

وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي

MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

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MOULOUD MAMMERI UNIVERSITY OF TIZI-OUZOU

FACULTY OF LETTERS & LANGUAGES

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جامعة مولود معمري - تيزي وزو

كلية الآداب واللغات

قسم الإنجليزية

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master in English**

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Field: English Language

Specialism: Didactics of Foreign Languages

Title

**Students' and Teachers' Attitudes Towards Blended
Learning: The Case of the Departement of English at
Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou.**

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Academic Year: 2021/2022

I dedicate this work to:

My family.

To my best friends Keltoume and Kenza and my binomial Dyhia.

To all those who supported me to achieve this work.

*To every teacher who gave us any piece of advice and guidance throughout
the research.*

Sonia Mokraoui

*First and Foremost I want to dedicate this work to my lovely family for their
support and encouragement.*

To my beloved best friends Kenza and Keltoume and my binomial Sonia.

To every teacher who helped us to accomplish this work.

Dyhia Saadi

We would like to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to our supervisor **Mrs. ADEM Karima** for her insightful comments, support, guidance and precious advice.

We are extremely grateful to all the members of the board of examiners who have kindly accepted to read and examine our modest dissertation.

Our thanks are also extended to all the students and teachers from the department English for their cooperation, support and invaluable contribution during the realization of our work.

Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the attitudes of master two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning in the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. This study relies on four (04) main objectives. The first one is to uncover the students' attitudes towards Blended Learning (BL). The Second one is to determine teachers' attitudes towards BL. The Third one consists in discovering if BL offers flexibility and convenience for students and teachers. The fourth and final objective deals with establishing students' and teachers' attitudes towards the integration of Blended Learning into university. To carry out this research, Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' (TAM) has been adopted. This investigation is based on the mixed-methods research, which combines both quantitative and qualitative methods for the collection and analysis of data. In order to gather the required data, a questionnaire has been administered to thirty-five (35) students and a structured interview has been conducted with eleven (11) randomly selected teachers at the department of English. For quantitative data analysis, the Descriptive Statistical method also known as 'the rule of three', has been employed to elicit statistical data from the closed-ended questions included in the questionnaire. As for the qualitative data, the Qualitative Content Analysis has been used to analyze and interpret the data obtained from the open-ended questions included in the questionnaire and the interview. According to the findings, the students and teachers of the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou hold a positive attitude towards the Blended Learning method and believe that it is a fruitful method that can ameliorate the teaching/learning process, as it offers the students and teachers flexibility and convenience. It is also concluded that they support the integration of Blended Learning as an official learning/teaching method into university, even though they encounter some obstacles that can restrict the incorporation of the BL method during the academic year (lack of ICTs skills from teachers and students, lack of technological material).

Key words: Attitude, Blended Learning (BL), Distance Learning, Face-to-Face instructions (F2F), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

- **Apps:** Application software
- **BL:** Blended Learning
- **CALL:** Computer-assisted Language Learning
- **CMC:** Computer-mediated Communication
- **DLE:** Didactics of Foreign Languages
- **EFL:** English as a Foreign Language
- **F2F:** Face-to-Face
- **FLL:** Foreign Language Learning
- **ICT's:** Information and Communication Technologies
- **LMD:** License, Master, Doctorate
- **Lge and Com:** Language and Communication
- **M2:** Master Two
- **MMUTO:** Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou
- **PDAs:** Personal Digital Assistants
- **PEOU:** Perceived Ease of Use
- **PU:** Perceived Usefulness
- **QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis
- **TAM:** Technology Acceptance Model

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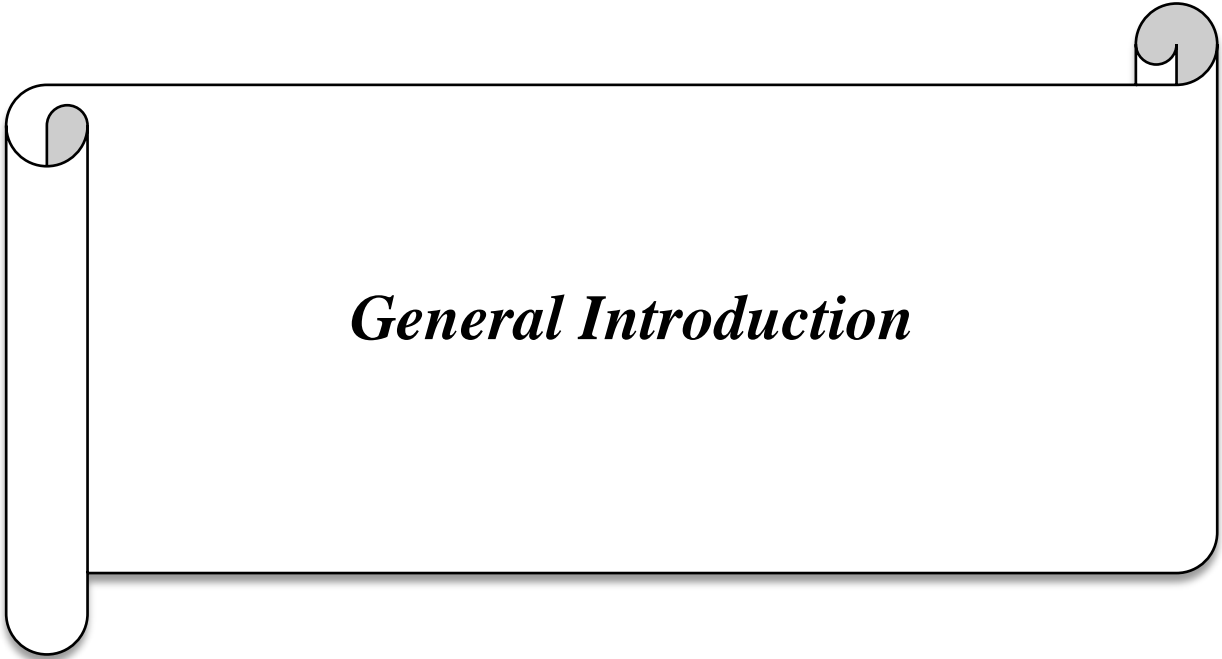
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General Introduction

Statement of the problem

In the recent years, technology has generated extensive waves of changes in various areas of life. Foreign Language Learning (FLL) as a subfield of education is not excluded from the influence of these innovations. The emergence of computer-mediated communication (CMC) is defined by Simpson (2000:414) as “human communication via computers”. Thus, it has led to the evolvement of distance learning, which refers to the incorporation of communication technologies into the teaching/learning process to facilitate the interaction between teachers and students, and to promote an innovative educational environment.

The pandemic coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has emerged at the beginning of 2020 and has become an international concern that has affected all fields, including the field of education. In the Algerian educational sector, the lockdown has prevented the normal achievement of the academic year. Therefore, in order to accommodate this problem, the Ministry of Higher Education has imposed a shift from the conventional Face-to-Face (F2F) learning to distance learning. They have recommended the utilization of the Moodle and E-learning online platforms. Additionally, applications (apps) like Google Meet, Zoom Education and Gmail have granted the students and teachers opportunities to communicate virtually through chat rooms and video conferencing. The integration of these apps and platforms into the educational process has resulted in the emergence of Blended Learning (BL) as a new method of teaching/learning in Algerian universities.

Blended Learning, also known as hybrid learning, refers to the merging of traditional (F2F) learning instructions with distance learning. According to Friesen (2012), the term Blended Learning refers to the variety of possibilities provided by combining technology with traditional classroom arrangements that necessitate physical presence of both the teacher and the learners.

Moreover, BL joins the strengths of Face-to-Face (more direct interactions, immediate feedback) and distance learning (flexibility in time and space, technology, and interactive features).

Numerous studies have been carried out concerning the integration of technology as a teaching tool. The first study conducted in the department of English at the Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou (MMUTO), which is submitted by Nait Remdane El Hacene for the master degree in Language and Communication entitled “Teachers’ Attitudes and Motivation Towards E-learning: The Case of the Department of English at the Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou”. It investigates the views of teachers regarding the use of technology as a teaching tool. The results show that teachers exhibit positive attitudes towards the integration of E-learning in the teaching process. The second study has been conducted in the department of Teacher Education in the University of Calcutta, India, which is entitled “Students’ Attitudes Toward Blended Teaching among Students of the University of Calcutta”. It is submitted by Md.Mahasin Ali. He has concluded that despite the difficulties that are faced in Blended teaching, the students have positive attitudes and believe it is a beneficial method.

The aforementioned studies have tackled the importance of E-learning and have uncovered the attitudes of students towards Blended teaching. However, they have failed to consider both students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards Blended Learning and whether they are open to its integration as a teaching/learning strategy after the recent COVID-19 pandemic. In an attempt to widen the scope of this field, the current study is conducted at the department of English in MMUTO to investigate both the students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards Blended Learning.

Aim and Significance of the Study

The overall aim of the present work is to investigate the attitudes of Master Two (M2) students from Didactics of Foreign Languages (DLE) and Language and Communication (Lge and Com) specialisms, as well as teachers of the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou towards Blended Learning, and its integration as an official teaching/learning method. This study is guided by the following individual objectives. The first objective aims to discover the students' attitude towards Blended Learning. The second objective is to identify the teachers' attitudes towards BL. The third objective is to consider whether BL offers flexibility and convenience for both the students and teachers or not. The fourth and last objective is to investigate if Blended Learning should be integrated into the teaching/learning process or not.

This research is conducted to identify the attitudes of Master Two DLE and Lge and Com students and teachers of the department of English at MMUTO towards BL. Additionally, the significance of this study is to contemplate if Blended Learning can be incorporated as an official teaching/learning method, by relying on the experiences of the students and teachers with distance learning during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current investigation aims at answering the following research questions:

Q1. What is the attitude of students towards Blended Learning?

Q2. What is the attitude of teachers towards Blended Learning?

Q3. According to the students and teachers, does Blended Learning offer flexibility and convenience?

Q4. What are the attitudes of students and teachers towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process?

In an attempt to answer the research questions, we put forward the following hypotheses:

H1. Students have a positive attitude towards Blended Learning.

H2. Teachers have a negative attitude towards BL.

H3. According to the students and teachers, Blended Learning offers convenience and flexibility.

H4. Students and teachers have a positive attitude towards the integration of BL into the teaching/learning process.

Research Techniques and Methodology

To accomplish our research, we rely on the mixed-methods approach by merging both the quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis. The data are gathered through two fundamental tools: a questionnaire and a structured interview. The questionnaire is distributed to thirty-five (35) Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms. The structured interview is conducted with eleven (11) teachers who are selected randomly at the department of English at MMUTO. In terms of the quantitative data gathered with the questionnaire, they are analyzed using the descriptive statistical method more precisely 'The rule of three'. As for the qualitative data collected through the structured interview and the questionnaire, it is interpreted by adopting the Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA). Furthermore, Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' (TAM) is the theoretical framework that is adopted to conduct this research. It is used to investigate the attitudes of students and teachers towards Blended Learning, by determining how they come to accept and use technology through two main factors: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and Perceived Usefulness (PU).

Structure of the Dissertation

The structure of this dissertation follows the traditional simple model. It consists of a General Introduction , four chapters, and a General Conclusion. The ‘General Introduction’ presents the statement of the problem, the aims and significance of the study, the research questions and hypotheses, the research techniques and methodology, and the structure of the dissertation. The first chapter is entitled ‘Review of the Literature’ which provides the theoretical background of the study and definitions of the concepts related to the research. The second chapter is labeled ‘Research Design’. It is concerned with the procedures of data collection and data analysis. The third chapter ‘Presentation of the Findings’ presents the data that is collected from the questionnaire and the structured interview in the form of diagrams. The fourth and last chapter is the ‘Discussion of the Findings’. It discusses the results of the investigation and provides answers to the research questions. Lastly, the ‘General Conclusion’ provides an overall summary of the research from the aims to the findings, and it ends up with suggestions and recommendations for further research.



Review of the Literature

Introduction

The current chapter presents the review of the literature which is concerned with providing background information on the main concepts in relation to our work. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides various definitions for the term attitude, its components as well as its significance in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching/learning. The second section includes multiple definitions of Blended Learning, beginning with its origin, components along with its models and benefits in the (EFL) teaching/ learning context. The final section is devoted to explaining Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model', which is the theory upon which this work is founded. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning and its integration in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.

1. Attitude

1.1 Definition of Attitude

The word attitude is apparent in the dictionary of psychology by Bartlett (1952:22) as “a more or less stable set or disposition of opinion, interest, or purpose involving expectancy of a certain kind of experience and readiness with an appropriate response”. The concept of attitude is defined by many scholars in different ways. According to Baker (1992) an attitude allows for the consistent and appropriate description and prediction of behavioral patterns (human conduct). Additionally, Allport (1935:25) states that “attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals' response to all objects and situations with which it is related”. In other words, a persons' attitude is a mental or neurological sate of preparedness that is established by experience which influences the individuals' behavior to all the occurrences, events and situations that are related to it.

The significance of attitude in understanding psychological phenomenon has been given formal recognition early in the history of social psychology. Attitude refers to a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, thing, and event that impact the way we perceive the world and how we behave (Richard.J.Crisp, Rhiannon.N.Turner,2010). Moreover, Eagly and Chaiken (1993:01) claim that “an attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor”. That is to say, attitude is a psychological trait that demonstrates a certain amount of favoritism or disdain towards a particular entity. It reflects the perception and feelings that an individual possesses and expresses toward something, either positively or negatively.

According to Park and Burgess (1942:438)

Attitudes are not the same as emotions or sentiments although attitudes always are emotionally toned and frequently supported by sentiments. Opinions are not attitudes. An opinion is rather a statement made to justify and make intelligible an existing attitude or bias [...]. An attitude is the tendency of the person to react positively or negatively to the total situation. Accordingly, attitudes may be defined as the mobilization of the will of the person.

Considering the definition above, attitude is a positive, negative, or neutral inclination to a given object, situation or person. As a matter of fact, attitudes are not the same as opinions, even though they are emotionally charged and frequently supported by sentiments. An opinion is a statement designed to defend and make understandable an existing attitude. That is, attitudes can be defined as the mobilization of the individual's will.

1.2 Components of Attitude

The concept of attitude has generated several conceptual models. The most influential model of attitude is the multicomponent model (Eagly & Chaiken,1993).According to this perspective attitudes are constructed of three components: Cognitive Component, Affective Component, and Behavioral Component.

1.2.1 Cognitive Component

Jain (2014:06) defines the cognitive component of attitude as “an evaluation of the entity that constitutes an individual's opinion (belief/disbelief) about the object”. For example, in terms of English language acquisition, the cognitive aspect of attitude is determined by a student's knowledge and level of ability to comprehend the language. Garret et al (2003) declare that the cognitive attitude can be divided into four steps: connecting previous and newly acquired knowledge, creating new knowledge, testing new knowledge, and applying new knowledge in any situation.

1.2.2 Affective Component

The affective component is the emotional response (liking/disliking) towards an attitude object. In other words, they are the feelings that express the individuals' degree of preference for an entity. Garret, et al (2003) suggest that in terms of English language learning, the affective aspect is a person's liking or disliking of the language itself as well as his or her feeling of excitement or dread, when she or he uses or learns it.

1.2.3 Behavioral Component

The behavioral aspect of attitude refers to a person's excessive behavior that is directed toward a situation, object, or person (Garett, et al 2003). That is to say, this component refers to the person's negative or positive attitude towards an object which can influence and control the individuals' actions. For instance, the individual's previous experience with an entity can be translated into a particular type of behavior.

1.3 Attitude in EFL Teaching/Learning

In the context of English as a foreign language teaching/learning, attitude is one of the factors that holds a great impact on the learners' and teachers' academic performance. According to Reid (2003:43) “attitudes are important to us because they can not be neatly separated from the

study for the reason that achievement in a target language relies not only on intellectual capacity but also on the learner's attitudes towards language learning". That is to say, success or failure of the language acquisition depends on learners' and teachers' attitudes which include their feelings, emotions and beliefs towards the target language as well as their cognitive abilities. Attitudes are crucial and they are associated with the target language throughout the learning process. Thus, attitudes cannot be simply disentangled from the research.

