the students' autonomy in evaluating their progress. In

addition, 45% of teachers are ready to use technological tools to monitor students' participation level and determine which groups or individual students need additional instructional support, whereas 45% to 50% admitted they are not ready yet to fulfil these tasks.

C. Personalizing Blended Environments

Table 12

Teachers' Ability to Personalize Blended Environments

	Competencies/ Abilities	Number (Percentage)			
	Scale:	*Very High*	*High*	*Low*	*Very Low*
13	To provide students with flexibility in where they learn.	3(15%)	7(35%)	10(50%)	0(0%)
14	Provide students with online options for how they demonstrate their mastery of their learning objectives.	2(10%)	5(25%)	10(50%)	3(15%)
15	Tailor the learning experience to the individual students' needs and interests.	1(5%)	7(35%)	11(55%)	1(5%)
16	Provide students with more flexibility in personalizing online activities.	2(10%)	4 (20%)	11(55%)	3(15%)

***Table*12** above depicts teachers' skills and ability to personalize blended environments. Half teachers (50%) are not able while the other half (47%) are able to provide students with flexibility where they learn (they rated their ability to perform those tasks as "high" and "very high"). Fewer teachers (35%) are able to provide students with online options for how they demonstrate their mastery of their learning objectives. Moreover, about 30- 40% of these teachers claim their ability to tailor the learning experience to the individual students' needs and interests and to provide them with more flexibility in personalizing online activities, whereas, from 60% to 70% rate their ability in fulfilling the previously mentioned tasks as "low" and "very low".

D. Online Interaction

Table 13

Teachers' Ability to Manage Online Interaction

	Competencies/Abilities	Number (Percentage)			
	Scale:	*Very High*	*High*	*Low*	*Very Low*
21	Establish clear expectations for respectful online and in-person communication between students.	4(20%)	8(40%)	8 (40%)	0(0%)
17	Establish clear boundaries when communicating online that maintain professional student-teacher relationships.	3(15%)	9(45%)	7(35%)	1 (5%)
18	Create opportunities for students to help each other inside and outside of class using online technology	0(0%)	8(40%)	11 (55%)	1(5%)
19	Facilitate productive learner interaction in online discussion.	2(10%)	9(45%)	9(45%)	0(0%)
20	Provide timely feedback to students using a variety of channels (text, email, audio, video…).	0(0%)	9(45%)	10(50%)	1(5%)
21	Strengthen students' sense of belonging to the class community using online and face to face communication.	1(5%)	9(45%)	10(50%)	0(0%)

Table 13 above displays results related to teachers' readiness to manage online interaction (See **Chapter One** for types of interaction). 60% of the surveyed teachers (rated their ability as "high" and "very high") claimed their ability and thus their readiness to establish clear expectations for respectful online and in-person communication between students, while 40% of them said they are unable to establish such expectations. About 40% of teachers admit that they are not able to establish clear boundaries when communicating online to maintain professional student-teacher

relationships whereas more than 45 % of them (rated their ability as “high” or “very high”) possess the keys to manage interaction and establish boundaries so as to maintain professional teacher-student relationship. 60% of the teachers said they are not able yet to create opportunities for students to help each other inside and outside of class using online technology, while 40% of them are ready to do so. Moreover, teachers, with a percentage that ranges from 45% to 55%, are able to facilitate productive learner interaction in online discussion and provide timely feedback to students using a variety of channels, yet an equal percentage of them rate their ability with regards to those skills as “low and very low”. Finally, with regards to strengthening students’ sense of belonging to the class community using online and face to face communication, teachers split into two equal halves; 50% said they are able to do that whereas 50% said they are not able yet.

Section Four: The Importance of Teacher Training and Professional Development

Q10: Are you well trained in using online technologies for teaching purposes?

Table 14

Teachers’ Training in Using Online Technologies

Options	N	(%)
Yes	5	25%
No	15	75%
Total	20	100 %

In **table 14,** data shows that 75% of the teachers who participated in the study are not well-trained in how to use online technologies whereas the remaining 25% claim they have all what it requires when it come to the use of ICTs in teaching.

Q11: To what extent are you ready to improve the procedure of inserting and using online technologies in your class?

