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A Comparative Study of Blended Learning versus Traditional Learning in ESL Class

Rubina Akhtar

Student, Language Academy, University Technology Malaysia, Malaysia

Aminabibi Saidalvi

Lecturer, Language Academy, University Technology Malaysia, Malaysia

Hanita Hassan

Lecturer, Language Academy, University Technology Malaysia, Malaysia

Abstract:

The aim of this study was to examine the effects of blended learning (BL) and traditional learning (TL) on students' achievements in English as a second learning (ESL), one of the Government College in Bahawalpur, Punjab Pakistan. The study compares English Language learning abilities using BL and TL. An experimental study was conducted using an experimental and a control group of thirty students in each group, students' performance in the English language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar) were measured through pretest and posttest. The students in the experimental group engaged the blended learning approach (BLA) while students in the control group engaged the traditional learning approach (TLA). The results of students in pre-test and post-test describe that the students with the BLA had a great achievement in this experimental study comparatively the students with the TLA found a significant difference ESL development. It is hoped that teachers should implement BL method as it can improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Keywords: Blended learning, traditional learning, ESL graduate students

1. Introduction

Blended learning (BL) is a phenomenon approach on-going research applied linguistics because it is an appropriate combination of the beneficial aspects of online and face to face learning during the education process, Eryilmaz, (2015). According to Khan and Jumani, (2012) stated that the Traditional Language Approach (TLA) is focused on face to face consultation and whole organizational control over the process. Malik, (2015) illustrated that teaching strategies and techniques are used to achieve specific teaching objectives. Pakistan has been struggling to find out an education system that suitable according to students' needs and priorities because traditional teaching has been not completing the students need.

English is a compulsory subject of government and private educational institutes and it is taught in primary, secondary and higher secondary level in Pakistan. Many learners are found to be weak in English language skills because they memorize grammar rules without practice. Sarfraz, (2011) explored that students are taught with the grammar rules first and are facilitated with insufficient learning situation to practice those rules. English language subject is taught through grammar translation method (GTM) which emphasizes the rules of grammar. Some educational institutes focus direct method (DM) where teachers switch L2 towards L1. It was also found most of the teachers blend DM with GTM. The researcher was explored during this study when teachers asked questions in L2 and students replied in L1; communication in L2 mostly never work and instructor takes help L1 Sumaiya, (2015). The graduate students learn English skills without practice and understanding of concepts. The learners study English language skills deductively instead of inductively which block creative thinking skills; It is the drawback of examination system and GTM. The examination system is demanded to students to give correct answers for good marks. It never focuses to check their understanding and ability while it is the exam of their memory.

Accepting many weakness of TLA some researchers support it because they said that BLA has showed unpredictable results that the effect of BL on learners' education achievements is still unclear López-Pérez, Pérez-López, and Rodríguez-Ariza, (2011) but according to Wei, Shi, Yang, and Liu, (2017) the major reason destructive feelings towards BLA of learning tend to be produced by week designed approaches while it takes an excessive deal of supposed and careful preparation to deliver an excellence learning experience regardless of the mode of delivery. Therefore Chun, Kern, and Smith, (2016) said that many similar studies proved that technology is an influential supplier to learning using of technology in education support as one the "pillars" of effective learning and similar studies uncovered statistically significant differences between the experimental and the control group with respect to students' achievements. BL have been improved that the usages of properly implementation transform students' knowledge, satisfaction and success. BL has proved the potential of transformation to enhance knowledge.

2. Literature Review

Blended learning is a distinctive teaching method and it is completed the requirement of the modern era with technology. H. Singh, (2003) posit that the model of BL is rooted in the idea that learning is not just a moment event though it is a continuous development. BL delivers several benefits over using any single learning distribution medium alone. The use of

technology and various devices in our daily routine has been transferred the social deviations in society. The wrathful novelties of software and apps have been using in English language class. These are blogs, websites, Facebook pages, Facebook groups and Whatsapp etc. The exciting era, learners are bounded by technology and it is necessary to prepare them according to the requirement of the technology world.

BL facilitate instructor that they use various social media apps to teach students and organize them for multi-tasking. BL would allow more communication between teachers and learners, which would lead to more operative learning procedures by Alebaikan and Troudi, (2010). According to Aslam, (2015) the present generation who are sitting in classrooms are the future of Pakistan and education policies are destroying their learning skills. The requirement of modern education is to take some attentive steps to bond the gaps. The colleges can establish the students for their upcoming careers by accepting blended learning methods. Blended learning helps learners to learn the ease approach in English language skill.