According to Ajzen (2005), attitude entails evaluation, which is typically done on a bipolar scale from favourable to unfavourable, or from positive to negative. In other words, attitudes toward a specific language can be positive or negative; some learners may have a negative attitude towards the second language and want to learn it in order to gain a competitive advantage over others in the community. However, a positive attitude generally increases motivation and the willingness to learn. Language attitudes are likely to be constructed as a result of the learners' experiences, which may change over time. They could refer to both attitudes towards language learning and also attitudes towards the members of a particular speech community. Furthermore, a person's attitude is a mental posture that influences their behaviors or opinions towards or against a particular thing, it can be a conscious or, in some cases, an unconscious reaction based on their experiences.

Conventionally, the EFL teaching/learning process has been restricted to the Face-to-Face interpersonal communication. However, the recent advanced technologies and other multimodal properties have allowed the instructors to deliver lectures using a mixture of traditional in-person learning and newly integrated technologies. This method is otherwise known as Blended Learning, which the following section aims to conceptualize.

2. Blended Learning

2.1 Origin and Definition of Blended Learning

The origin of Blended Learning (BL) pre-date the advent of digital technology and has emerged as one of the most popular pedagogical concepts at the beginning of the 2000s. The rise of personal computing in the eighties and the advent of the World Wide Web in the nineties have encouraged the development of new models of learning at different levels of education. Therefore, digital technology has begun to be introduced into the field of private sector training.

Blended Learning refers to the diverse aspects of learning and teaching. It is the combination of both the strengths of traditional Face-to-Face learning and the advantages of distance learning. It is defined by Garrison and Vaughan (2008:148) as “the organic integration of thoughtfully selected and complementary Face-to-Face and online approaches and technologies”. In addition, Mason and Rennie (2006) extend this definition by including other combinations of technologies, locations, or pedagogical approaches. In other words, BL is the process of incorporating a variety of activities and technology with Face-to-Face traditional learning in order to create a motivating educational environment for the students, and provide them with opportunities to work and attain their goals as well as encouragement to ameliorate their learning.

In accordance to the previous definitions Sharma & Barrett (2009:7) state that:

Blended Learning is one of the recent ways which combines Face-to-Face classroom component with an appropriate use of technology. The term technology covers a wide range of recent aspects such as the Internet, CD-ROM, and interactive white board. It also combines the use of computer as a means of communication such as chat and email.

Additionally, Throne (2003:16) claims that “Blended Learning is a mix of multimedia technology, CD-ROM, video streaming, visual classrooms, voice mail, email and conference calls, and online text animation and video-streaming”. That is to say, Blended Learning is about the mingling of the

traditional way of teaching and technology-based training using a range of pedagogical methods and different forms of teaching. Its versatility as a pedagogical strategy for creating learner-centered instruction consists in the capacity to exploit the potentials of both the traditional Face-to-Face instruction and online learning modality in order to provide students with multiple pathways of learning. On the light of the precedent definitions, BL consists of two main concepts; Face-to-Face learning which refers to the traditional classrooms where the teacher conducts instruction with the students in person, as well as, distance learning that refers to technology-based learning which includes the integration of virtual resources and tools.

2.1.1 Face-to-Face Learning

Face-to-Face learning refers to the traditional method of teaching that takes place in a typical or conventional classroom with the co-presence of the teacher and students. According to Murray (2017), conventional teaching is done in a Face-to-Face format, where the teacher interacts directly with the students while delivering prepared lectures. It means that the teaching/learning process is conducted concurrently. However, Face-to-Face learning like any other instructional method has advantages and disadvantages.

Voci and Young (2001) state that the advantages of Face-to-Face learning include social communication between the teacher and the students, familiarity with the method used and the interactive learning environment among students. In fact, classroom learning offers multi-sensory appeal, the students can actively participate in activities and case studies, listen to the lecturer and get visual clues through handouts or white board lists. Additionally, F2F instruction enables students to enquire about things and take part in live debates, since the teacher can be reached directly in the classroom and there is instant communication and feedback. Besides, Face-to-Face learning provides the students additional opportunities for interpersonal interaction to establish and maintain personal and professional relationships while pursuing their education.

However, Baldwin-Evans (2006) has identified the disadvantages of Face-to-Face learning. First, they include the challenges of having to join a classroom location every day such as having to travel long distances and the lack of transportations in some areas. Then, the lack of time that learners and instructors have for learning, since every lecture is timed according to a specific schedule. Lastly, the loss of group discussion if the lesson is lecture-based, since students are often passive during lectures.

2.1.2 Distance Learning

According to Webster & Hackley (1997), the term distance learning refers to approaches that focus on expanding access to education and training by liberating learners from time and place constraints which leads individual and group learners to benefit from its flexible learning opportunities. Distance learning is considered as the most rapidly expanding sector of education, due to the development of internet-based technologies particularly the World Wide Web, that has highlighted the potential impact of distance learning on all aspects of education. Thus, it can be described as a type of learning which involves the implementation of information, computing and communications technology applications in more than one location, and provides both individual and group learners with customizable learning options.

The United States Distance Learning Association (2001) defines “distance learning” as the delivery of education or training through electronically mediated instruction including satellite, video, audio graphic, computer, multimedia technology and other forms of learning at a distance. This association notes that distance education refers to teaching and learning situations in which the instructor and the learners are geographically separated and therefore rely on electronic devices and printed materials for instructional delivery. That is to say, distance learning is the delivery of education or training via electronic means, and other kinds of remote learning.

Furthermore, Holmberg (1989) suggests the following characteristics for distance education: the segregation of both teachers and students, facilitation in terms of organization and planning, establishment of the material and assessment for the students, utilization of media and technology to establish connection between student and teacher for the dissemination of content and critical feedback, facilitation of engagement between students and teachers, and segmentation of the learning groups. In addition, distance learning is a driving factor in social and economic development. It is instantly becoming an important element of the mainstream educational system of both developed and undeveloped countries. The internationalization and the advancement of distance learning offers numerous opportunities for countries to achieve the objectives of their educational system.

Blended learning is a versatile notion that takes different formats. The subheading below provides several models to classify the diverse aspects of this method.

2.2 Blended Learning Models

Graham (2013) observes that several universities and colleges have developed their own Blended Learning models, which vary depending on how much of a course is taught Face-to-Face or remotely. Staker and Horn (2012) categorize Blended Learning into four models which are rotation, flexible, self-blended, and enriched virtual. The four models have a common strength which represents the ability to place more into the hands of students.

2.2.1 The Rotation Model

It is a program in which students rotate on a fixed schedule or at the teacher's discretion between learning in groups in a classroom setting to completing lab course work. Other learning environments involved in this model are online learning and individualized training (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.2.2 The Flexible Model

It is a program in which content and instruction are delivered primarily by the Internet. Students move on individually, but under the supervision of the teacher who is physically present. The teacher-of-record provides Face-to-Face support on a flexible and adaptive as-needed basis through activities such as small-group instruction, group projects, and individual tutoring (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.2.3 The Self-Blended Model

In this model, students pick different courses to pursue autonomously while being supervised by a teacher and other students. Students self-blend some individual online classes while taking others in person (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.2.4 The Enriched-Virtual Mode

It is a sort of a program implemented across the entire school in which each subject involves a mixture of Face-to-Face instructions and learning remotely using online delivery of content, students alternate their time between the two methods (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.3 Blended Learning Constituents

Carman (2002) identifies five key constituents for a Blended learning process: Live events, Self-paced learning, Collaboration, Assessments, Support materials.

2.3.1 Live events

It means that most students believe that nothing matches having access to a live instructor. For this reason, Blended Learning refers to synchronous instructor-led activities in which all students take part simultaneously, such as "virtual classrooms".

2.3.2 Self-paced learning

It refers to that learners should complete their learning experiences individually in their personal adequate space and time, by means of interactive web-based, or CD-ROM instructional techniques.

2.3.3 Collaboration

It means that students build a community of debate and communication where they all work to increase their knowledge through email and online chats.

2.3.4 Assessment

It serves as a gauge of students' knowledge, pre-assessments can be used to ascertain prior knowledge before online learning, and post-assessments can be used to determine and evaluate the progression of the students' learning post online learning. Assessment is considered one of the most crucial and vital components of Blended Learning since it gives students the opportunity to check their understanding and design their own mixed learning environment. The efficiency and advancements of every learning event are also measured.

2.3.5 Support materials

It includes printed references, job aids as charts, summaries, checklists, and personal digital assistants (PDAs), as examples of physical and digital reference resources that encourage learning, retention, and transfer (PDAs).

2.4 Benefits of Blended Learning in the (EFL) Teaching/Learning Context

In the last few decades Blended Learning has arisen as a new and significant educational trend. Research on this hybrid method is relatively new and is linked with multiple educational fields such as English teaching methodology, educational technology, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and distance education. According to Graham (2006) Blended Learning in higher education occurs based on several levels: activity-level blending, course-level blending,

and institutional-level blending. Each one of these levels uses a combination of traditional ways of teaching and online elements depending on the type of learning, whether it is an activity, course, program or institution, and illustrates the Blended Learning environment as it relates to Face-to-Face learning and online learning.

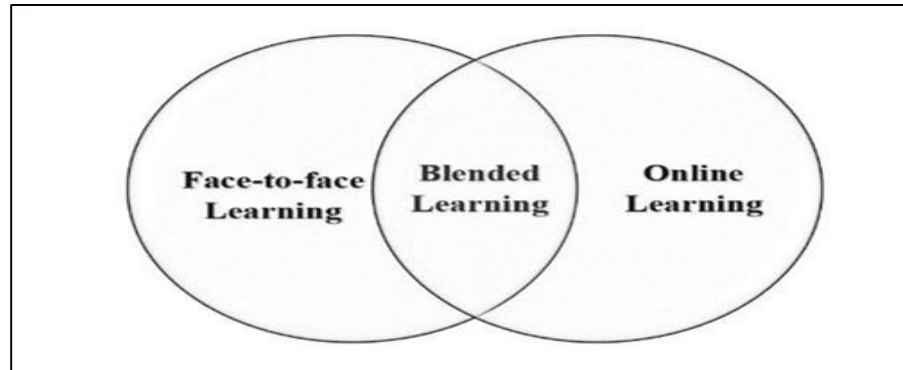


Figure 01: Blended Learning Environment (Graham 2006)

According to Riel, Lawless, and Brown (2016:189), “Blended Learning environments provide students with online and Face-to-Face places to meet, collaborate, and work on meaningful projects. Each of these spaces has particular benefits to successful learning”. The main characteristics of this method is that it allows teachers to provide their students with classroom activities in two different settings: in-person and online.

In addition, Stein and Graham (2014) suggest that Blended Learning has several advantages for students, teachers and administrators such as increased access and convenience, improved learning, decreased or more flexible expenses. First , in terms of increased access and convenience for many students, the benefit of taking classes online consists in decreasing the need to in-person attendance, in particular the students work or a family to care for. Second, BL improves learning and it is considered to be more effective than any other learning method for the following reasons: improved instructional design, increased guidance and trigger, easier access to

learning activities, individualized learning opportunities, increased engagement through social interactions, time-on-task (accelerated learning). The third benefit of BL consists of lower or flexible course costs for teachers, students, and institutions, as well as less travel time that leads to transportation savings and lower parking costs.

Furthermore, Neumeier (2005:164) states that “the most important aim of a Blended Learning design is to find the most effective and efficient combination of the two modes of learning for the individual learning subjects, contexts and objectives.” Thus, he provides a framework design that consists of six parameters to identify the main factors in designing a Blended Learning environment for language Teaching/ Learning. These parameters are: mode, model of integration, distribution of learning content and objectives, language teaching methods, involvement in Learning subject and location. Each one of these parameters is significant for language teachers to determine whether to integrate Blended Learning into their teaching practices.

3. Theoretical Framework

The current study seeks to identify the attitudes of students and teachers towards Blended Learning, by relying on Davis’ (1989) ‘Technology Acceptance Model’ (TAM). This model seeks to measure the willingness of people to accept or reject any new information technology innovation. Davis (1989) conceptualizes (TAM) relying on the prior work of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) who have formulated the theory of Reasoned Action. TAM is developed specifically to predict and explain technology usage behavior and to identify the factors leading to the acceptance or rejection of technology. Davis (1989) suggests that users’ motivation can be explained by two factors: Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness.

- **Perceived Ease of Use**

According to Davis (1989:320), Perceived Ease of Use refers to “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort”. This follows from the definition of ‘ease’ as the freedom from difficulty or great effort. The importance of Perceived ease of use is supported by Bandura's extensive research on self-efficacy (1982:122) who defines it as “judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations”. To put it in another way, the positive or the negative attitude of a user towards technology is influenced by the degree of the effort it requires.

- **Perceived Usefulness**

It is the second factor of TAM which is defined as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” (Davis, 1989:320). This follows the definition of the word useful as ‘capable of being used advantageously’. Similarly, Mathwick et al. (2001) define Perceived Usefulness as the extent to which a person deems a particular system to boost their professional and academic performance. In other words, it is the individuals’ perception of the degree a technology or tool is able to help them achieve their goal. Technology is perceived as being useful when it offers several advantages for its users even if it requires a certain degree of effort. Additionally, Perceived Usefulness is also considered to be influenced by Perceived Ease of Use as Davis & Venkatesh (2000:187) note: “the easier a technology is to use, the more useful it can be”.

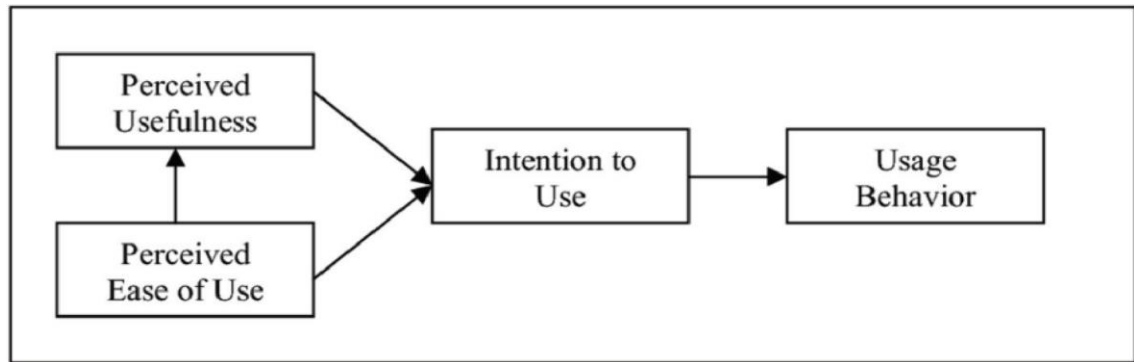


Figure 02: The Earliest Technology Acceptance Model (Davis1989)

Davis (1989) claims that Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness predict the attitude towards using the technology, which in turn determines the users' behavioral intention to use the technology. The attitude to use is concerned with the users' evaluation of the desirability of employing a particular information system application while the behavioral intention is the measure of the likelihood of a person employing the application. Moreover, Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of use are influenced by external factors such as social, cultural, and political factors. Social factors include language, skills, and facilitating conditions. Political factors are mainly the impact of using technology in politics and political crises. Garg and Garg (2013) suggest that in formulating perceptions regarding new technologies, subjective and social norms influence consumers as well as perceptions of the quality of service.