Table 15

Teachers' Readiness to Improve the Procedure of Inserting and Using Online Technologies

Options	N	(%)
To a large extent	9	45%
To some extent	11	55%
Not ready yet	0	0%
Total	20	100 %

***Table*15** above shows that the teachers who participated in the study are willing to improve the way they insert and use blended techniques inside their classrooms. 55% of the participants are to some extent ready to develop their knowledge and skills to cope for the challenges they face in blended environments, whereas 45% are determined (to a large extent) to learn and to develop their procedures of "**online integration"**. Unsurprisingly, it can be said that teachers of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel are open to improve their ways of using online strategies in interplay with face to face teaching.

Q12: What are the skills that teachers must develop to teach in blended contexts?

With regards to this question, teachers' answers can be summarized as follows:

- To possess digital skills; the ability to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information effectively.

- The ability of transitioning between the two modalities (online technologies and face to face instruction).

- The adequate knowledge about the two approaches (their stengths and weaknesses) and how to obtain the perfect mix.

- The ability to manage all types of interaction in online settings.

- The ability to select and use the right tools to enhance the teaching and learning experience.

- To be well trained on how to implement technology into face to face instruction and how to handle modern technologies.

- The ability to provide students with the chance to interact while managing an effective class-room environment.

- The ability to manage time during the use of blended technologies.

Q13: Do you think that training is deemed necessary for teachers to effectively implement blended pedagogy?

Table 16

The Importance of Training for the Implementation of Blended Teaching

Options	**N**	**(%)**
Yes	20	100%
No	0	0%
Total	20	100 %

Table16 shows that all participants (100%) agree on the fact that training is crucial for the development of teaching practices and competencies especially when new approaches such as BT are adopted.

Q14: What would you suggest to implement Blended Learning and Teaching effectively and successfully in your university?

The suggestions given by teachers in order to implement Blended Learning and Teaching successfully in Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University can be summarized as follows:

- Providing teachers with the needed training on the right ways to implement and use blended teaching and learning.
- Clarifying what blended teaching/learning exactly is for both teachers and learners and how they can benefit from the new approach.
- Providing the needed tools and guidelines that are needed to better implement blended teaching/learning.
- The implementation of blended learning and teaching techniques require a limited number of students in order to facilitate the process.

5. Discussion of the Main Results

By means of a "Blended Teaching Questionnaire", data was gathered from a sample that consisted of 25 teachers of English (Department of English in Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel). Adopting a qualitative approach, data was analysed prudently as many significant results cropped up. However, to help guide the discussion of the results that were gained from the questionnaire, this section returns to the research questions that the researchers seek to answer.

- How do teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University perceive Blended Teaching and what are the perceptions about the benefits and challenges of this approach?

Section One in the questionnaire comprises some general information about teachers' gender, age, experience, in addition to their familiarity with technology-based teaching. The researchers tried to link those factors with teachers' perceptions about BT and their readiness to implement it. According to the results obtained, the majority of teachers (90%) were females so "gender" was excluded as a possible influential factor. In addition, 95 % of participants belong to "young adults" who are assumed to have high-tech skills. Indeed, 85% of teachers were familiar with inserting technology into instruction and (90%) of them are enthusiastic about Blended Teaching which is based on mixing face to face instruction with online teaching. Thus, the target teachers have a positive attitude towards the use of online technologies in their courses.

However, 45% of them are not familiar with mixing technology with face to face instruction, they are still hesitant though holding a positive attitude towards BT. Since experience is vital for the development of teaching strategies in general, this unfamiliarity can be justified if we take into consideration that 35% of teachers are either novice or relatively experienced (1- 10 years); teachers who have been teaching for 11 to 20 years have already mastered the teaching endeavour and gained enough experience to be innovative by including or implementing whatsoever form of instruction in their classrooms and still they are able to guarantee a successful progression. In contrast to most novice teachers who need to gain more experience to grab the gist of teaching and be able to move to the next level of innovation inside their classrooms.

