

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract: *This article is devoted to blended learning approach and in teaching foreign languages. Blended learning is believed to improve students' understanding in learning second language. The employment of offline and online activities is expected to give better outcome than the traditional face-to-face activities.*

Key words: *online, offline, learner, distance, educator, facilitator, classroom, traditional.*

Nowadays, foreign language teaching and learning is widely being enhanced in our country, because it is being an important means of communication among the people of different cultures and languages. Like many other countries, Uzbekistan is also open to the spread and development of English in order to improve country's social, economic and educational opportunities. According to several documents like National program of preparing cadres, all new specialists undergoing the higher educational system are required to know one or several foreign languages. A training approach combines different learning techniques. In the standard educational model, blended learning often refers to the use of laboratory equipment or computers to complement the class sessions and strengthen the teaching process through practice and the application of theories learned in class. On March 19, 2019 the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the head of the state had earlier forwarded 5 important initiatives to organize social, spiritual and enlightenment activities on the new system¹.

Blended learning is believed to improve students' understanding in learning second language. The employment of offline and online activities is expected to give better outcome than the traditional face-to-face activities. There is an increased awareness of the importance of blended learning in the higher education sector especially as the changing digital landscape continues to shape learning and teaching. Blended learning is commonly defined as a combination of face-to-face learning with technology-based or online learning. We subscribe to Garrison and Kanuka's definition of blended learning, where the two components are optimally integrated to make the most effective use of both modes of study. There is a general expectation among today's students that technology-enhanced learning will be an integral part of university experience and that they will need to adapt to this new approach of learning². This adaptation is not only relevant in gaining knowledge and learning skills, but also has implications for future career prospects in terms of social and digital literacies. For teachers, developing an effective approach to blended learning requires relevant skills and experience in designing and facilitating blended learning opportunities informed by a good understanding of students' experiences. This is perhaps called for teachers to have an in-depth understanding of learners' needs and additional skills and experiences when facilitating, designing and building the learning systems and support mechanisms that encourage blended learning. A review of the literature over the past 15 years reveals several perspectives on students' experiences of blended learning perspectives on students'

¹ www.uza.uz

² IJEE, Indonesian Journal of English Education, 4 (1), 2017

experiences of blended learning. For example, Cramphorn found that psychological factors, lack of social cues and time management may all act as opportunities or barriers to student participation in blended learning. Concannon noted that students' attitudes to computers, study patterns and future career plans may either enhance or inhibit student use of information and communication technology (ICT). Blended learning was also linked to a higher level of student engagement and self-regulated learning and was seen to provide flexible access to learning resources with the added advantage of allowing students time to review composed thoughts, making reflection a part of the learning process³.

When accessed in terms of information transfer and interaction methods blended-learning is to combine the positive sides of online and conventional face to face learning methods. A face to face learning is one in which instructors and students meet together in the same place and at the same time. In the face to face learning, sessions are synchronous. While no communications technologies are required for a face to face session⁴.

According to the Frostburg State University's online learning definition, online learning can consist of both real-time interactions, such as in Collaborate, as well as interactions, which occur over extended periods of time, such as email or an online discussion board. B-learning which combines the advantageous aspects of these two environments, have many pluses in terms of student, instructor and educational institutions. According to the researches, three main reasons why the blended learning is being recommended have been put forward

- a) Boosting up effectiveness of education.
- b) Increased access and convenience.
- c) Greater cost effectiveness.⁵

From an Australian perspective, Taylor and Newton claim that the subject design process is crucial in the blended learning process and there are three criteria that frame this accessibility to learning experiences.

Firstly, the content is educationally appropriate and meaningful; secondly, the material is accessible wherever the students are and thirdly, that the activities presented are of equal value⁶. Blended learning required immediate feedback to the students for their performance which can be achieved by combining assessment technique with the use of latest technological advancement. Blended learning techniques provide teachers to deliver the lecture as well as assess student learning using creative and innovative methods. Assessment is no doubt one of the major tools in teaching and learning process. In this paper we discussed Blended learning and its assessment techniques, also, we discussed issues in blended learning environment along with its advantages⁷. Blended learning as shown in Figure 1 refers to a learning environment that incorporate diverse teaching styles, delivery means, media formats or a combination of all these. It can also be defined as the integration of various learning activities like online and face-to-face learning. Blended approach studies how to join the best feature of face to face and online instruction. For example, advanced interactive sessions can be conducted to the students in the classroom while online sessions with multimedia-rich content of the course can be accessed by students anywhere, anytime through internet access.

³ <http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/ijee>

⁴ Garrison, D. R., & Kanuka, H. Blended learning: Uncovering its transformative potential in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 7(2), 2004. 95-105.

⁵ Moore, D. S.. New pedagogy and new content: The case of statistics. *International statistical review*, 65(2), 1997.

⁶ Allen, M. (21 April, 2010). Using web 2.0 in your teaching. Seminar presented at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.

⁷ Maryam Tayebinik, Marlia Puteh, Blended Learning or E-learning? IMACST: vol. 3 no. 1 Feburay 2012



Figure 1- Blended Learning concepts⁸

Blended learning as a learning program where more than one delivery mode is being used with the objective of optimizing the learning outcome and cost of program delivery. The concept of blended learning is rooted in the idea that learning is not just a one-time event—learning is a continuous process. Blending provides various benefits over using any single learning delivery medium alone. In 2003, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) described blended learning in as *the integrated combination of traditional learning with web-based online approaches*. Blended Learning as optimizing achievement of learning objectives by applying the “right” personal learning technologies to watch the “right” personal learning style to transfer the “right” skills to the “right” person at the “right” time. Blended learning is a way of meeting the challenges of tailoring learning and development to the needs of individuals by integrating the innovative and technological advances offered by online learning with the interaction and participation offered in the best of traditional learning. Traditional method includes face to face interaction with teachers. Here teacher is the active speaker where as in online learning students are center of teaching and learning process to achieve curriculum diversity. Blended learning do not use any single learning delivery medium rather incorporates a wide range of learning opportunities like- online, face to face. It is the best way of facing the challenges in learning with its innovative technology and regular motivation by teachers in classroom. It is a two way process where teacher acts as facilitator for the students.

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