Technology acceptance model is used in a wide variety of domains. Scholars test the models of technology acceptance in different contexts and explore the acceptance of different technologies such as mobile banking, telecommunication technology, virtual reality, and e-learning systems, to name few (Adams, Nelson & Todd, 1992; Venkatesh & Davis, 1996; Wilson, 2004; Al-Gahtani, 2016). Moreover, Scherer, Siddiq & Tondeur (2018) state that in the field of education, it is applied to explain teachers' adaptation of digital technologies in education.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the review of the major concepts that our research topic is based on. First, it has provided the definition of attitude and its importance in the context of language teaching/learning. Second, it has also explained the Blended Learning concept which is the combination of Face-to-Face learning and distance learning. Lastly, the chapter concludes with the presentation and explanation of Davis' (1989) "Technology Acceptance Model" which is the theoretical framework that has guided the current investigation. The next chapter introduces the research design process of the study.



Research Design

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the methodology. It describes the research design of the current study, which consists of the data collection instruments that have been used to gather information, and data analysis procedures that explain to the way the data are analyzed and interpreted. Both procedures are adopted to investigate students' and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning in the English Department at MMUTO. This chapter is divided into two parts that elaborate the procedures for data collection and data analysis. First, it explains the data collection tools which combines a questionnaire and a structured interview. Second, it defines data analysis procedures that contain two methods; the Descriptive Statistical Method analyzes the quantitative data obtained from the students' questionnaire. Lastly, Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used to analyze and interpret the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions included in both the questionnaire and the interview.

1. Procedures of Data Collection

1.1 Research Method

This inquiry opts for the mixed-method research to collect the appropriate data. It is defined by Tashakkori and Creswell (2007: 04) as a “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study”. In this study, the quantitative method is used to collect numerical data from the closed-ended questions of the questionnaire, while the qualitative method is used to gather the qualitative data from the open-ended questions included in both the questionnaire and the interview.

1.2 Context of the Investigation and the Sample of the Participants

This study has been conducted in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. The overall objective of this research is to discover what kind of attitudes students and teachers have towards the Blended Learning Method. The target sample

encompasses thirty-five (35) Master Two students from DLE and Lge and Com specialisms, along with eleven (11) teachers selected randomly at the department of English.

2. Data Collection Tools

In order to answer the advanced research questions and to confirm or refute the suggested hypotheses, this study adopts two different kinds of data collection tools: A questionnaire and a structured interview.

2.1 Questionnaire

Brown (2001:6) defines a questionnaire as “any written instrument that presents participants with a series of questions or statements to which they should react either by selecting from existing possibilities or writing out their answers. A questionnaire is particularly efficient for gathering information on a large scale”. It is a set of structured items that are used by researchers to gather information needed from the answers of the respondents without requiring much time and effort.

The questionnaire included in this study aims to discover the attitudes of the students from DLE and Lge and Com specialisms towards Blended Learning and the implementation of this method during the learning process. The questionnaire consists of twelve (12) items divided into two sections. We have relied on the Davis’ (1989) Technology Acceptance Model in order to formulate the questions, based on the two variables: Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness. The first section is entitled “Students’ Attitudes towards the Integration of Technology in their Learning”, which covers eight (08) close-ended questions that aim to uncover the students’ stance towards the use of technology as an educational tool. The second section is “The Students’ Views on the Incorporation of Blended Learning into their Learning Process”. It is composed of a set of four (04) open-ended questions.

The questionnaire is delivered to five students during the process of the pilot study to test the accuracy and relevance of the questions. After the feedback, we have added some items

and have omitted the ones that have been found impertinent such as the questions related to the profile of the students. We have reformulated unclear questions, as well as the titles of the two sections to ensure the practicality of the questionnaire.

2.2 Interview

The structured interview is the second supportive instrument used to gather the qualitative data for this research. It is defined by Gillham (2000:01) as “a conversation where one person—the interviewer—is seeking the response for a particular purpose from the other person—the interviewee-”. Indeed, it is a two-way method which permits an exchange of ideas and information. The structured interview is conducted with eleven (11) randomly selected teachers at the department of English at MMUTO. It comprises six open-ended questions that are asked in a set order to obtain in-depth answers and get detailed insight about teachers’ attitudes towards Blended Learning, and its integration into university. In order to facilitate the analysis of these answers, the Face-to-Face interviews are recorded after getting the interviewees’ permissions,

3. Data Analysis Procedures

For the analysis of the collected data, we have selected two data analysis procedures. The Descriptive Statistical Method is used to analyze the quantitative data that have been gathered from the questionnaire as well as the structured interview. The Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) method is used to examine the qualitative data that are gathered from the open-ended questions in the students’ questionnaire and teachers’ interview.

3.1 Descriptive Statistical Method

Bell (1987: 119-120) states that “in order to decrease the complexity of raw data, provide precision to the analysis and assure research validity and reproducibility, quantitative data are elicited using a descriptive statistical method”. We have proceeded in the calculation of the percentages using the descriptive statistical method also known as the Rule of Three. Its

equation is $(X = Z \times 100 / Y)$, in which **X** is the calculated percentage, **Z** is the value of the similar answers, **Y** is the total number of the participants. The results of the students' questionnaire are highlighted by means of diagrams. In fact, a quantitative research is used specifically to analyze and organize information.

3.2 Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

Krippendorff (1980, cited in Micheal and Andrea, 2005: 191) claims that “content analysis is a research method for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action”. QCA is a method that is adopted for the analysis of qualitative data that are mainly obtained from M2 DLE and Lge and Com students' questionnaire, and from the teachers' interview in the English department. We have used this method through the examination and interpretation of the participants' answers. The results are transformed into written material and transcribed in form of texts.


4. Limitations of the Study

The limitations we have encountered throughout this investigation include time constraint and lack of participants. We have gathered the data from the questionnaire and the interview during the two last weeks before the summer vacations. Due to a shortage of time, we have been unable to enlarge our research by conducting an experimental research. In terms of the lack of participants, we have relied on an online questionnaire to gather the needed data since we could not find students at the department of English due to the summer vacations. We have also faced some difficulties in conducting interviews with more teachers as some of them have been out of reach.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research design and the methodology used to carry out our investigation. First, it has presented the research method, the context of the investigation

and the sample population that has participated in our study. Second, it has described the data collection tools and has explained the way the data used in the study have been collected. Then, it has provided a clear insight into both procedures of data collection and data analysis. The quantitative data that have been collected through the questionnaire, are analyzed by means of the descriptive statistical method. The qualitative data, which are obtained from the interview and the open-ended questions from the questionnaire, are examined by means of the Qualitative Content Analysis. The next chapter presents the findings of the research.



Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the presentation of the findings of this research. It is divided into two sections. The first section is devoted to the findings of the students' questionnaire. The second section presents the results obtained from the teachers' interview. The results of this study are reported in percentages and illustrated in the form of diagrams.

1. Presentation of the Results of the Students' Questionnaire

1.1. Section one: Students' Attitudes Towards the Integration of Technology in their Learning

Q.01 Have you ever faced difficulties with the Face-to-Face teaching?

a- I have

b- I have not

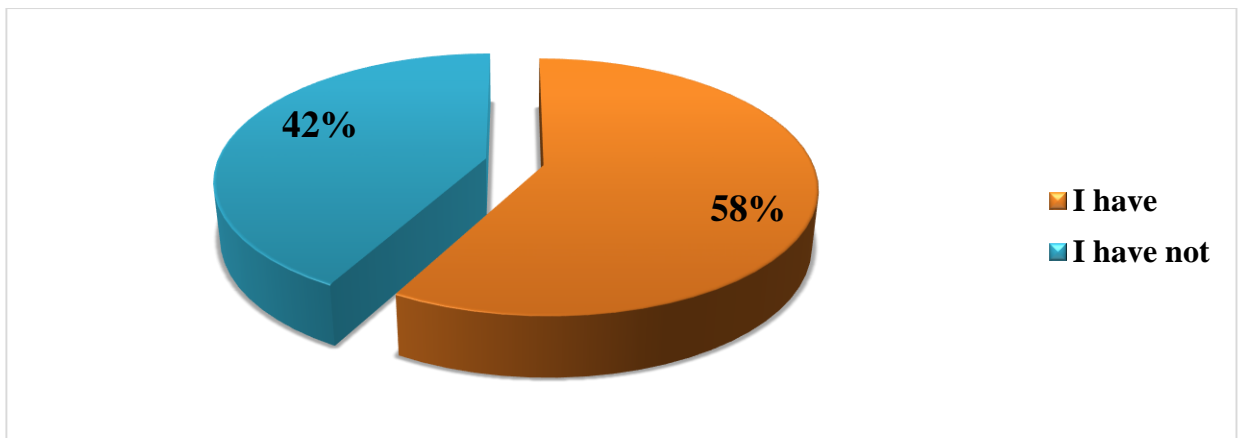


Diagram 01: Students' Difficulties with Face-to-Face Teaching

Diagram (01) above displays that (58%) of the participants face difficulties with the Face-to-Face teaching while (42%) do not have any difficulty with it.

Q.02 Do you enjoy using technological tools when learning?

a- Yes

b- No

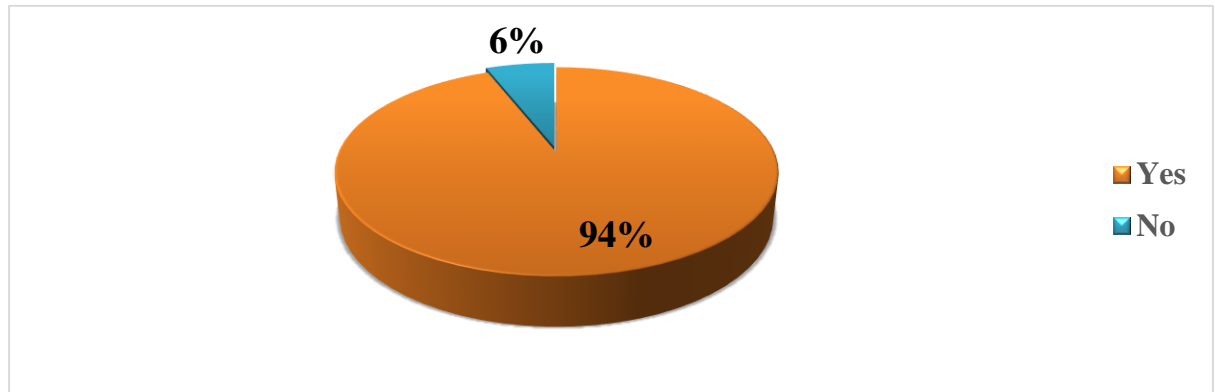


Diagram 02: Use of Technological Tool

The results of Diagram (02) demonstrate that (94%) of the participants enjoy the use of technological tools in their learning while (6%) do not enjoy it.

Q.03 What sort of technological tool do you prefer using? (you can choose multiple answers)

a- Mobile phones

b- Tablets

c- Computer

d- Data show

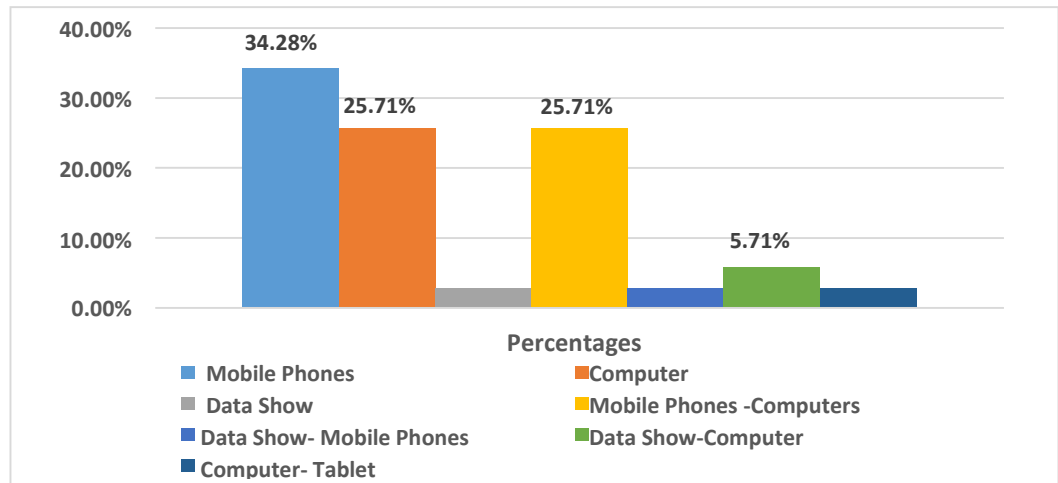


Diagram 03: Students' Preferred Technological Tool

According to the results displayed on Diagram (03), it is noticed that (34.28%) of the students prefer the use of the mobile phone for their learning. While (25.71%) of the participants have settled for the computer as their favorite tool, only (2.85%) have chosen the data show. On

the other hand, (25.71%) have selected both the mobile phone and the computer, (2.85%) have also picked both the data show and mobile phone. Lastly, (5.71%) have decided on both the data show and computer, and (2.85%) on computer and tablets.

Q.04 How do you find the integration of technology in EFL classes?

a-useful

b-not useful

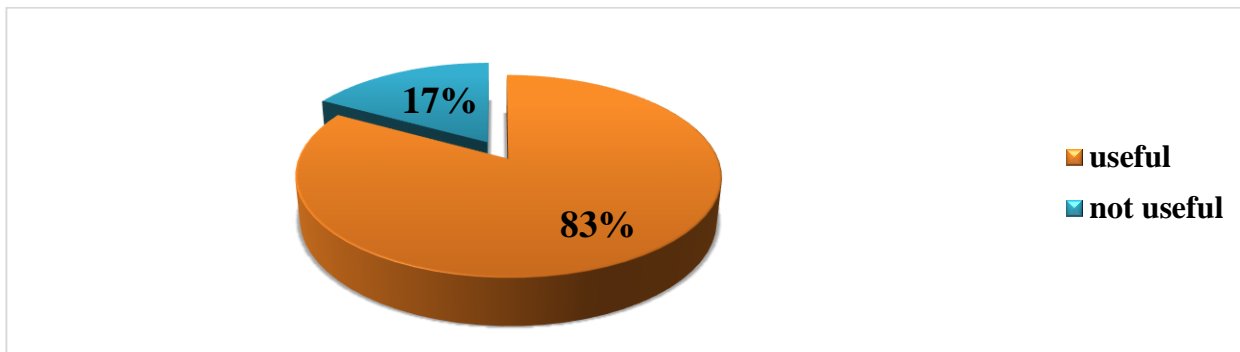


Diagram 04: Students' Opinions on the Integration of Technology in their Learning

Diagram (04) shows that (83%) of the students find the integration of technology to be useful for their learning while (17%) disagree and claim it is not useful.

Q.05 Have you ever taken an online class?

a- Yes

b- No

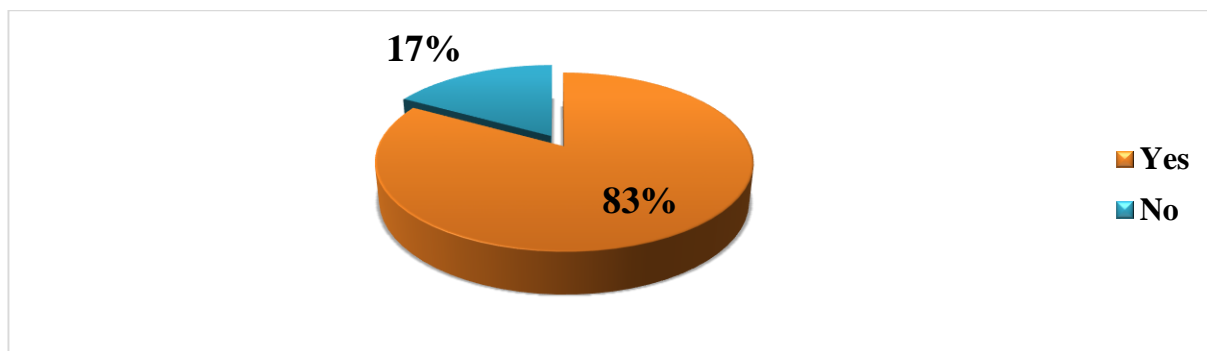


Diagram 05: Students' Participation in an Online Course

It is revealed from Diagram (05) above that (83%) of the participants have taken an online class before and (17%) have not had the experience.