Moreover, the results revealed that most teachers are aware about the benefits of blended teaching. Teachers are probably aware of the importance of blended teaching as the newly emerging approach of teaching and the future of education, especially in the middle of the current

sanitary crisis. The majority of participants (90%) agree that Blended Teaching permits teachers to explore new teaching strategies that blend in-person and online learning. Hence, it is obvious that teachers have already or are willing to undertake new experiences in blended environments that would influence other areas such as interaction and participation among others. On the other hand, some teachers (35%) reluctant to believe that technology based tasks are more effective than traditional ones; this can be due to the lack of experience with mixing online technologies with face to face instruction. However, in general, and based on the obtained results, almost all teachers did acknowledge the advantageous side of BT.

Furthermore, a large number of teachers (70- 100%) admitted that they face technical and organizational challenges when implementing blended teaching such as managing students, achieving the balance between the use of online technologies and the content to be delivered, and selecting the appropriate devices to facilitate the course. In addition, teachers find themselves working intensively and have more workload than usual. Teachers pointed out to the challenges that they face frequently when implementing BT given that it is a new approach especially in the Algerian universities.

- Do teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University possess the necessary sub-skills and key competencies of Blended Teaching?

- To what extent are teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University ready to implement Blended Teaching?

According to Graham, Borup, Short and Archambault (2019), there are four competencies that make teachers effective in blended environments; four competencies that, according to them, represent the pillars of Blended Teaching that make teachers effective in blended environments: online integration, data practices, personalization and online interaction. The results obtained

showed that many teachers are unable create an effective blended environment by mixing online tools with in-person instruction. They are also unable to provide students with the necessary procedures, instructions, and guidelines to manage their time wisely in blended environments. This revealed that they lack some important skills to integrate online technologies which Graham et al. (2019) consider to be the first pillar of BT. Thus, teachers of English in Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University are not ready yet to implement **online integration.**

Additionally, teachers fail to use technological tools to facilitate the interaction and assess students' participation and progress in order to determine their level of understanding (what they are learning and why are they learning it). This indicates that teachers are unable to assess learners' engagement in blended environments which Graham et al. (2019) refer to as the second pillar of blended teaching. Hence, teachers of English in Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University are not ready yet to develop **data practices** in blended environments.

The results obtained in the third section of the questionnaire revealed that teachers are unable to allow students have some control over their own learning experience and customize the experience to fit their needs. Besides, they do not permit flexibility which is necessary for students to attain better learning experiences. This confirms that those teachers are unable to personalize blended environments; the third pillar in blended teaching (Graham et al., 2019). Based on the results obtained in part three, teachers of English in Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University are not ready yet to personalize blended environments

Moreover, the results obtained indicated that teachers of English in Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University are not ready yet to implement online interaction since they lack the skills to establish online and in-person communication between them and their learners or between learners themselves. Hence, they do not help learners and them with provide equal opportunities especially

in online discussions. Therefore, **online interaction,** which Graham et al. (2019) refer to as the fourth pillar of BT, cannot be maintained.

Hereby, one intriguing conclusion yielded from the analysis of results with regards to the previously mentioned research questions (Q2 and Q3), teachers of English in Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University are found incompetent enough when it comes to implementing BT. This can be linked to many factors; some of which are teacher-related whereas many others are context-related factors

- How can teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University become better blended teachers?

As far as this question is concerned, 75% of the teachers did not receive any sort of training on how to use ICTs in EFL teaching, yet 55% of them reported their willingness to improve their implementation of BT instead of only relying on face to face instruction. In addition, the majority of teachers united on how important it is to create the suitable environment where all types of interaction may be guaranteed; teacher-student, student-student and student-content. Moreover, the results revealed that most of the teachers highlighted the importance of offering teachers adequate training, not only for them but for learners, too. Time management skills, digital skills, appropriate technological and online tools are also stressed by teachers to implement BT in Algerian Universities.

6. Limitations of the Study

As with any study, the researchers faced a number of limitations that should be taken into consideration and which can be summarized in the following:

- **COVID19 Restrictions**: They hugely affected the flow of the study as interaction inside or outside the university was limited.

- **Lack of References**: The very common use of the term "Blended Learning" at the expense of the term "Blended Teaching" created confusion for the researchers as to how to differentiate between the two not mentioning that very few resources were available about Blended Teaching.