Blended learning combines modern technology-based approach with traditional education practice. The basic notion of blended learning is derived from two words, blend and learn. Graham, (2006) defines that the process online can be used during face to- face meetings or approved over the internet while others are presented in the traditional class. The novelty of blended learning is exploring new ideas and provides various chances to blend different methods and learn with multiple experiences. BL delivers the greatest methodology for specific objectives as well as classroom project-based activities and instructions.

The present era is called the technological world. BL never apply single rule in the different minds of learners. The innovation of BL is exploring new ideas which provide multiple chances to blend various techniques for the learning experience. According to Marsh, (2012) BL refers to a mixing of various learning settings and phrase has specified meanings based upon the framework in which it is used. BL provides students and instructors a potential setting to acquire and explain more successfully. The present students are demanded to use modern techniques and methods in the education system. It is believed that TLA is determined as learning procedures where learners and instructors are demonstrated physically in same place at same time. Mostly the well-known traditional method of imparting education since it has been ongoing the chalk and talk method. A. K. Singh, Yusoff, and Oo, (2009). Although several studies have been documented that teachers and students are communicating a platform that physical existed in traditional learning, Muradkhanli, (2011). The teacher performs a dominating role during class and practice "teacher dominated interaction". Since Nazarenko, (2015) claimed that instructors have been served as a source of knowledge and students received knowledge as passive. A number of researchers has reported that the basic function of English teaching in Pakistan to prepare students for examination because passing examination provide further opportunities. The teacher of government institutes teach English through the medium of Urdu and local language because they have not mastery in English by Coleman, (2010). According to Memon, (2007) said that the overcrowded traditional classroom does not stimulate students' emotions or mind because straight rows of desk never create attraction in the classroom. A. K. Singh et al., (2009) deny previous studies and said that the students in a TL system is not only receiving knowledge or degree but also receiving experience and practice skill that is very supportive in all aspects of life particularly in today's globalized domain while Khalid and Khan, (2006) deny the advantages of the traditional approach because they accept follow new teaching methods for better results and students performs.

3. Research Methodology

An experimental study has been conducted to analysis the differences of the effects of BLA and TLA on students' learning achievements in ESL class. The BLA has applied in the experimental group while TLA has employed in control group. Although, traditional approach has been mostly considering such as teacher centered and content-oriented approach. Teachers and students have communication gap and less interaction. Teachers served in the class and focus only text without any motivational support. The teacher was wanted to accomplished syllabus on time and content of text book only followed. The assigned tasks have been completed by students. In this study, the traditional approach has been practiced in the control group. The framework of traditional approach was shown in Figure 1.

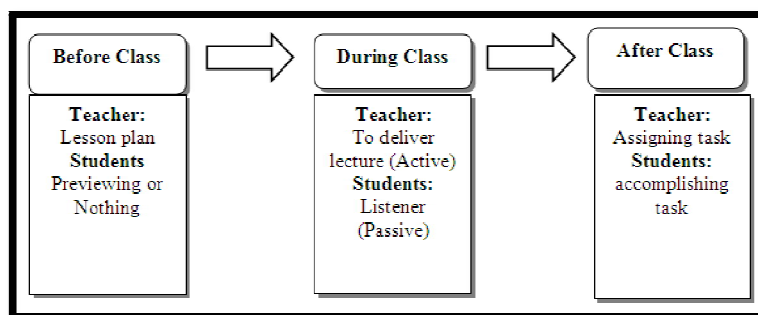


Figure: 1 Traditional Teaching Strategy

Blended learning combined traditional classroom approaches with online activities. Formerly the face-to-face class, the teacher should upload learning materials and raised several questions. Students studied individually according to their self-paced learning, build up with unrecognized questions and explored challenges which instructor design before. The teacher should answer students' questions in time with varies examples and activities. During the classroom, lectures were briefed and the rest minutes were used for learning activities, including discussion, questions and group presentation, summary about topic. A new environment has been designed creative class activities that fostered learners' critical thinking, cooperative abilities and problem solving. The online learning section focused on the additional initial discussion after face to face class. The homework assignments have been completed with multiple activities and, preview material was uploaded before the next class. In blended learning, the students were assisted during learning activities by the teacher. During this study, the blended learning approach has been practiced by the experimental group. The framework of the blended learning approach was shown in Figure2.