If yes, how satisfied are you?

a- Very satisfied

b- Satisfied

c- Not satisfied

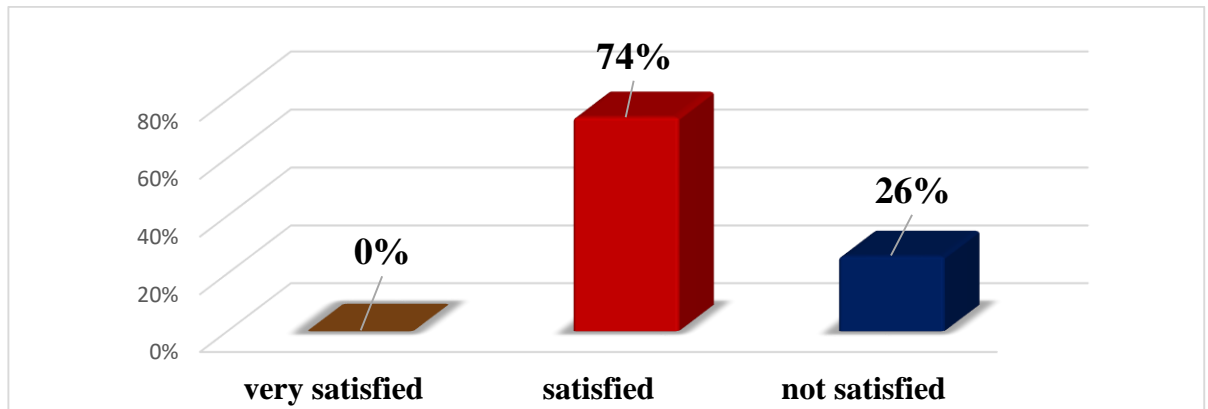


Diagram 06: Students' Satisfaction with Online Courses

Diagram (06) demonstrates that (74%) of the participants feel satisfied about their experience with taking an online course, and (26%) of the participant, are not satisfied with the experience but no one has responded with 'very satisfied'.

Q.06 Have you ever used online applications such as Google Meet and Zoom?

a- Yes

b- No

c- Others

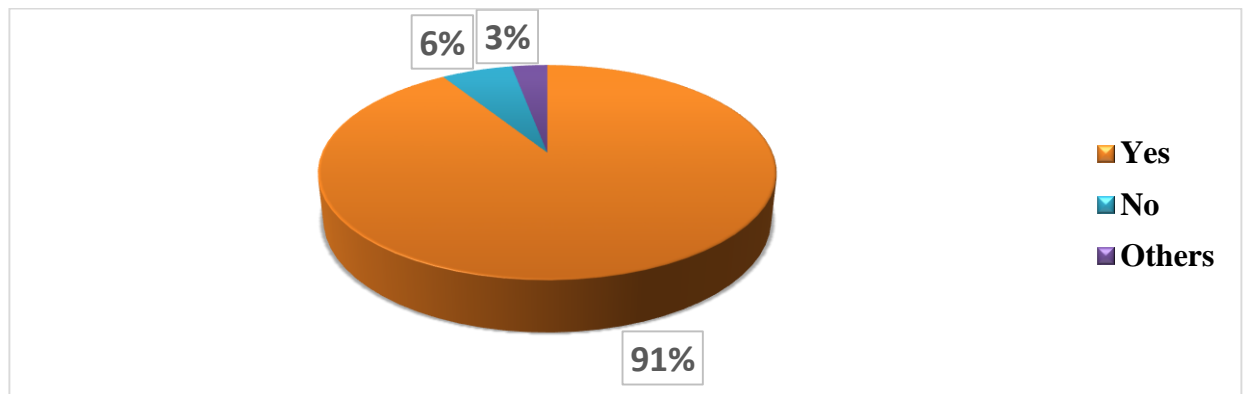


Diagram 07: Students' Use of Online Applications

Diagram (07) displays that a percentage of (91%) use online applications such as Google Meet and Zoom while (6%) do not use such applications and (3%) use other applications than the

ones mentioned in the question.

Q.07 What are the difficulties that you have faced during the use of those applications?

a-Lack of guidance

b-Technical Problems

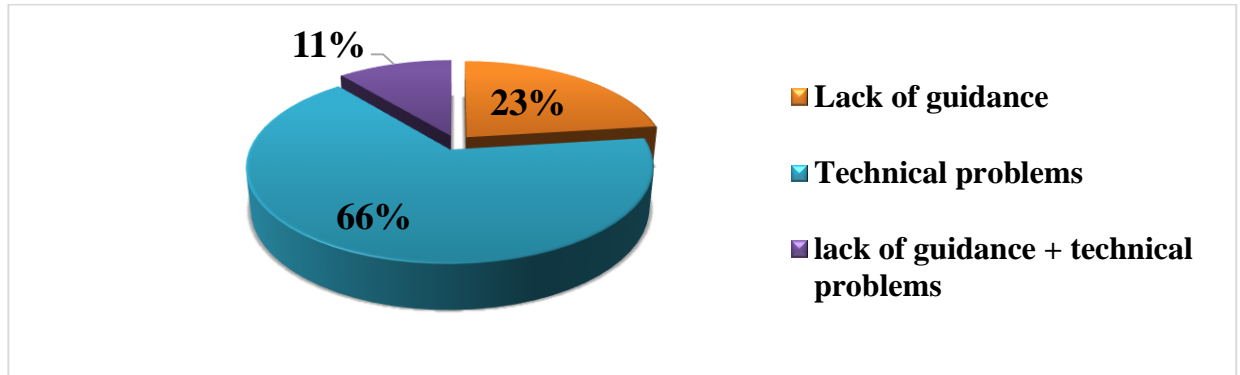


Diagram 08: Students' Difficulties with Online Application

The results on Diagram (08) show that (66%) of the participants face technical problems during the use of those applications and (23%) of them claim that their difficulty is the lack of guidance. However, (11%) of them state that they have faced issues with both lack of guidance and technical problems.

Q.08 Lessons are better delivered through online learning applications than through Face-to-Face learning?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

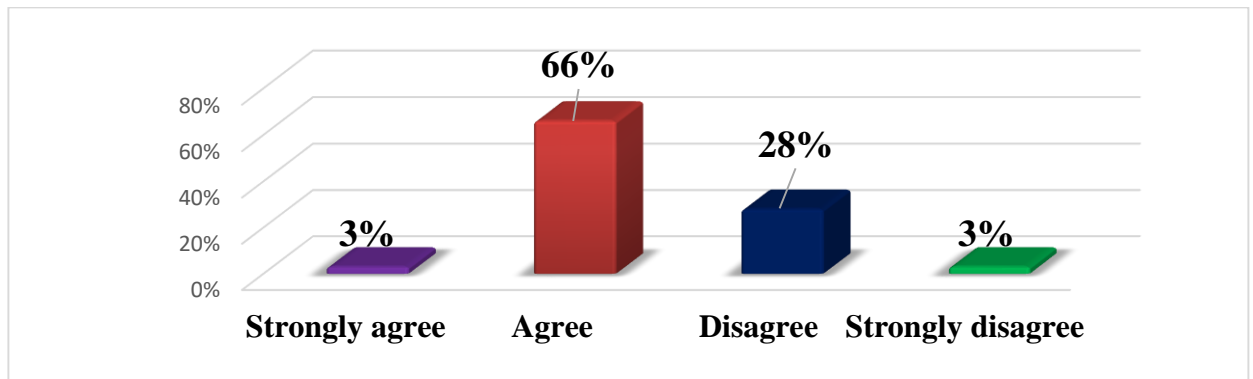


Diagram 09: Students' Preference Level of Online Course Delivery

As indicated on Diagram (09), more than half of the participants (66%) ‘agree’ that lessons are better delivered through online teaching. However, (28%) disagree that lessons are better delivered online and (3%) ‘strongly agree’ on the same statement but (3%) of the students ‘strongly disagree’ that lessons are better delivered online.

1.2 Section Two: Students’ Attitudes towards the Incorporation of Blended Learning into the Learning Process

Q.09 How important is Blended Learning?

Very important Important Slightly important unimportant

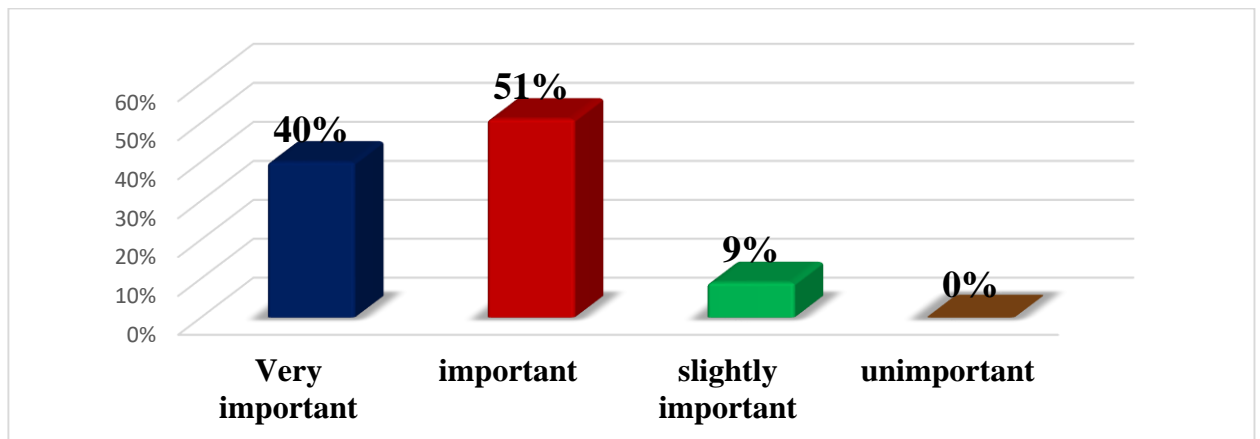


Diagram 10: Importance of Blended Learning

Diagram (10) above displays that (51%) of the students find the Blended Learning method important. Forty percent of them claim that BL is ‘very important’, whereas only (9%) of the participants have answered that it is ‘slightly important’ and none have answered with ‘unimportant’.

Would you justify your choice?

The majority of the students think that Blended Learning is important because it offers more options than Face-to-Face learning. With the emergence of the modern age, technology is being employed in a variety of setting, including education. Thus, it enables flexibility for

personalized learning while also increasing students' autonomy, as one participant states “it encourages students to use their full potential”. Additionally, the students who believe Blended Learning is very important have mentioned the aspect of mental health. They claim that BL could provide those that suffer from anxiety a chance to lessen the pressure that traditional ways of learning make them go through. One student states “it could be a great idea to use Blended Learning to help both students’ and teachers’ mental and physical health, because in my opinion, many students who suffer from anxiety and stress would do better when taught online than in a traditional manner”. However, for those who think that BL is only slightly important they believe that yes it has positive points but it is not that important.

Q.10 Do you think that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning?

Yes

No

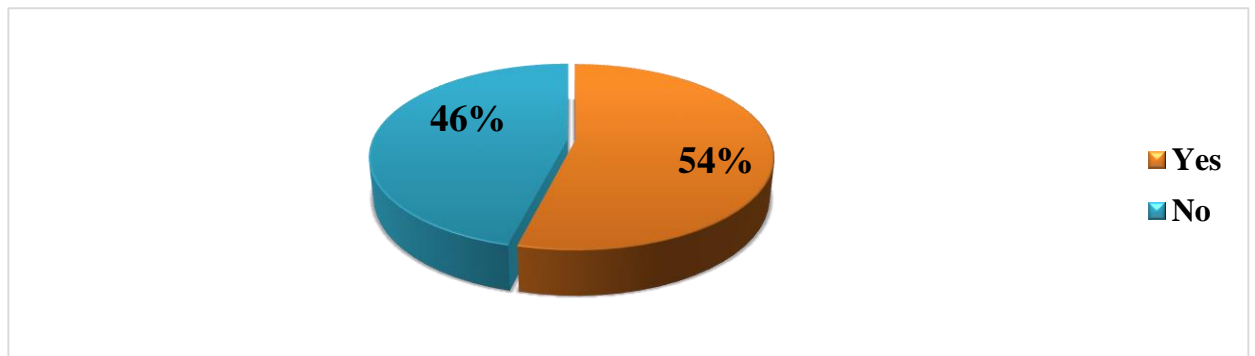


Diagram 11: Blended Learning Outperforms Face-to-Face Learning

Diagram (11) demonstrates that (54%) of the target participants believe that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning, contrary to the (46%) of the participants who think that BL is not more effective and prefer Face-to-Face learning.

Why?

The participants who have responded by ‘yes’ to the question consider BL to be a complementary method as it is more convenient to the modern world since it combines both the

advantages of distance learning and Face-to-Face learning. In contrast, to those who have responded by ‘No’ they refute the fact that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning because of the lack of guidance from the teachers as well as technical problems and consider F2F to be a more appropriate method of learning.

Q 10. Did the use of Blended Learning offer you more flexibility and convenience in the management of your courses?

Yes

No

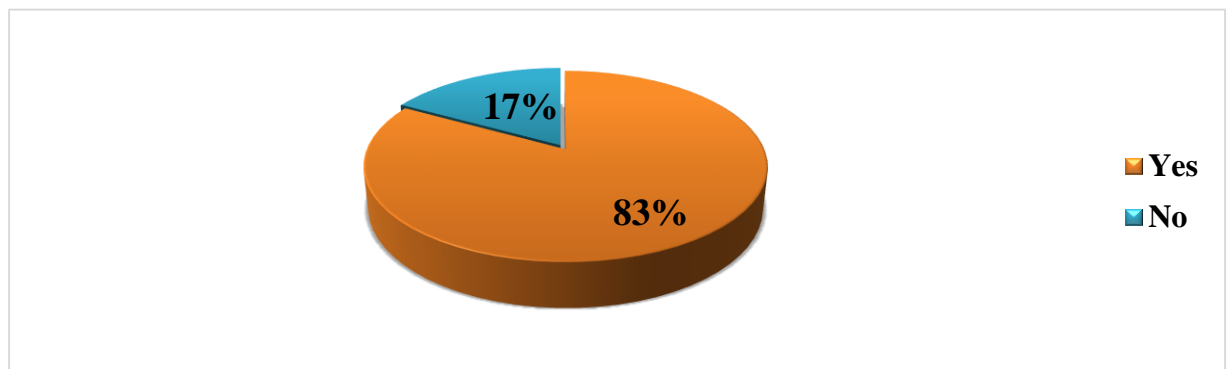


Diagram 12: Course Management Flexibility and Convenience in Blended Learning

Diagram (12) denotes that (83%) of the participants state that Blended Learning offers flexibility and convenience in course management, whereas (17%) have answered that it does not offer flexibility and convenience in the management of their courses.

How? Provide an example

Blended Learning offers more flexibility and convenience in course managements in terms of time and space management as an example from one of the students “ I recall a case where we had a catch-up session , which we could not attend during the week, the teacher agreed to a virtual lecture on the Google Meet platform on the weekend. The lecture was successful and we had the chance to study in the comfort of our homes”. In addition, another positive aspect of BL is that it is convenient for the students as it gives them the freedom to study at their own pace,

for example: “I was able to study at my own rhythm and it offered me new ways to search for knowledge. With BL, we can use technology tools along with books, we do not have to feel restricted to one thing only”, whereas (17%) of the students disagree that Blended Learning offers more flexibility and convenience than Face-to-Face learning; they claim that they prefer the traditional F2F teaching because BL causes them lack of motivation.

Q.10 Do you think that Blended Learning should be integrated in all your university courses?