- **Research Overwhelm:** Blended learning and teaching are interchangeably used with other concepts such as: hybrid leaning and online learning; all means the incorporation of technology in face to face settings, yet, each approach has its particularities.

- **Research instrument:** The study used a questionnaire to survey teachers a good amount of data from a large number of participants. Yet, it has some limitations, e.g., there is a possibility that teachers may have interpreted the questions differently from what was intended.

- **Collecting questionnaire sheets:** Collecting questionnaires was not as easy as distributing them; the questionnaire was first sent to teachers via e-mail but none of them answered, then printed questionnaires were handed to them once again, but due their hectic schedule, some of the teachers did not answer.

7. Recommendations

In the light of the findings of the present study, the following recommendations for teachers were suggested:

- Teachers should receive adequate training (webinars, workshops, online conferences…) that focusses on blended teaching frameworks and guidelines.

- Teachers and learners should be provided with the right technological devices that are required to implement Blended Teaching and Learning.
- Time management, planning and good training are part and parcel of Blended Teaching.
- Determining what Blended Learning and Teaching models to use helps teachers make their classrooms more engaging and organized.
- Teachers should also use the appropriate technology tools depending on learners needs and objectives.
- Knowledge about Blended teaching is constantly developing so teachers should always stay up to date in order to keep up with how technology is used.
- Teachers should allow students some control over path, place and pace to help them become more engaged and interactive.
- The Minestry of Education should also consider specifying a budget for Blended Teaching related activities (workshops and training sessions for teachers and the required tools/materials).
- What follows is are two guides that would help teachers plan and emplement BT in their classrooms:
    - Charles.R.G, Jared.S. Essentials for Blended Learning (2020)
    - Charles.R.G, Jered.B,Short & Leanna.A K-12 Blended Teaching A Guide to Personalizd Learning and Online Integration (2019)

Conclusion

This chapter represents the practical part of this study, it presents the sample and research tool which is a questionnaire administered to teachers of English at the University Mohammed Seddik

Ben Yahia. Data analysis and the discussion of the results were the core of the whole chapter. The findings highlight that the overall attitude that teachers hold towards Blended Learning and Teaching is a net positive. Moreover, they also highlight those teachers are not ready yet and may be outside their comfort zone when implementing Blended Teaching especially in the absence of adequate training and development.

General Conclusion

The field education, in general and EFL education, in particular has always witnessed constant upgrading whether it be in the approaches teachers follow or their relationship with their learners and teaching environment. The challenges in today's teaching settings are due to the encroachment of technology. Hence, modern EFL education has a keen interest in blended teaching and learning which would enhance both EFL teachers and learners' abilities and skills while allowing them to gain access and control over a great amount of information. By replacing the widely seen out-of-date models of teaching through implementing e-learning tools via blended approaches, the process is transformed in a way that is modern; in other words, those new approaches can revolutionize the Algerian EFL education industry if it incorporates technology as one of its main elements. Additionally, the mass of EFL teachers today seek access to the benefits and flexibility that technology offers; believing that the utilization of varying degrees of technology in the classroom can and will lead to a more fulfilling teaching/learning experiences.

The key aspect of this dissertation was an assessment of teachers' readiness to adopt Blended Teaching in the classroom. This study assumed that the target teachers have the required competencies and sub-skills of blending face to face and online instruction, so they are ready to implement Blended Teaching successfully. The results revealed that teachers have positive attitudes and perceptions towards this approach. Also, most of them are supportive and enthusiastic about adopting blended teaching. Meanwhile, they do not possess the sub-skills and the necessary competencies of Blended Teaching, which in turn, make them unable to implement Blended Teaching effectively. Accordingly, it is clear that teachers of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia are not ready yet to implement Blended education.

On the other hand, the researchers also arrive at the conclusion that this scenario certainly has a flip-side. The implementation of Blended Learning and Teaching in EFL education across Algeria will be very difficult due to lack of technology and training. In this way, it can be said that EFL teachers are not yet ready to confront the utilization of Blended Learning in the classroom without the necessary training and equipment.