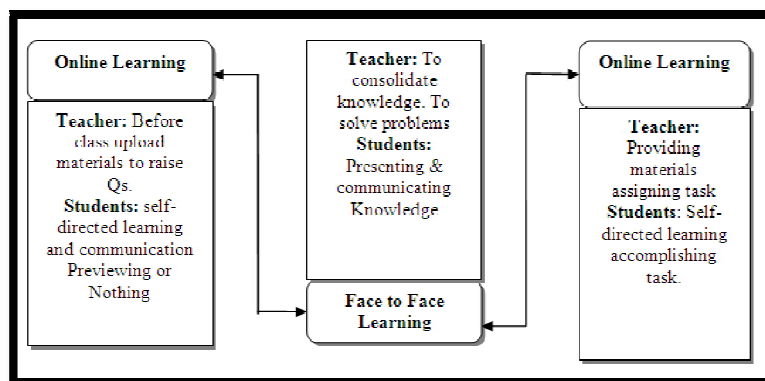


Figure: 2 Blended Learning Teaching Strategy

3.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to compare ESL students' learning development in traditional and blended learning classrooms. This study focused to identify ESL improvement among students learning experienced in a blended learning environment. The researcher's aim to compare TL with BL and proved that BL strategies best for students and used social media (Facebook group, page and Whatsapp) for learning purpose which meet students' various needs and learning styles according to their abilities.

3.2. Participants

A total of sixty-six graduate 4th year students participated in the present study. The students ranged in age from 18 to 22 years. There were thirty-three learners in control group and same number of students in Experimental group. The appropriate sample of students has been selected randomly through cluster sampling. Prior to pretest, students were orientated to the determination of the study, the experimental group students taught BL approach in ESL class.

3.3. Context and Data Collection

The Government girls' college satellite Town Bahawalpur has been selected because it has well equipped computer lab and multimedia resources. The researcher was followed government syllabus which already taught students. The duration of this study was eight weeks. The four lectures have been conducted every week in experimental class while same lectures in control class and every lecture based 40 Minutes. The researcher taught face to face traditional method (TM) and used Blended teaching (BL) online, social media, Facebook group, and Facebook page for experimental class. The informative material videos, audios and text have been posted in the groups. The students were prepared before next assignment and lecture discussion. The control group students have been treated TMA and all activates have completed during class and assigned homework.

8 Weeks	Contents	Skills
1 st week	Pre-test and Dialogues	Speaking
2 nd week	Presentation	Speaking and Vocabulary
3 rd week	Novel	Listening
4 th Week	Descriptive Essay	Writing
5 th Week	Grammar	Writing and speaking
6 th Week	Grammar	Writing and Vocabulary
7 th Week	Comprehensions	Reading, Writing, Vocabulary and Grammar
8 th Week	Revision & Post-Test	Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Vocabulary and Grammar

Table 1: Procedure of the Study

Skills	Pre-test	Post-test	Time	Marks
1.Speaking	Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of traditional food and fast food. Which type of food do you prefer and why?	Some people prefer to spend their lives doing the same things and avoiding change. Other people believe that change is a good thing. Discuss both these views and give your opinion.	20 minutes	10
2.Writing	Descriptive Essay (200 words)	Descriptive Essay (200 words)	30 minutes	10
3.Reading	Comprehension No:2	Comprehension No: 5	20 minutes	10
4. Listening	Audio Recording and answer given sheet Qs.	Audio Recording and answer given sheet Qs	20 minutes	10
5.Grammar	Objective Test	Objective test	20minutes	10
6.Vocabulary	Fill in the Blanks and cross words	Fill in the Blanks and cross words	20 minutes	10
				Total=60

Table 2:Pre-Test and Post-Test Study Plan

3.4. Procedure and Data Collection

This experimental study has been used quantitative approach for data analysis. The data has collected by using pre-test and post-test. In this comparative study, all students have to essential take pretest- and post-test. The pretest has single

designed for control and experimental group. These tests have been included reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary and grammar skills and each skill test has been based on 10 marks. Each skill questionnaire pattern has included six objective questions and two subjective questions in the pre-test and post-test. The pre-test has decided total sixty marks and post-test also sixty marks.

4. Data Analysis Technique

Data has been collected from the pre-test and post-test that conducted to the control and experimental groups. The comparison between control and experimental group has shown pretest and posttest students' progress in language skills. The collected data has been examined statistically used SPSS software. The students' scores have been defined by t-tests. The results have labeled by t-test through (means, standard deviation, paired t-test, p value, correlation and difference). The significant differences between control and experimental groups have been originated through students' scores.