Yes

No

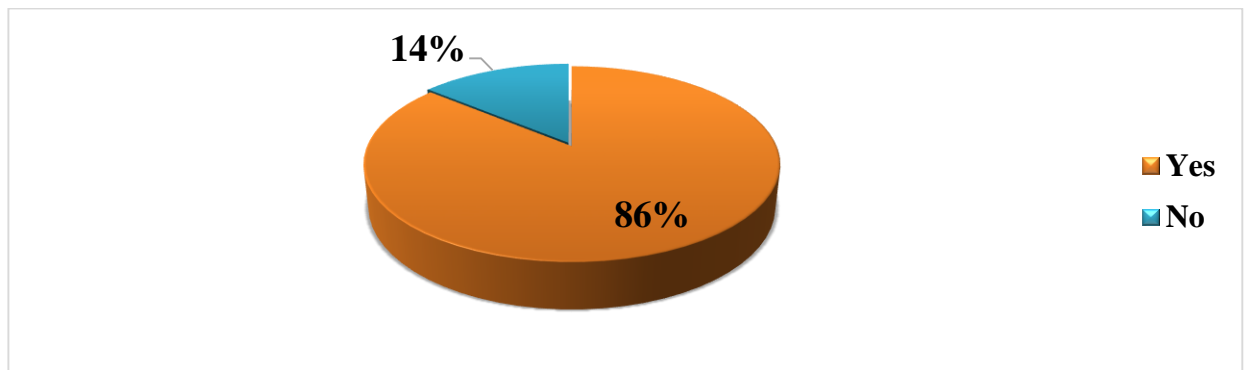


Diagram 13: Integration of Blended Learning into University Courses

The statistics above show that (86%) of the students answer that Blended Learning should be integrated into all their university courses. Yet, (14%) of them do not want Blended Learning to be integrated.

Justify your answer

According to the students' answers, (86%) of the students who agree on the integration of BL into university courses believe it is for various reasons such as to make the learning experience more interesting and convenient for everyday life unexpected circumstances like the outbreak of a pandemic or even more common the lack of public transportations due to strikes. In addition, being able to access lectures without the constant need to be physically present in the

classrooms is really helpful for the students who have double lives as a student and a part time employee. Conversely, (14%) of those who disagree on the integration of Blended Learning in university courses believe that courses are better delivered in the traditional Face-to-Face way especially for certain subjects. For instance, the subject of listening and speaking can not be taught online as it requires the co-presence of both students and teachers for better interaction.

2. Presentation of the Findings of the Teachers' Interview

The interview is the second data collection tool that has been employed in this research to gather data. It is conducted with eleven (11) teachers of all grade levels and specialties. The information below provides the complete outcomes of conducting the interviews.

Question 1: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

This question is asked for the purpose of discovering whether the teachers of the Department of English at MMUTO are familiar with the term Blended Learning or not. Based on their answers, it is revealed that all of them are familiar with it, but they have different degrees of knowledge about the concept. Most of the teachers have been introduced to BL during the Covid-19 pandemic due to the circumstances that have obliged them to use distance learning. They define this method as a modern method of learning where Face-to-Face teaching is carried out along side distance learning.

Additionally, some teachers have shared their experiences that have lead them to discover Blended Learning like for example through internships and practical trainings. Some of the teachers' answers are as follow "we have been introduced to it in 2018 since I was part of internship that we did for new recruits teachers late 2017 early 2018, where we were taught methods of how to use Moodle, how to use platforms that should help the students in their learning. We were trained for about six months and we were given tasks to complete and to hand

through the internet because the supervisor was actually located in Constantine. It was the first experience in Tizi Ouzou”. Another teacher has also shared her experience as follow “I have participated in an online training program on Blended Learning with the University of Constantine from January to July 2021. This training helped me to know what is Blended Learning and what are the different tools and platforms that can be used to carry out this form of learning like YouTube, Moodle, and Edx platforms.”

Question 2: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

The purpose of this question is to discover what the teachers use to perform their distance teaching, that is, the online platforms and applications that help them to accomplish the delivery of their online courses. The platforms that almost all of the teachers made use of are the MMUTO E-learning platform and Moodle. As for applications, they have mentioned the utilization of Google Meet and Zoom. Furthermore, in the case of some teachers who are more experienced with online learning they have answered this way: “I use Quizlet, Moodle and I also tried Google Classroom during the pandemic period. I also like to use Google Drive with my students. I recorded my lecture and then shared the link with them”, and also “The applications that can be used are the following: Skype, blogs, Yahoo, Sonic Educational Websites, YouTube and Messenger.” However, some teachers have expressed their discontentment with the use of any online application or platform saying they are pleased to continue using traditional tools of teaching.

Question 3: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

This question seeks to discover whether the teachers perceive Blended Learning as an important method of learning or not. According to the findings, all the teachers agree that BL is a pertinent method that can offer many benefits when applied under the right circumstances. The

majority of the teachers share their approval of the use of online tools for the sake of learning as it can enhance the autonomy of students and it could also motivate both the learners and teachers to enhance their technological abilities.

Question 4: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

This question aims to provide a variety of examples illustrating the flexibility and convenience that Blended Learning can offer. Based on the responses, the majority of teachers believe that Blended Learning encourages students to become autonomous as one teacher states “the students can learn at their own pace. I give them the lesson, perhaps use videos by recording yourself explaining and sending it to the student.” Additionally, according to the teachers’ answers, BL provides the students complete access to all the lectures and information whenever and wherever they choose, which can significantly lessen their anxiety and increase participation.

Moreover, BL offers time management for students and teachers, as another teacher suggests, “I can present the theoretical part of the course in the classroom, and then I can put the course on the University website or any online platform that students can have access to and assign them online homework with regards to the course we have seen in class. In this way, me as a teacher, I can save time, and the students can have access to the online version of the course from anywhere at any time.” However, one teacher expresses her dissatisfaction and claims that Blended Learning is not always practical due to the shortage of materials and internet connectivity.

Question 5: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

This question has been asked in an attempt to ascertain the teachers’ attitudes concerning

the combination of Face-to-Face and online teaching as a new method of teaching. According to the results, most of the teachers support the use of Blended Learning and have responded as follows “I would say the combination of the two would be the ideal teaching the utopian teaching that would be fruitful in the right circumstances”, “I think that Blended Learning is a valuable teaching-learning approach. It can be beneficial for both teachers and students if used properly”. Another teacher has shared her experience to support the idea of combining the two methods with the following statement “I think that as a new method, the teacher should try it and take risks It is not perfect but we should learn from our mistakes. The first time I taught online I knew I was going to face difficulties but I had to do it anyway or otherwise I would never learn”. However, one teacher shares their preference for Face-to-Face instruction, despite the fact that Blended Learning is a solid method. In their opinion, Face-to-Face instruction is superior since it offers more direct contact with students.

Question 6: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

The final question seeks to determine if the teachers of the department of English support the integration of Blended Learning and whether it can benefit the students and teachers. From the interviews, nearly all the teachers express their support for implementing BL at the university. They agree that this method has benefits both for teachers and students but emphasize the importance that both sides receive training to become more acquainted with the concept. Two teachers claim, “It is something that I really hope our country will develop and take into consideration in a serious manner because it is helpful, practical and can motivate learners”. “The integration of Blended Learning at the level of our department will have many benefits in the case of the learners to learn according to their needs and interest, and the teacher can boost their motivation from all the materials that are on the net”. Nevertheless, one teacher states that even

though Blended Learning is a good method, the direct interaction between teachers and students is irreplaceable as online education is an unreliable method.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of our study obtained from the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. The findings have deduced that Blended Learning is an important method of learning and that it could be a great source of advantages if incorporated in the right way. These findings are discussed in details in the discussion chapter.



Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss and interpret the results obtained from the questionnaire distributed to thirty-five (35) Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms, as well as the results from the structured interview that has been conducted with eleven (11) randomly selected teachers in the department of English at MMUTO. Therefore, this chapter is divided into four sections. The first section deals with the students' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The second section is concerned with the teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The third section discusses Blended Learning in terms of flexibility and convenience according to the students and teachers. The fourth and last section is devoted to the attitudes of students and teachers towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process.

1. Students' Attitudes towards Blended Learning

According to the questionnaire administered to the students, the results of the first question have revealed that (58%) of the students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms encounter difficulties with Face-to-Face learning instructions (see Diagram 01, page 26). In order to improve their education and decrease these obstacles and difficulties that can negatively influence their learning, the students do not refuse to be exposed to new methods of learning. Therefore, the incorporation of technology can play a major role to ameliorate the learning environment and improve their education. According to the results of the fourth question from the questionnaire, (83%) of the participants have expressed that the use of technology is useful in their learning, while (17%) do not consider the addition of technology to their learning to be useful (see Diagram 04 page 28). This question has been asked to the students to discover if they perceive technology to be useful for more

educational purposes rather than just for entertainment. Accordingly, Balanskat (2006) observes that ICT's is employed as a tool to achieve a wide range of educational aims, hence digital integration is widely promoted. These goals are acknowledged as modernizing teaching, planning, and evaluation processes, as well as more modified learning.

In addition to that, the results from the fifth question show that (83%) of the students have taken an online course before through Zoom and Google Meet online applications (see Diagram 05, page 27), and (74%) of them have rated their experience as being 'satisfied', while the remaining (26%) feel 'unsatisfied' (see Diagram 06, page 29). The participants have shared the most frequent obstacles that they have encountered during those online courses, (66%) of the students have faced technical problems, (23%) of them state that it is lack of guidance and the remaining (11%) claim that they have faced both technical problems and lack of guidance. Despite the difficulties that students have encountered with their online learning experiences, they do not reject the use of technology as a learning tool and they are open to learn remotely. Brown (2004) claims that the integration of ICT's into education can enhance the way students discover and evaluate the fundamentals of knowledge. That is, it can help students produce ideas, analyze facts, collaborate and communicate productively.

Moreover, the results from the ninth question reveal that (51%) of the students think that Blended Learning is an important method of learning (see diagram 10, page 31). As one student states "It pushes the learner to discover new techniques for learning and makes use of different tools especially with the evolution of technology" .Thus, Blended Learning provides a customized training experience for the learners, permitting them to learn more about the proper use of ICTs tools and ameliorating the students' information literacy. As Dangwal and Lalima, (2017: 132) declare "Learners increase their experience concerning the use of technology: Since the present witnessed the sophistication of ICT's, it is recommended in most professions and

domains”. Additionally, in reference to the students’ answers, Blended Learning is also important because it enhances the learners’ autonomy as one student notes “It makes it easier for the learner to learn and become autonomous”. To put in another way, BL allows the learners to discover their full educational potential outside the usual traditional ways of learning. It boosts students' self-confidence and openness to new experiences as well as creating a dynamic and enthusiastic environment that promotes students' interpersonal and social relationships, as well as their capabilities and sense of ease. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) have examined higher rates, better retention and higher level of student satisfaction due to the transformative potential of Blended Learning.

As far as the effectiveness of Blended Learning is concerned, it is noticed from the answers obtained through the tenth question that (54%) of the participants agree that BL is more effective than Face-to-Face learning. Blended Learning is a modern method that is more compatible with the current digital world, so it offers more comfort and motivation for the learner. As one student declares: “I strongly believe that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning as it is more convenient for teachers and students as they feel more at ease with this type of learning especially students, they seem to be more motivated and less anxious”. However, the remaining (46%) of the participants do not agree that Blended Learning is more effective than F2F because they have a preference for traditional classroom learning for reasons such as the lack of direct interactions with teachers and the lack of ICT’s knowledge, as one students declares: “I like Face-to-Face learning since it is more convenient to me. I personally feel more comfortable with it”.

As a result, the findings demonstrate that despite the contradicting answers from the participants but a substantial percentage of the students have a positive attitude towards Blended Learning. Concisely, BL is a method that encourages a variety of educational approaches and

learning style. It is all about strengthening the students' active participation throughout their classes using a range of strategies, offering them the alternative choice to initiate their own learning, and establishing an energetic and autonomy-oriented atmosphere.

2. Teachers' Attitudes Towards Blended Learning

BL is not a foreign concept to the teachers of English at MMUTO. The interview that has been conducted with the teachers has revealed the various online platforms and programs that the teachers use to accomplish their teaching as well as their perspectives on the usage of technology as a teaching tool. The majority of teachers are familiar with the use of the MMUTO E-learning platform and the Moodle platform. Some teachers also have claimed to have further knowledge and skills with the utilization of other online tools such as Google Meet and Zoom. One teacher has mentioned that during the pandemic, she has tried Google Classroom in addition to Quizlet, Moodle, and other platforms. She has also enjoyed using Google Drive with her students, therefore she has recorded her lecture and then provided them the link. Additionally, there are a variety of applications that can be used, including Skype, blogs, Yahoo. Sonic educational websites, YouTube, and Messenger. In addition to using technology in the classroom, the recent emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has compelled instructors to rely on distance online course delivery to complete the university academic year. As a result of the esoteric circumstances, some teachers have decided to adopt online teaching as an additional teaching potential substitute. In fact, the use of technology in their teaching is quite common throughout the academic year.

As it is displayed in the results of the previous chapter, the teachers that have participated in the interview are familiar with the concept of Blended Learning and define it as a contemporary method of teaching and learning that has gained a significant recognition and

flourished recently in the Algerian educational field. However, each teacher has been introduced to Blended Learning in a distinctive way. The majority of the teachers are first exposed to this strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic, since the circumstances at the time required them to rely on distance learning. Thus, nearly all the courses have been shared with the students of the department of English on the university platform 'E-learning', and have been reviewed afterwards when the students joined their classrooms, as one teacher declares " we have been introduced to it or we found ourselves compelled to use it when the COVID-19 first appeared in Algeria except some modules like E-learning". Moreover, the other teachers have indicated that they have been exposed to the BL method through a special training during which they have received multiple instructions on how to employ online teaching/learning platforms, as one teacher asserts " We have been introduced to it in 2018 since I was part of internship that we did for new recruits teachers late 2017 early 2018 ,where we were taught methods of how to use Moodle, how to use platforms that should help the students in their learning". Consequently, these trainings had a significant impact in ameliorating the teachers' use of technological devices. The technological skills they have obtained from this trainings along with their previous knowledge and experience with Face-to-Face learning has enabled them to execute Blended Learning in an appropriate way.

As far as question three of the interview is concerned, teachers have shared their tenet in regards to the importance of Blended Learning as a teaching and learning method. The majority agrees that BL could be beneficial for both teachers and students due to the fact it combines the advantages of Face-to-Face Learning and distance learning. As one teacher quotes "I think it is really important, [...] What we can do with Blended Learning is that we can evaluate some skills that cannot be evaluated in the classroom [...] sometimes with the lack of time I cannot do some exercises so I post them online on the platforms". In accordance to these results, Staker and Horn

(2012) state that Blended Learning occurs within a formal educational setting. Teaching and learning in a Blended Learning environment includes an online delivery of content and instruction and allows learners and teachers to have some control over the time, place and pace of instruction.

Furthermore, from the interview answers the teachers emphasize that Blended Learning is a learner-centered learning method because it creates autonomous students and significantly increases students' self-efficacy, which can significantly encourage them to be more active learners by allowing them to construct their own knowledge as one teacher claims “it is important because it motivates students and allow them to participate in their learning process. They are not passive but active learners”.

To sum up, the interview with the teachers have demonstrated that all of them are acquainted with the concept of Blended Learning, as they have provided us with a brief description of what this method is, their knowledge and their experiences with BL. Thus, it is worth mentioning that teachers' knowledge and understanding of Blended Learning is of a great significance in determining their positive attitudes toward it.

3. Blended Learning in Terms of Flexibility and Convenience According to the Students and Teachers

From the analysis of the previous section, it is noticed that the majority of the students and teachers have positive attitudes towards Blended Learning. BL is a recently developed innovative learning strategy that combines technology-based learning with traditional Face-to-Face learning methods. There are many perceived benefits of adopting BL in higher education.