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Appendix

Blended Teaching Questionnaire

This questionnaire is for all teachers at the department of English in Mohammed Seddik Benyahia University, Jijel. As Master II students, the purpose of our dissertation is to understand how ready you are to implement Blended Teaching and how to support quality blended teaching in Algerian universities, especially now that most universities world-wide have moved increasingly towards online course delivery as a result of the massive disruptions of COVID 19. No information will be shared and your participation means a lot as it allows us to conduct our research.

Thank you in advance.

Blended Teaching: *Is a strategic combination of online and in-person instruction.*

<u>Section One</u>: General Information

Q1- What is your gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐

Q2- How old are you?

From 25 to 45 ☐ From 46 to 65 ☐

Q3-How long have you been teaching?

From 1 to 10 years ☐

From 11 to 20 years ☐

More than 20 years ☐

Q4- Are you familiar with using technology-based teaching?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q5- Are you familiar with mixing technology with face to face instruction?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q6- Are you supportive/enthusiastic about the use of online technologies in your course?

Yes ☐

No ☐

<u>Section Two</u>: Teachers Beleifs and Attitudes towards Blended Teaching

A/ Benefits of Blended Teaching

Q7- Rate your agreement with the following:

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree SD: Strongly Disagree D: Disagree

Scale / Stametemnts	SD	D	A	SA
1- Technology based tasks are more effective than traditional ones.				
2- Online technologies allow students and teachers to do things that would be difficult or impossible in classrooms without online technologies.				
3- Teachers would explore new teaching startegies that blend in-person and online learning.				
4- Students will have better learning experiences when teachers and students participate in online discussions.				
5 -Online technologies improve peer to peer interaction.				
6- Online technologies improve teacher-learner interaction.				
7-The learning outcomes are achieved better through the incorporation of technology and modern methods rather than fully relying on traditional ways.				
8-Students learn better when technology allows them to adjust the speed of their own learning.				
9- Online technologies positively trigger learners' motivation.				

10- Online technologies positively trigger teachers' motivation.				

B/ Challenges of Blended Teaching

Q8- Rate your agreement with the following:

Scale / Statements	SD	D	A	SA
1- Blended teaching is labor intensive and to a high standard of quality.				
2-The use of online technologies involves an increase in teaching tasks and working hours.				
3- Managing students in online environment is quite difficult.				
4-Teaching materials in blended contexts would quickly become irrelevant if they were not updated and revised.				
5- Selecting inappropriate technology tools, devices and techniques may hinder the achievement of the learning outcomes in blended environments.				
6- In blended contexts, teachers may stress the implementation of online technologies at the expense of the course content.				

Section Three: Teachers' Readiness to Implement Blended Teaching

Q9- Rate your ability to do the following:

Scale / Statements	Very High	High	Low	Very Low

1-Effectively combine online instruction with in-person instruction.				
2- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of online and in-person activities for your students.				
3-To use digital tools to monitor students activity and performance in order to enhance their learning experiences.				
4-Determine when it is most effective to interact with students online and in-person.				
5-Help students manage their class related online accounts and passwords				
6-Provide clear procedures and instructions for transitioning between online and in person activities.				
7-Establish procedures for how students should seek help when learning with online technology.				
8-Establish guidelines that help students use online time wisely.				
9-To facilitate online interactions with and between students.				
10-Help students guide their own learning progress using online and offline assessment data.				
11-Use technology tools to monitor students participation Level (e.g., time on task, attendance, logins, frequency of activity, etc)				
12-Determine which groups or individual students need additional instructional support.				
13-To provide students with flexibility in where they learn.				
14-Provide students with online options for how they demonstrate their mastery of their learning objectives.				
15- Tailor the learning experience to the individual students' needs and interests.				
16- Provide students with more flexibility in personalizing online activities.				
17- Establish clear expectations for respectful online and in-person communication between students.				

18- Establish clear boundaries when communicating online that maintain professional student-teacher relationships.				
19- Create opportunities for students to help each other inside and outside of class using online technology.				
20- Facilitate productive learner interaction in online discussion.				
21- Provide timely feedback to students using a variety of channels (text, email, audio, video…).				
22- Strengthen students' sense of belonging to the class community using online and face to face communication.				

<u>Section Four:</u> The Importance of Teachers' training and Proffessional Development

Q10- Are you well trained in using online technologies for teaching purposes?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q11- To what extent are you ready to improve the procedures of inserting and using online technologies in your classes?