5. Findings

5.1. Analysis of control Group Pretest and Posttest Results

The control group has been taught traditional teaching method. A set of pre-test and post-test has been conducted to measure the ESL students' progress in control group. The ESL students learning development has been explained by the analysis of language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar). The control group comparison between pre-test and post-test has been described that the traditional learning approach helpful to enhances students' language skills.

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-Obtained Marks	28.55	33	4.542	.791
	Post Obtained Marks	30.12	33	4.505	.784

Table 3: Control Group Paired Samples Statistics

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre-Obtained Marks & Post Obtained Marks	33	.838	.000

Table 4: Control Group Paired Samples Correlations

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Upper	
Pair 1	Pre-Obtained Marks - Post Obtained Marks	-1.576	2.574	.448	-2.489	-.663	-3.516	32	.001

Table 5: Control Group Paired Samples Test

Table: 1 above shows the control group pre-test and post-test means scores of students at graduate level that shows slightly difference in progress post-test. Secondly, defines .838 correlations among thirty-three students in pre-test and post-test. To conduct further analysis, the t-test was applied to determine the significance of the difference in mean score. As p value is less than 0.05, so the results of t-test show that the difference of mean is significant ($p < 0.05$). Based on the results of mean difference in pre-test and post-test performance, it is evident that the performance of Pre-test students is not same as compared with the performance of Post-test in control group. The students have improved but with minor progress. Control group paired samples test shows that it is significant.

5.2. Analysis of Experimental Group Pretest and Posttest

The pre-test has been taken before the treatment by experimental group and after two months later post-test has conducted among graduate students. The statistical analysis has shown a huge difference of student's performance between both tests. The comparisons of both tests students' performance in language skills described that the duration of two months experimental group created an enormous difference students' progress.

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-Obtained Marks	27.91	33	5.234	.911
	Post Obtained Marks	34.24	33	5.309	.924

Table 6: Experimental Group Paired Samples Statistics

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre-Obtained Marks & Post Obtained Marks	33	.754	.000

Table 7: Experimental Paired Samples Correlations

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Pair 1	Pre-Obtained Marks - Post Obtained Marks	-6.333	3.697	.644	-7.644	-5.022	-9.841	32	.000

Table 8: Control Group Paired Samples Test

Table 2 above describes the experimental group pre-test and post-test mean scores in paired sample. The results show that there is a difference in the mean score between post-test (34.24) and pre-test (27.91) learners. The experimental group illustrates that the mean difference is significant ($p < 0.05$) and positive correlation. Based on the results of mean difference in pre-test and post-test performance in the experimental class, it is clearly shown that the performance of students in post-test is not same as compared with the performance of pre-test. The experimental group shows an enormous difference in students' upgrading after treatment. Control group paired samples test has described a clear significant difference between pre-obtain marks and post obtain marks in experimental group. It is significant ($p < 0.05$).

5.3. Comparison between Control and Experimental Groups

This comparative study has been examined by students' progress. The comparison between control and experimental group have been described the pre-test and post-test results clearly and gave the account of improvement of students. The down table shows both groups students' progress in pre-test and post-test.

	Groups of Students	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Obtained Marks	Control	33	28.55	4.542	.791
	Experimental	33	27.91	5.234	.911

Table 9: Pre-test Comparisons between Control Group and Experimental Group

Pre-Obtained Marks	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Equal variances assumed	.635	.428	.527	64	.600	.636	1.206	-1.774	3.046
Equal variances not assumed			.527	62.754	.600	.636	1.206	-1.775	3.047

Table 10: Independent Samples Test

The pre-test analysis has been described both group's students' language skills progress. At this level both group students have the minor difference in their scores. They have been studying same traditional teaching method and its difference becomes students' progress and participation in class. The pre-test results in the control group ($M=28.55$; $SD 4.542$) and Experimental group ($M=27.91$; $SD 5.234$). The scores show that the mean difference is not significant ($p > 0.05$).

	Groups of Students	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post Obtained Marks	Control	33	30.12	4.505	.784
	Experimental	33	34.24	5.309	.924

Table 11: Post-Test Comparisons between Control Group and Experimental Group

Post Obtained Marks	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Equal variances assumed	1.104	.297	-3.400	64	.001	-4.121	1.212	-6.543	-1.700
Equal variances not assumed			-3.400	62.348	.001	-4.121	1.212	-6.544	-1.698

Table 12: Independent Samples Test

The post-test comparison between the control group and experimental group has shown the difference in student's improvement. The control group ($M=30.12$; $SD 4.505$) while experimental group (34.24 ; $SD 5.309$). The means difference in both groups ($M= -4.121$; $SD 1.212$). The nature of the comparison between the variables are evidently different. It defines mean

difference is significant ($p < 0.05$). The difference of students results mark able and it provides the evidence that the students were improved by blended learning.