In order to answer the third research question of the present investigation, Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' is relied on to investigate how the students and teachers perceive Blended Learning in terms of flexibility and convenience based on two variables:

Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness. Perceived Ease of Use is the degree to which an individual believes that using a specific system would be effortless. In other words, ease of use entails freedom from complexity and difficulties. Moreover, Perceived Usefulness is the extent to which a person considers using a specific strategy or technique to improve their performance.

Davis (1989) has worked on the development of the 'Technology Acceptance Model' by defining the processes that mediate the relationship between external factors and actual system use. The findings of this study reveal that Perceived Ease of Use is determined as the degree to which the participants perceive that participating in Blended Learning is convenient to their educational needs such as the accessibility to the materials anytime and anywhere. In this investigation, Perceived Usefulness has been defined as the extent to which the students and teachers believe that engaging in Blended Learning can enhance their academic performance, by allowing them to be more flexible with their teaching and learning in terms of course management. Flexibility and convenience are important aspects of Blended Learning that both the teachers and students interpret based on their own personal experiences.

The results from the eleventh question of the questionnaire show that (83%) of the students agree that Blended Learning offers them more flexibility and convenience in their course management. We have asked the students to provide some examples. (see Diagram 12 ,page 33). One student has responded as follows "Blended Learning enables the student to access the materials from anywhere at any time while enjoying the benefits of Face-to-Face support and instruction". In this sense, Hansen (2001) claims that when students are given a choice in their learning, they could feel more motivated to work.

Additionally, according to the students' answers obtained from the questionnaire, Blended Learning allows flexibility for course managements in terms of time and space organization. It gives learners a degree of control. They can choose the platform that aligns with their preferences,

as another student states “I was able to study at my own rhythm and it offered me new ways to search for knowledge. With BL, we can use technological tools along with books, we don’t have to feel restricted to one thing only”. From the viewpoint of the students, learning has evolved with the use of various computer programs, and the use of personal electronic devices (mobile, tablet, laptop). Thus, the possibility of obtaining more information from electronic e-learning platform leads to their self-development and motivates their learning.

Furthermore, Garrison and Kanuka (2004) argue that Blended Learning offers opportunities to create transformative learning environments that can effectively encourage critical, creative, and complex thinking skills. In this context, one student has shared that they had a catch-up session that they could not attend during the week, and the teacher agreed to give a virtual lecture on the Google Meet platform on the weekend. The lecture went well, and the students were given the opportunity to study at home. Consequently, this experience is another example of how Blended Learning has allowed them to be flexible in their learning. Wingard (2004:27) claims that the idea of accessibility motivates students as “They like to have the ability to access course materials anytime, anywhere and are positive about the convenience and flexibility this provides them. Because Blended Learning courses help in providing them with the flexibility they need to juggle jobs, school and family”. In other words, students acknowledge the convenience and flexibility of being capable of accessing course materials at any time and from any location. Since Blended Learning offers them the flexibility they need to balance work, school, and family life.

In addition, in the fourth question of the interview, the teachers are asked to provide examples on how Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience. Based on the responses, some teachers believe that BL encourages the students to be more autonomous as it provides them with complete access to all the lectures and information whenever and wherever it

is convenient for them. As one teacher states “Flexibility is the first and major characteristic of online learning like in terms of time and space. As an example, I have taught my students even when I was outside like at home or at restaurants. All I needed was the internet and my phone. Flexibility is something lacking in face to face classes. In terms of convenience it offers practicality”. Hence, from the teachers’ answers, Blended Learning can enable them to improve their existing teaching practices. In other words, many benefits can be generated when Blended Learning is implemented in the learning environment. By mixing online instructions and one-on-one face time, learners can work independently with new concepts while the teacher circulates and supports learners who may require assistance.

4. The Attitudes of Students and Teachers towards the Integration of Blended Learning into the Teaching/Learning Process

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is used as a theoretical framework for the definition of the variables that contribute to the discovery of the teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards the adoption of Blended Learning in higher education contexts. Students’ and teachers’ attitude towards Blended Learning is decisive in determining the success or failure of its implementation into the teaching/learning process. In this study, it is revealed that the majority of the participants have expressed positive attitudes towards Blended learning. According to Davis (1989), Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use predict the users’ attitude towards using the technology and subsequent behavioral intentions. Perceived Usefulness has a direct impact on attitude toward using a technology and behavioral intention to use the technology, whereas Perceived Ease of Use has an indirect impact on attitude toward technology use and behavioral intention to use technology. In order to answer the fourth and last question stated in the general introduction, the same question has been asked for both the students and

teachers in the questionnaire and interview.

The answers from question twelve of the questionnaire have revealed that (86%) of the students from the DLE and Lge and Com specialisms are supportive of the integration of Blended Learning into their university courses (see diagram 13, page 34), as they claim that BL could create an integrated classroom where the needs of all types of learners could be met and it would also help enhance the technological skills of both students and teachers. One student states “Relying on Face- to-Face learning would not strictly be a good choice. One example is the recent pandemic where in-person interactions were prohibited and all institutions have shifted to online school. I'd say Blended Learning is essential and quite unavoidable too”. In this context, Riel et al. (2016) state that a Blended learning environment allows students to connect, communicate, and engage on worthwhile projects both online and in-person. Each of these areas offers unique advantages for effective learning. In other words, Blended Learning is an appealing remedy to the constraints of adapting learning and development to every individual's requirements. It provides an opportunity to merge the innovative and technological breakthroughs afforded by online learning with the interaction and the participation offered in conventional learning.

Moreover, the teachers' answers to the sixth questions from the interview reveal that nearly all of them are amenable to the idea of integrating Blended Learning into university by expressing their favorable viewpoints and sharing their own experiences on online teaching. It can be deduced from their answers, that BL or the combination of distance learning and Face-to-Face learning is described as the ideal teaching. As one teacher declares “I would say the combination of the two would be the ideal teaching the utopian teaching that would be fruitful in the right circumstances”. Accordingly, Occhipinti (2017) asserts that the combination of Face-to-Face and online learning is the best approach to motivating students to learn, since all essential learning activities can be integrated including thinking, interaction, adaptation and discussion As

another teacher says: “ The integration of Blended Learning at the level of our department will have many benefits in the case of the learners to learn according to the needs and the interest and the teachers can boost their motivation from all the materials that are on the net”.

However, from the answers obtained from the teachers’ interview, in order to successfully implement Blended Learning, teachers and students ought to be digitally literate, that implies the ability to assimilate and properly understand information from various sources. In the case of the department of English at MMUTO, many teachers have addressed the issue of a shortage of materials and a lack of technological experience, as one teacher affirms “In the case of our university, I think Blended Learning should be used carefully in a relevant way since we do not have the needed material and conditions”. In this context, Zhang and Zhu (2018: 268) note that “Finding a suitable environment for all students is a difficult task, but the Blended Learning approach facilitates an ‘accessible, flexible, active, interactive, encouraging, and inspiring’ teaching and learning environment”. Thus, Blended Learning needs to be applied in the right way and under the appropriate circumstances in order for every body to benefit from.

To sum up, by relying on Davis’s (1989) ‘Technology Acceptance Model’ in our study, and based on the findings of the questionnaire and interview, the results show that Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and attitudes towards using technology are key determinants of behavior intentions towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process of the department of English at MMUTO. Accordingly, Hanif et al (2018) express that researchers have relied a lot on TAM in the context of higher education to determine the degree to which students as well as teachers accept modern information technology. The reason for this is that TAM is a simple and easy-to-understand model. The findings of this study demonstrate that the students and teachers perceive the incorporation of online resources along with classroom Face-to-Face learning as a useful blend, which can help them make the teaching/learning process

less stressful.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the results obtained from the two research tools; a questionnaire administered to thirty-five (35) Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms, as well as a structured interview conducted with eleven (11) teachers chosen randomly at the Department of English. The findings provide clear answers for the research questions of the study by relying on Davis's (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' theoretical framework. In addition, some hypotheses stated in the general introduction are confirmed whereas others are refuted.

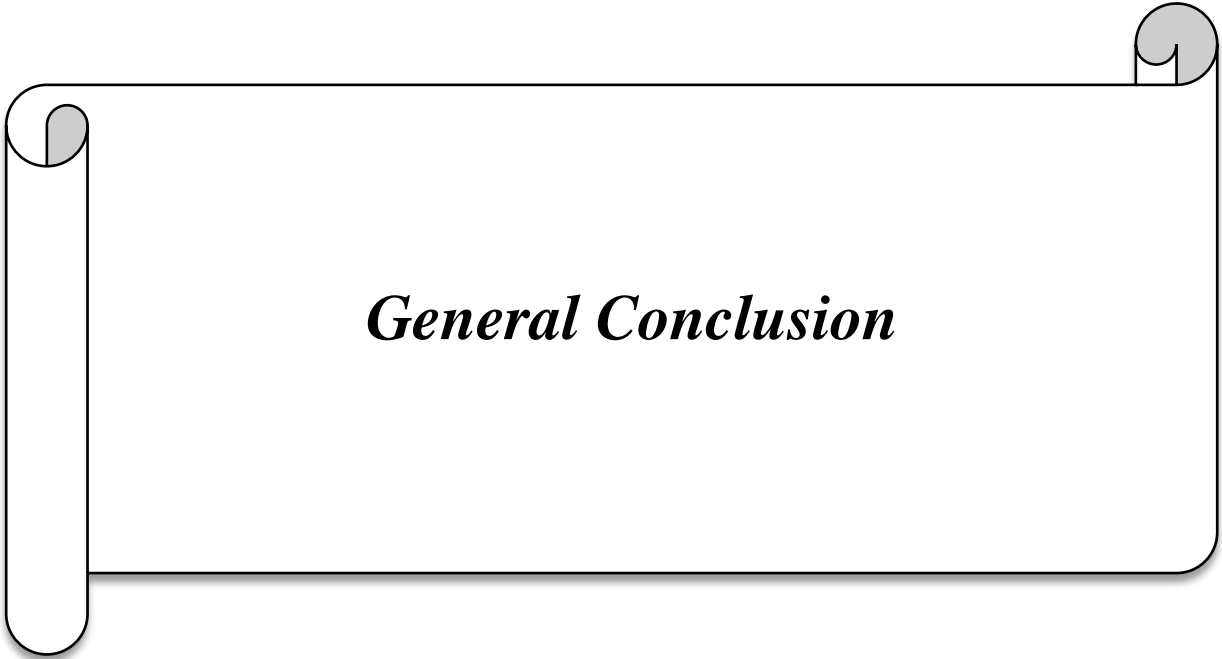
First, it is confirmed that most of the students have positive attitudes towards Blended Learning. They claim that BL allows them to remedy the obstacles they encounter with Face-to-Face learning. The addition of technology as a learning tool enables them to be more autonomous and access knowledge in more diverse ways since Blended learning includes both the learning styles addressed in traditional F2F teaching and distance teaching.

The second hypothesis which is "The teachers have a negative attitude towards Blended Learning" is denied, since the results have revealed that Blended Learning in spite of its complexity is viewed positively by the teachers. They acknowledge that they might encounter some difficulties with BL as a new method since some of them lack ICT's skills, but it is worth to try as it could help them improve the way they deliver their courses to the students and create enriched learning environment.

As for the third hypothesis, it is confirmed that Blended Learning offers flexibility and convenience. Based on the examples that have been provided by the students and teachers, they perceive BL a useful method since the incorporation of technology as a teaching/learning tool

allows them to facility their work and academic performances. This hypothesis is analyzed relying on the TAM model.

Lastly, after being introduced to Blended Learning in the light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, it is demonstrated that despite several technological and infrastructural challenges such as the lack of materials and minimal knowledge on information and communication technologies (ICTs), the students and teachers are supportive of the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process. Thus, the last and fourth hypothesis is also confirmed.



General Conclusion

The current dissertation has investigated the attitude of Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms along with the teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning at the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou. This study seeks to reach four (04) objectives. The first objective aims to discover students' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The second objective is to determine teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The third objective is to identify whether Blended Learning offers flexibility and convenience according to the students and teachers or not. The last objective seeks to uncover the attitudes of students and teachers towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process.

To achieve these aims, we have relied on Davis's (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' (TAM) which determines how individuals come to accept or reject a piece of technology. TAM suggests that an individual's attitude regarding a particular piece of technology is either positive or negative when executing a specific action. This model relies on two main components "Perceived-Ease of Use," and "Perceived Usefulness," as well as other external circumstances that can influence the individuals' decision to accept or reject a piece of technology. In the case of our research, TAM is used to analyze the students' and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning as well as its integration into the teaching/learning process.

To resolve the research questions and assess the validity of our hypotheses, a mixed method approach has been adopted. The data has been gathered using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Two main data collection tools are adopted to carry out the study. A questionnaire is administered to thirty-five (35) M2 Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication students, and a structured interview is conducted with eleven (11) teachers selected randomly at the department of English. For

data analysis, the Rule of Three is used to analyze the data gathered from the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire, and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is applied to interpret the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the structured interview.

The results from the students' questionnaire reveal that the students exhibit positive attitudes towards Blended Learning which confirms the first hypothesis of our study. The second hypothesis which stipulates that the teachers have a negative attitude towards Blended Learning is refuted. The findings from the interview indicate that the teachers have positive attitudes towards BL. Moreover, the third hypothesis is also confirmed as both the students and teachers have provided examples on how BL offers them flexibility and convenience in terms of course management. It is also concluded that the students and teachers have positive attitudes towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process, hence the last hypothesis is also confirmed.

To conclude, as the primary research that has been conducted at the department of English at MMUTO, we hope that the findings of our work can lead to new prospects for future studies in this field. Regarding further investigations, we suggest an experimental study in order to examine the effectiveness of Blended Learning at the department of English as an official teaching method during the entire academic year. In addition we suggest an investigation on the impact of Blended Learning on students' autonomy



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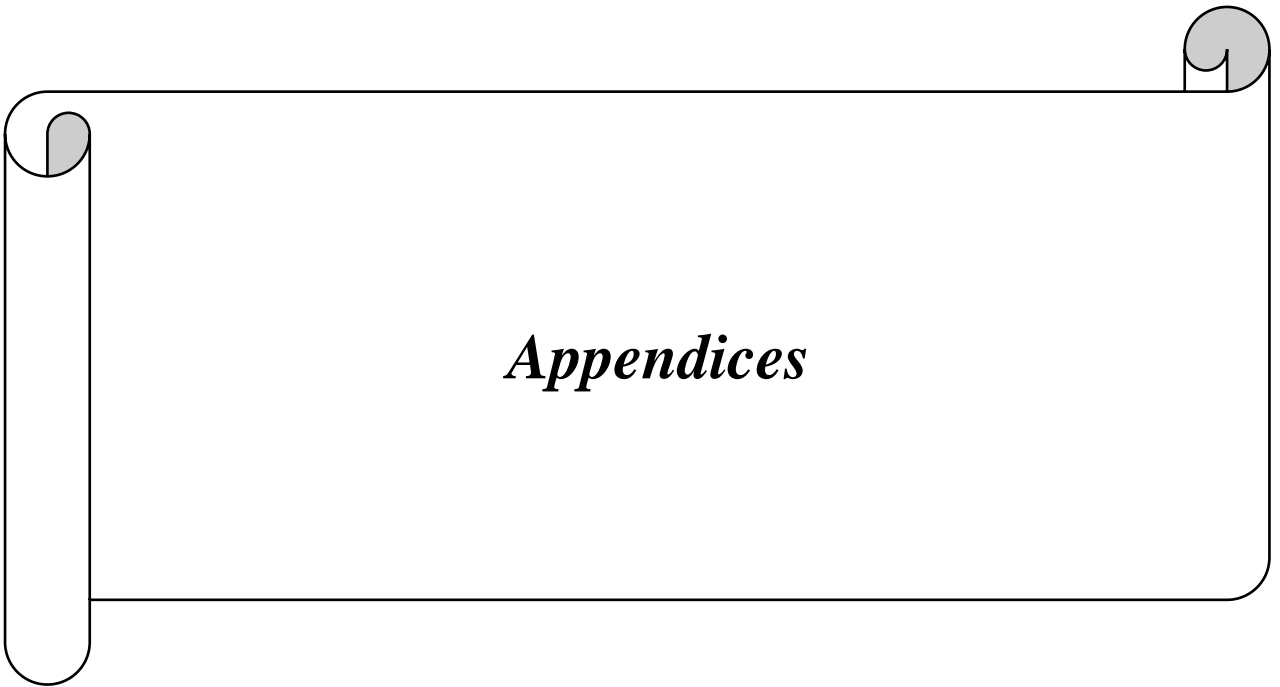
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Appendices

Appendix one: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

The present questionnaire aims to investigate the attitudes of master two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms in the department of English at MMUTO towards Blended Learning.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and for the time devoted to answering this questionnaire.