To a large extent ☐

To some extent ☐

Q12- What are the skills that teachers must develop to teach in blended contexts?

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Q13- Do you think that training is deemed necessary for teachers to effectively implement blended pedagogy?

Yes ☐

No ☐

14- What would you suggest to implement blended learning and teaching effectively and successfully in your university?

Résumé

La présente étude visait à évaluer la capacité des enseignants à mettre en œuvre l'enseignement mixte en classe. Elle avait pour objectif de savoir si les enseignants d'anglais au département d'anglais à l'Université Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel perçoivent positivement l'enseignement mixte et soutiennent son intégration dans leurs cours. Elle visait également à déterminer dans quelle mesure les enseignants sont bien préparés à appliquer cette approche avec succès. Par conséquent, on a émis l'hypothèse que « si les enseignants d'anglais à l'Université Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel disposent les compétences et les sous-compétences requises pour combiner l'enseignement en « présentiel » et « en ligne », ils seront capables à réussir la mise en œuvre de l'enseignement mixte. Afin d'atteindre les objectifs soulignés de la présente étude et de confirmer cette hypothèse, un « *Questionnaire d'enseignement mixte* », qui était une adaptation de 'l'Enquête de préparation à l'enseignement mixte' de Graham et al (2018) à l'Université Brigham-Young, a été conçu et administré aux enseignants. À cette fin, l'échantillon cible se composait de 25 professeurs d'anglais (hommes et femmes); cet échantillon a été sélectionné à dessein en raison de sa pertinence par rapport au sujet et aux objectifs de la recherche. Les données ont été analysées au moyen d'une approche quantitative. Les résultats ont montré que les enseignants d'anglais avaient une attitude positive à l'égard de l'enseignement mixte, ils pensent que les tâches basées sur la technologie sont plus efficaces que les tâches traditionnelles, et cela leur permettrait d'explorer de nouvelles stratégies d'enseignement. Ils ont également révélé que les enseignants ne sont pas encore prêts à mettre en œuvre des techniques mixtes dans l'enseignement de la langue anglaise. Il est intéressant de noter que les enseignants n'ont pas maîtrisé toutes les compétences requises des enseignants mixtes; ils manquent de certaines compétences et de sous-compétences essentielles pour une mise en œuvre efficace de l'approche nouvellement adoptée.

ملخص الدراسة:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم مدى استعداد الأساتذة لتطبيق التعليم المختلط داخل القسم. سعت هذه الدراسة أيضا إلى إيجاد ما إذا كان لدى أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية بقسم الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى– جيجل نظرة إيجابية تجاه التعليم المختلط و إذ كانوا يدعمون إدماجه في دروسهم و سعت كذلك لإيجاد مدى تحضرهم لتطبيقه بنجاح. و لذلك يحتمل أن أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى يمتلكون الكفاءات اللازمة و المهارات للمزج بين التعليم الحضوري و التعليم عن بعد مستعدين لتطبيق التعليم المختلط بنجاح. من أجل تحقيق الأهداف المسطرة لهذه الدراسة و تأكيد أو رفض هذا الاحتمال. و عليه تم توجيه استبيان لعينة من الأساتذة تتكون من 25أستاذ و قد تم اختيار هذه العينة نظرا لكونها مرتبطة بأهداف و غايات هذا الموضوع. تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام نهج كمي. و من خلال النتائج المتحصل عليها فإن أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى لديهم نظرة ايجابية تجاه التعليم المختلط لظنهم أن التطبيقات القائمة على التكنولوجيا أكثر فعالية من التطبيقات التقليدية و أنها ستسمح لهم باكتشاف استراتيجيات تعليم جديدة. أشهرت هذه الدراسة أيضا أن الأساتذة ليسوا مستعدين بعد لتطبيق تقنيات التعليم المختلط. و مما يثير الإهتمام فإن الأساتذة لا يمتلكون الكفاءات و المهارات الازمة لتطبيق الفعال لهذه المقاربة الجديدة. و عليه فهم بحاجة إلى برامج تدريبية خاصة وتطوير مهني مستمر.