6. Discussion

The findings from this study suggest that BL is an exceptional teaching method and it is obliging in reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar skills up grading in ESL class. The research signifies the effectiveness of comparative study with two different methods TL and BL. The outcomes of this study describe the improvement of experimental group. These previous studies indicate that BL students' performance slightly greater than TL by Aslam, (2015); Kazu and Demirkol, (2014) and Vernadakis, Giannousi, Derri, Michalopoulos, and Kioumourtzoglou, (2012) BL has been considered a successful approach among ESL students and it upgrade their scores, Gimeno-Sanz, (2010).

The emanating conclusions from the study specified that learners who attend blended class had great performance scores than those who attend traditional class. In literature, most of the studies have similar findings with BL. Ceylan and Kesici, (2017) researcher depicted the same results that the experimental group who has studied in BL atmosphere is educationally more successful the control group who has studied existing teaching situation.

The basic question was that blended learning enhances students learning ability versus compared to traditional learning. The present research results resistant that blended learning is an excessive teaching method which helps to enhance students learning compared to traditional teaching method. Lim and Morris, (2009) and Kirkwood and Price, (2014) studies also describe that same result has become to BL class and technology is a helpful tool with traditional learning. This study aimed to determine that BL is a unique teaching method which supportive to augment students' reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar skill in ESL class comparatively to TL.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify, analyses, and compare the effectiveness of two different methods, BL and TL. Further, this study signified that students who were taught with BL teaching method had better results than those students who were taught TL. Based on the findings, it suggests that blended learning is an exclusive teaching method which supportive to enhance students' results comparatively traditional learning. The BL approach which progressively advance zone and acknowledge this appear as an alternate teaching practice that can be applied around the world to increase students' performance.

The finding of this research describes that BL environment promotes students' learning and practice with different sources increase their language skills by providing the learning environment and opportunities. The students tackle various learning task and show more responsibility for their learning skills. The students' participation is an essential activity for learning and BL involved students to participate various activities. BL is a successful teaching method which provides excessive opportunities for ESL students and teachers.

8. Suggestions and Recommendations

Therefore, future studies are suggested to discover the effects of blended learning on ESL students' individual language skill reading, writing, listening, speaking and vocabulary with a relatively long period of time, in addition to the issues that might affect students' learning achievements. Further, more attention would be focus to the design and implementation of appropriated instructional models of BL, in this way to deliver learners with an improved learning experience and thus develop their language skills and abilities.

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Appendix

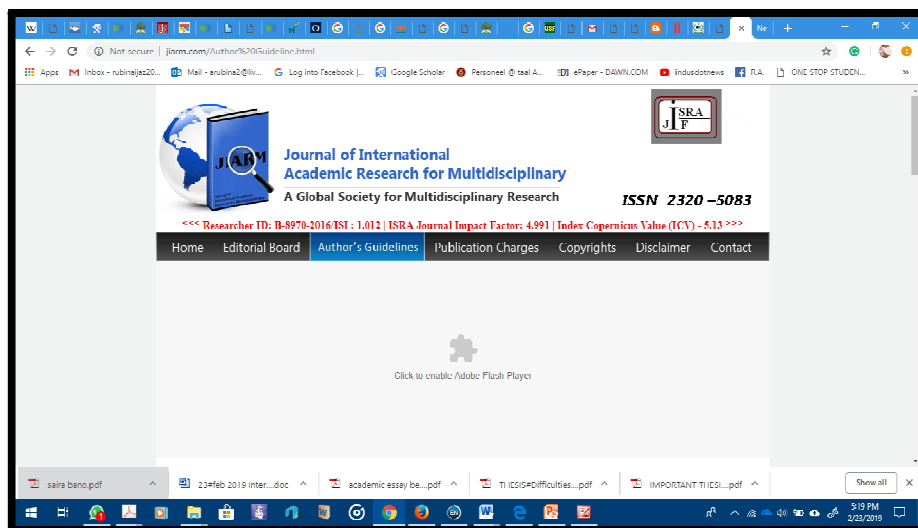


Figure 3