Blended Learning refers to a method of teaching which combines Face-to-Face classroom learning and online learning.

Section one: Students' Attitudes towards the Integration of Technology in their Learning.

Q.01 Have you ever faced difficulties with the Face-to-Face of teaching?

a- I have

b- I have not

Q.02 Do you enjoy using technological tools when learning?

a- Yes

b- No

Q.03 What sort of technological tools do you prefer using? (you can choose multiple answers)

a- Mobile phones

b- Tablets

c- Computer

d- Data show

Q.04 How do you find the integration of technology in EFL classes?

a- Useful

b- Not useful

Q.05 Have you ever taken an online class?

a- Yes

b- No

If yes, how satisfied are

you? a- Very satisfied

b- Satisfied

c- Not satisfied

Q.06 Have you ever used online applications such as Google meet and Zoom?

a- Yes

b- No

c- Others

Q.07 What are the difficulties that you have faced during the use of those applications?

a- Lack of guidance

b- Technical problems

Q.08 Lessons are better delivered through online learning applications than through Face-to-Face learning?

a- Strongly agree

b- Agree

c- Disagree

d- Strongly Disagree

Section two: Students' Attitudes towards the incorporation of Blended Learning into the Learning process.

Q.09 How important is Blended Learning?

a- Very important

b- Important

c- Slightly important

b- Unimportant

Would you justify your choice?

.....

.....

.

Q.10 Do you think that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to Face learning ?

a- Yes

b- No

Why?

.....

.....

Q.11 Did the use of Blended Learning offer you more flexibility and convenience in the management of your courses?

a- Yes

b- No

How? Provide an example

.....

.....

.....

Q.12 Do you think that Blended Learning should be integrated in all your university courses?

a- Yes

b- No

Justify your answer

.....

.....

.....

Thank you

Appendix Two: Teachers' Interview

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your time and participation,

This interview forms part of our dissertation research on attitudes towards Blended Learning. The purpose of this interview is to obtain your attitude on a number of aspects related to the subject.

Question 1: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning ?

Question 2: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Question 3: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Question 4: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Question 5: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Question 6: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefits teachers and students?

Thank you

Teachers' interview transcription:

Interviewee one:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: we have been introduced to it in 2018 since I was part of internship that we did for new recruit's teachers late 2017 early 2018. We were taught methods of how to use Moodle and how to use platforms that should help the students in their learning. We were trained for about six months, we were given tasks to complete and to hand through the internet because the supervisor was actually located in Constantine. It was the first experience in Tizi Ouzou ,in other cities they started in 2017. It is a requirement for all new recruits it is still preferred now for all new teachers that have been newly recruited to take it, and it takes about 6 to 8 months. Where we are obliged to attend some courses and then we have an online evaluation. This is how I got familiar with that concept and how it allowed me to incorporate it in my teaching when the corona virus has emerged.

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: we had Moodle, and an application called 'Vu', it is to design maps and to design mind cards and to facilitate the learning for students. This is what they asked us to use and they actually told us how to use it, it was not just random. When we were asked to do the task, they would actually give us on their websites where to download videos, some guide minds , and note books in pdf versions. They explained us how to use it and we were supposed to read it and watch the videos in order to get familiar and then, later on, use it with our students.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Honestly, I would say it is important however I do not 100 percent believe in it in our context ,we lack so many means it is not efficient ,as myself I had all my means my own computer I had an internet connection at home and I faced some difficulties, because when they give you tasks they tell you to hand them back on a specific time and sometimes the internet is not working so you pass the deadline ,same for students there is some villages that have no connection. It would be really effective when we have the means that are necessary but in our context I do not believe in it. Actually when the corona virus started they told us to incorporate the online teaching, I actually did more than just publishing my courses on the university's platform. I contacted the members of the students committee who contacted my students and they created a group email, when I used to send them personally my courses however, when we came back in September and I asked them who received it none of them, I had five group out of five groups may be 20 students out 200 students had received the courses , as many of them had no cellphones. So when everyone is able to have the needed material and hopefully under better circumstances, perhaps the ministry will take charge of it.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: For example when I say flexibility meaning the learners can learn on their own pace I give them the lesson, perhaps using videos by recoding yourself explaining and send it to the students ,they can review the video as many times as they want ,they can pause it whenever there is a problem and go back , most students in the classroom are shy perhaps scared to ask questions ,perhaps they see that there is a distance between them and the teacher so they do not necessarily ask questions even though I really do encourage it a lot

but it feels like some students are uncomfortable ,they have another way to learn cause you cannot expect every student to have the same learning process. For convenience when the students do not feel like studying or going to university they can download the lecture and learn whenever they feel ready.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: I think it will be the best method of teaching, gathering all the right circumstances ,the good atmosphere , some students say they learn more and better online because they are in the comfort of their home rather than in the classroom. I would say the combination of the two would be the ideal teaching, the utopian teaching that would be fruitful in the right circumstances.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: It would actually decrease anxiety because each time I lost a session because of for example the students' assembly. It is stressful for both teachers and the students, cause for the students when they miss a lesson they need to catch it up and when they do perhaps it is a lot at the same time. I would suggest it just for the lack of anxiety it would be ideal just to be little bit comfortable and less worried I would say if we cannot have a lecture at school let's do it on Google meet or zoom.

Interviewee two

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Yes, I'm familiar with Blended Learning which is a way of teaching that combines or integrates Face-to-Face or physical and online learning.

interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: So the university allows us to display courses and drills to students on a platform called Moodle.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Well it is important because it motivates students and allow them to participate in their learning process, they are not passive, they are active learners.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: Well in my opinion, according to my experience Blended Learning allows me as a teacher to find documents online and to share these documents with my students so if my student have a pc or internet can easily search for information on the internet, I can provide them links, I can also ask them to do research and can find all the information.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: Of course the combination is going to be fruitful it would have a good result because a student who is involved in his or her learning certainly succeed or will progress compared to a student that is passive

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official

teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: Yes of course in our department it would be good that we as teachers combine physical and online teaching and learning, certainly it will be a good thing for the teachers and the students of our department.

Interviewee three:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning is a very important form of learning where Face-to-Face teaching is carried out alongside online learning. I am familiar with this form of learning because I have participated in an online training program on blended learning with the University of Constantine from January to July 2021. This training helped me to know what is Blended Learning and what are the different tools and platforms that can be used to carry out this form of learning like YouTube, Moodle, and Edu platforms. We can use these online platforms to support Face-to-Face teaching, by provide additional material like tests, quizzes, and activities for students to do at home).

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: I have used online teaching mainly during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown via the Moodle platform. I have uploaded many courses on this platform. However, this was not successful due to technical problems, Internet connectivity issues, and students' inability to access the platform. Currently, I am using just emails to send lectures and activities to my students. I am not relying on Moodle or any other platform because of the mentioned obstacles.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning can help students to be autonomous, learn at their own pace, and increase their engagement. Blended Learning can also save time meaning that the teacher can deliver the course in the classroom and upload the main material as well as additional material like activities and quizzes on a given online platform. Another benefit of Blended Learning is that students can have access to the material from anywhere and at any time.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: For example, I can present the theoretical part of the course in the classroom, and then I can put the course on the University website or any online platform that students can have access to and assign them online homework with regards to the course we have seen in class. In this way, as I teacher I can save time, and the students can have access to the online version of the course from anywhere at any time, review it at their own pace, and then do the homework.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: I think that it is a valuable teaching-learning approach. It can be beneficial for both teachers and students if used properly.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: For successful integration of Blended Learning in the department of English at the University of Tizi-Ouzou, it is important to familiarize both teachers and students with

this form of learning by providing adequate training. It is also important to provide the necessary technological devices and Internet access for both teachers and students.

Interviewee four:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: I was not directly introduced with that term, I was doing it without knowing it was Blended Learning. I was trying to find ways to incorporate technology knowing it is not easy at our university with the lack of materials and students' digital skills. My familiarity started with first year students, I introduced them to some websites starting by introducing them to new words in order to try to do exercises online on a platform called Quizlets. I also had my first online lecture experience on Google meet with masters one students.

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: I use Quizlet, Moodle and I also tried Google classroom during the pandemic period. I also like to use Google drive with my students, I recorded my lecture and then shared the link with them.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: I think it is really important, we should use all the means we have. What we can do with Blended Learning is that we can evaluate some skills that cannot be evaluated in the classrooms like for example when I teach speaking I have to develop students' fluency, accuracy, pronunciation and lexical diversity and sometimes with the lack of time I cannot do some exercises so I post them online on the platforms. With Blended Learning we can also

take advantage of the extra time that the students have outside the classroom because most of the modules we have we have class only one or two times a week.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: In terms of flexibility you can for example schedule lectures online at any time of the day and you can agree with your students. when it comes to convenience it is not always convenient because students lack the right equipment's and internet connection is not always good.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: I think that as a new method teacher should try it and take risks, it is not perfect but we should learn from our mistake. The first time I taught online I knew I was going to face difficulties but I had to do it anyways or otherwise I would never learn. When it comes to students it is also a way to break the ice and give them more confidence to use the internet cause sometimes students can have very negative attitudes towards the use of computers.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: I think that it can benefit both teachers and students because it can help them develop their digital skills and discover the kind of equipment they need and can use in the classroom. It can break so many barriers like geographical ones and time constraints. For teachers it can help them develop their information skills to learn how to plan a lesson online

and for students it will teach them how to interact online but in a formal environment not just social media.

Interviewee five:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning is a new concept that emerged these last years to link traditional pedagogy with online learning. The teacher has to design his own tasks and syllabus and use all the resources on the net.

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: I will answer your question by a reference to the module of oral expression that I have taught using Blended Learning. The applications that can be used are the following: skype, blogs, yahoo. Sonic educational websites, YouTube and messenger.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning is highly needed in language learning as it provides a real and authentic input and exposure for language learners. The most important benefit is that it can enhance autonomy so that students discover their own interests for life long learning.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: Blended learning offers this aspect of flexibility as students are first initiated to material courses/tasks and then teachers can create a blog where they can use them outside the walls of the class. The classroom need to provide a good atmosphere for initiation and

evaluation of the improvement of the students. The following steps will take the cycle form which means that students learn and take the maximum of benefits outside and then get the stimuli of the necessary orientation and feedback from the teacher. If students use applications such as Skype they need guidance from the teachers so the role of the teachers is a catalyst for the success of any pedagogical task.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: this new method is very effective provided that the teacher plays an active role inside and outside the class for feedback, evaluation, orientation.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: The integration of Blended Learning at the level of our department will have many benefits in the case of the learners, to learn according to their needs and interests and the teacher can boost their motivation from all the materials that are on the net.

I dedicate this work to:

My family.

To my best friends Keltoume and Kenza and my binomial Dyhia.

To all those who supported me to achieve this work.

*To every teacher who gave us any piece of advice and guidance throughout
the research.*

Sonia Mokraoui

*First and Foremost I want to dedicate this work to my lovely family for their
support and encouragement.*

To my beloved best friends Kenza and Keltoume and my binomial Sonia.

To every teacher who helped us to accomplish this work.

Dyhia Saadi

We would like to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to our supervisor **Mrs. ADEM Karima** for her insightful comments, support, guidance and precious advice.

We are extremely grateful to all the members of the board of examiners who have kindly accepted to read and examine our modest dissertation.

Our thanks are also extended to all the students and teachers from the department English for their cooperation, support and invaluable contribution during the realization of our work.

Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the attitudes of master two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning in the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. This study relies on four (04) main objectives. The first one is to uncover the students' attitudes towards Blended Learning (BL). The Second one is to determine teachers' attitudes towards BL. The Third one consists in discovering if BL offers flexibility and convenience for students and teachers. The fourth and final objective deals with establishing students' and teachers' attitudes towards the integration of Blended Learning into university. To carry out this research, Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' (TAM) has been adopted. This investigation is based on the mixed-methods research, which combines both quantitative and qualitative methods for the collection and analysis of data. In order to gather the required data, a questionnaire has been administered to thirty-five (35) students and a structured interview has been conducted with eleven (11) randomly selected teachers at the department of English. For quantitative data analysis, the Descriptive Statistical method also known as 'the rule of three', has been employed to elicit statistical data from the closed-ended questions included in the questionnaire. As for the qualitative data, the Qualitative Content Analysis has been used to analyze and interpret the data obtained from the open-ended questions included in the questionnaire and the interview. According to the findings, the students and teachers of the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou hold a positive attitude towards the Blended Learning method and believe that it is a fruitful method that can ameliorate the teaching/learning process, as it offers the students and teachers flexibility and convenience. It is also concluded that they support the integration of Blended Learning as an official learning/teaching method into university, even though they encounter some obstacles that can restrict the incorporation of the BL method during the academic year (lack of ICTs skills from teachers and students, lack of technological material).

Key words: Attitude, Blended Learning (BL), Distance Learning, Face-to-Face instructions (F2F), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

- **Apps:** Application software
- **BL:** Blended Learning
- **CALL:** Computer-assisted Language Learning
- **CMC:** Computer-mediated Communication
- **DLE:** Didactics of Foreign Languages
- **EFL:** English as a Foreign Language
- **F2F:** Face-to-Face
- **FLL:** Foreign Language Learning
- **ICT's:** Information and Communication Technologies
- **LMD:** License, Master, Doctorate
- **Lge and Com:** Language and Communication
- **M2:** Master Two
- **MMUTO:** Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou
- **PDAs:** Personal Digital Assistants
- **PEOU:** Perceived Ease of Use
- **PU:** Perceived Usefulness
- **QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis
- **TAM:** Technology Acceptance Model

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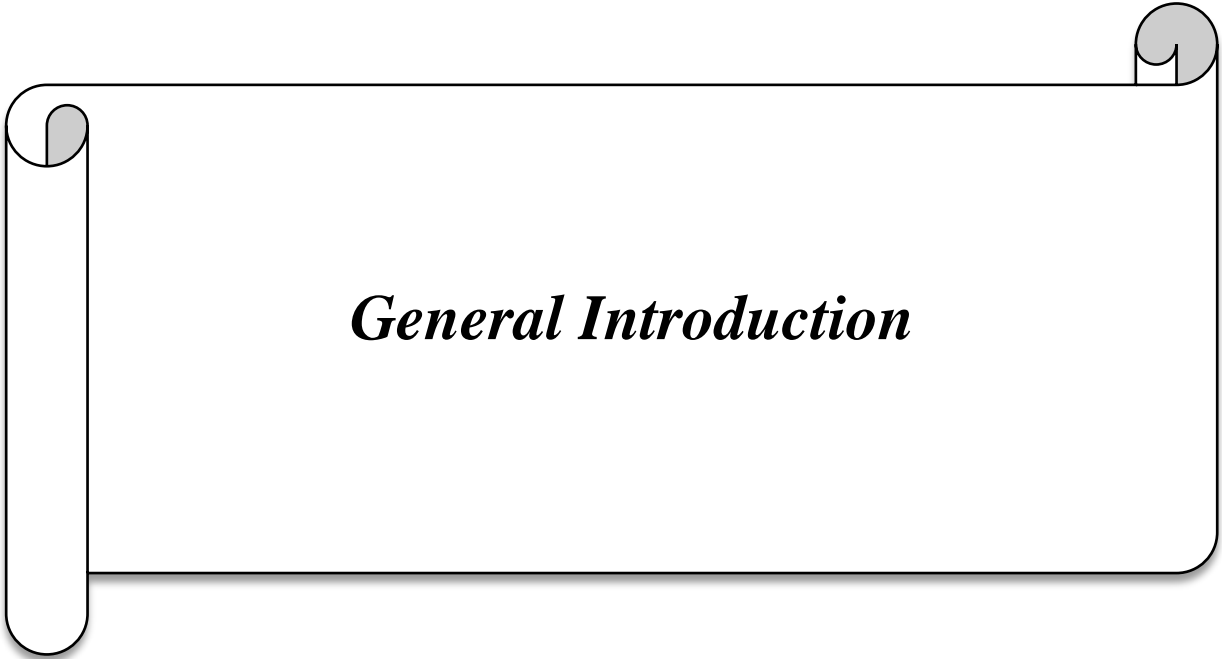
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General Introduction

Statement of the problem

In the recent years, technology has generated extensive waves of changes in various areas of life. Foreign Language Learning (FLL) as a subfield of education is not excluded from the influence of these innovations. The emergence of computer-mediated communication (CMC) is defined by Simpson (2000:414) as “human communication via computers”. Thus, it has led to the evolvement of distance learning, which refers to the incorporation of communication technologies into the teaching/learning process to facilitate the interaction between teachers and students, and to promote an innovative educational environment.

The pandemic coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has emerged at the beginning of 2020 and has become an international concern that has affected all fields, including the field of education. In the Algerian educational sector, the lockdown has prevented the normal achievement of the academic year. Therefore, in order to accommodate this problem, the Ministry of Higher Education has imposed a shift from the conventional Face-to-Face (F2F) learning to distance learning. They have recommended the utilization of the Moodle and E-learning online platforms. Additionally, applications (apps) like Google Meet, Zoom Education and Gmail have granted the students and teachers opportunities to communicate virtually through chat rooms and video conferencing. The integration of these apps and platforms into the educational process has resulted in the emergence of Blended Learning (BL) as a new method of teaching/learning in Algerian universities.

Blended Learning, also known as hybrid learning, refers to the merging of traditional (F2F) learning instructions with distance learning. According to Friesen (2012), the term Blended Learning refers to the variety of possibilities provided by combining technology with traditional classroom arrangements that necessitate physical presence of both the teacher and the learners.

Moreover, BL joins the strengths of Face-to-Face (more direct interactions, immediate feedback) and distance learning (flexibility in time and space, technology, and interactive features).

Numerous studies have been carried out concerning the integration of technology as a teaching tool. The first study conducted in the department of English at the Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou (MMUTO), which is submitted by Nait Remdane El Hacene for the master degree in Language and Communication entitled “Teachers’ Attitudes and Motivation Towards E-learning: The Case of the Department of English at the Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou”. It investigates the views of teachers regarding the use of technology as a teaching tool. The results show that teachers exhibit positive attitudes towards the integration of E-learning in the teaching process. The second study has been conducted in the department of Teacher Education in the University of Calcutta, India, which is entitled “Students’ Attitudes Toward Blended Teaching among Students of the University of Calcutta”. It is submitted by Md.Mahasin Ali. He has concluded that despite the difficulties that are faced in Blended teaching, the students have positive attitudes and believe it is a beneficial method.

The aforementioned studies have tackled the importance of E-learning and have uncovered the attitudes of students towards Blended teaching. However, they have failed to consider both students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards Blended Learning and whether they are open to its integration as a teaching/learning strategy after the recent COVID-19 pandemic. In an attempt to widen the scope of this field, the current study is conducted at the department of English in MMUTO to investigate both the students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards Blended Learning.

Aim and Significance of the Study

The overall aim of the present work is to investigate the attitudes of Master Two (M2) students from Didactics of Foreign Languages (DLE) and Language and Communication (Lge and Com) specialisms, as well as teachers of the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou towards Blended Learning, and its integration as an official teaching/learning method. This study is guided by the following individual objectives. The first objective aims to discover the students' attitude towards Blended Learning. The second objective is to identify the teachers' attitudes towards BL. The third objective is to consider whether BL offers flexibility and convenience for both the students and teachers or not. The fourth and last objective is to investigate if Blended Learning should be integrated into the teaching/learning process or not.

This research is conducted to identify the attitudes of Master Two DLE and Lge and Com students and teachers of the department of English at MMUTO towards BL. Additionally, the significance of this study is to contemplate if Blended Learning can be incorporated as an official teaching/learning method, by relying on the experiences of the students and teachers with distance learning during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current investigation aims at answering the following research questions:

Q1. What is the attitude of students towards Blended Learning?

Q2. What is the attitude of teachers towards Blended Learning?

Q3. According to the students and teachers, does Blended Learning offer flexibility and convenience?

Q4. What are the attitudes of students and teachers towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process?

In an attempt to answer the research questions, we put forward the following hypotheses:

H1. Students have a positive attitude towards Blended Learning.

H2. Teachers have a negative attitude towards BL.

H3. According to the students and teachers, Blended Learning offers convenience and flexibility.

H4. Students and teachers have a positive attitude towards the integration of BL into the teaching/learning process.

Research Techniques and Methodology

To accomplish our research, we rely on the mixed-methods approach by merging both the quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis. The data are gathered through two fundamental tools: a questionnaire and a structured interview. The questionnaire is distributed to thirty-five (35) Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms. The structured interview is conducted with eleven (11) teachers who are selected randomly at the department of English at MMUTO. In terms of the quantitative data gathered with the questionnaire, they are analyzed using the descriptive statistical method more precisely 'The rule of three'. As for the qualitative data collected through the structured interview and the questionnaire, it is interpreted by adopting the Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA). Furthermore, Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' (TAM) is the theoretical framework that is adopted to conduct this research. It is used to investigate the attitudes of students and teachers towards Blended Learning, by determining how they come to accept and use technology through two main factors: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and Perceived Usefulness (PU).

Structure of the Dissertation

The structure of this dissertation follows the traditional simple model. It consists of a General Introduction , four chapters, and a General Conclusion. The ‘General Introduction’ presents the statement of the problem, the aims and significance of the study, the research questions and hypotheses, the research techniques and methodology, and the structure of the dissertation. The first chapter is entitled ‘Review of the Literature’ which provides the theoretical background of the study and definitions of the concepts related to the research. The second chapter is labeled ‘Research Design’. It is concerned with the procedures of data collection and data analysis. The third chapter ‘Presentation of the Findings’ presents the data that is collected from the questionnaire and the structured interview in the form of diagrams. The fourth and last chapter is the ‘Discussion of the Findings’. It discusses the results of the investigation and provides answers to the research questions. Lastly, the ‘General Conclusion’ provides an overall summary of the research from the aims to the findings, and it ends up with suggestions and recommendations for further research.



Review of the Literature

Introduction

The current chapter presents the review of the literature which is concerned with providing background information on the main concepts in relation to our work. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides various definitions for the term attitude, its components as well as its significance in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching/learning. The second section includes multiple definitions of Blended Learning, beginning with its origin, components along with its models and benefits in the (EFL) teaching/ learning context. The final section is devoted to explaining Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model', which is the theory upon which this work is founded. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning and its integration in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.

1. Attitude

1.1 Definition of Attitude

The word attitude is apparent in the dictionary of psychology by Bartlett (1952:22) as “a more or less stable set or disposition of opinion, interest, or purpose involving expectancy of a certain kind of experience and readiness with an appropriate response”. The concept of attitude is defined by many scholars in different ways. According to Baker (1992) an attitude allows for the consistent and appropriate description and prediction of behavioral patterns (human conduct). Additionally, Allport (1935:25) states that “attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals' response to all objects and situations with which it is related”. In other words, a persons' attitude is a mental or neurological sate of preparedness that is established by experience which influences the individuals' behavior to all the occurrences, events and situations that are related to it.

The significance of attitude in understanding psychological phenomenon has been given formal recognition early in the history of social psychology. Attitude refers to a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, thing, and event that impact the way we perceive the world and how we behave (Richard.J.Crisp, Rhiannon.N.Turner,2010). Moreover, Eagly and Chaiken (1993:01) claim that “an attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor”. That is to say, attitude is a psychological trait that demonstrates a certain amount of favoritism or disdain towards a particular entity. It reflects the perception and feelings that an individual possesses and expresses toward something, either positively or negatively.

According to Park and Burgess (1942:438)

Attitudes are not the same as emotions or sentiments although attitudes always are emotionally toned and frequently supported by sentiments. Opinions are not attitudes. An opinion is rather a statement made to justify and make intelligible an existing attitude or bias [...]. An attitude is the tendency of the person to react positively or negatively to the total situation. Accordingly, attitudes may be defined as the mobilization of the will of the person.

Considering the definition above, attitude is a positive, negative, or neutral inclination to a given object, situation or person. As a matter of fact, attitudes are not the same as opinions, even though they are emotionally charged and frequently supported by sentiments. An opinion is a statement designed to defend and make understandable an existing attitude. That is, attitudes can be defined as the mobilization of the individual's will.

1.2 Components of Attitude

The concept of attitude has generated several conceptual models. The most influential model of attitude is the multicomponent model (Eagly & Chaiken,1993).According to this perspective attitudes are constructed of three components: Cognitive Component, Affective Component, and Behavioral Component.

1.2.1 Cognitive Component

Jain (2014:06) defines the cognitive component of attitude as “an evaluation of the entity that constitutes an individual's opinion (belief/disbelief) about the object”. For example, in terms of English language acquisition, the cognitive aspect of attitude is determined by a student's knowledge and level of ability to comprehend the language. Garret et al (2003) declare that the cognitive attitude can be divided into four steps: connecting previous and newly acquired knowledge, creating new knowledge, testing new knowledge, and applying new knowledge in any situation.

1.2.2 Affective Component

The affective component is the emotional response (liking/disliking) towards an attitude object. In other words, they are the feelings that express the individuals' degree of preference for an entity. Garret, et al (2003) suggest that in terms of English language learning, the affective aspect is a person's liking or disliking of the language itself as well as his or her feeling of excitement or dread, when she or he uses or learns it.

1.2.3 Behavioral Component

The behavioral aspect of attitude refers to a person's excessive behavior that is directed toward a situation, object, or person (Garett, et al 2003). That is to say, this component refers to the person's negative or positive attitude towards an object which can influence and control the individuals' actions. For instance, the individual's previous experience with an entity can be translated into a particular type of behavior.

1.3 Attitude in EFL Teaching/Learning

In the context of English as a foreign language teaching/learning, attitude is one of the factors that holds a great impact on the learners' and teachers' academic performance. According to Reid (2003:43) “attitudes are important to us because they can not be neatly separated from the

study for the reason that achievement in a target language relies not only on intellectual capacity but also on the learner's attitudes towards language learning". That is to say, success or failure of the language acquisition depends on learners' and teachers' attitudes which include their feelings, emotions and beliefs towards the target language as well as their cognitive abilities. Attitudes are crucial and they are associated with the target language throughout the learning process. Thus, attitudes cannot be simply disentangled from the research.

According to Ajzen (2005), attitude entails evaluation, which is typically done on a bipolar scale from favourable to unfavourable, or from positive to negative. In other words, attitudes toward a specific language can be positive or negative; some learners may have a negative attitude towards the second language and want to learn it in order to gain a competitive advantage over others in the community. However, a positive attitude generally increases motivation and the willingness to learn. Language attitudes are likely to be constructed as a result of the learners' experiences, which may change over time. They could refer to both attitudes towards language learning and also attitudes towards the members of a particular speech community. Furthermore, a person's attitude is a mental posture that influences their behaviors or opinions towards or against a particular thing, it can be a conscious or, in some cases, an unconscious reaction based on their experiences.

Conventionally, the EFL teaching/learning process has been restricted to the Face-to-Face interpersonal communication. However, the recent advanced technologies and other multimodal properties have allowed the instructors to deliver lectures using a mixture of traditional in-person learning and newly integrated technologies. This method is otherwise known as Blended Learning, which the following section aims to conceptualize.

2. Blended Learning

2.1 Origin and Definition of Blended Learning

The origin of Blended Learning (BL) pre-date the advent of digital technology and has emerged as one of the most popular pedagogical concepts at the beginning of the 2000s. The rise of personal computing in the eighties and the advent of the World Wide Web in the nineties have encouraged the development of new models of learning at different levels of education. Therefore, digital technology has begun to be introduced into the field of private sector training.

Blended Learning refers to the diverse aspects of learning and teaching. It is the combination of both the strengths of traditional Face-to-Face learning and the advantages of distance learning. It is defined by Garrison and Vaughan (2008:148) as “the organic integration of thoughtfully selected and complementary Face-to-Face and online approaches and technologies”. In addition, Mason and Rennie (2006) extend this definition by including other combinations of technologies, locations, or pedagogical approaches. In other words, BL is the process of incorporating a variety of activities and technology with Face-to-Face traditional learning in order to create a motivating educational environment for the students, and provide them with opportunities to work and attain their goals as well as encouragement to ameliorate their learning.

In accordance to the previous definitions Sharma & Barrett (2009:7) state that:

Blended Learning is one of the recent ways which combines Face-to-Face classroom component with an appropriate use of technology. The term technology covers a wide range of recent aspects such as the Internet, CD-ROM, and interactive white board. It also combines the use of computer as a means of communication such as chat and email.

Additionally, Throne (2003:16) claims that “Blended Learning is a mix of multimedia technology, CD-ROM, video streaming, visual classrooms, voice mail, email and conference calls, and online text animation and video-streaming”. That is to say, Blended Learning is about the mingling of the

traditional way of teaching and technology-based training using a range of pedagogical methods and different forms of teaching. Its versatility as a pedagogical strategy for creating learner-centered instruction consists in the capacity to exploit the potentials of both the traditional Face-to-Face instruction and online learning modality in order to provide students with multiple pathways of learning. On the light of the precedent definitions, BL consists of two main concepts; Face-to-Face learning which refers to the traditional classrooms where the teacher conducts instruction with the students in person, as well as, distance learning that refers to technology-based learning which includes the integration of virtual resources and tools.

2.1.1 Face-to-Face Learning

Face-to-Face learning refers to the traditional method of teaching that takes place in a typical or conventional classroom with the co-presence of the teacher and students. According to Murray (2017), conventional teaching is done in a Face-to-Face format, where the teacher interacts directly with the students while delivering prepared lectures. It means that the teaching/learning process is conducted concurrently. However, Face-to-Face learning like any other instructional method has advantages and disadvantages.

Voci and Young (2001) state that the advantages of Face-to-Face learning include social communication between the teacher and the students, familiarity with the method used and the interactive learning environment among students. In fact, classroom learning offers multi-sensory appeal, the students can actively participate in activities and case studies, listen to the lecturer and get visual clues through handouts or white board lists. Additionally, F2F instruction enables students to enquire about things and take part in live debates, since the teacher can be reached directly in the classroom and there is instant communication and feedback. Besides, Face-to-Face learning provides the students additional opportunities for interpersonal interaction to establish and maintain personal and professional relationships while pursuing their education.

However, Baldwin-Evans (2006) has identified the disadvantages of Face-to-Face learning. First, they include the challenges of having to join a classroom location every day such as having to travel long distances and the lack of transportations in some areas. Then, the lack of time that learners and instructors have for learning, since every lecture is timed according to a specific schedule. Lastly, the loss of group discussion if the lesson is lecture-based, since students are often passive during lectures.

2.1.2 Distance Learning

According to Webster & Hackley (1997), the term distance learning refers to approaches that focus on expanding access to education and training by liberating learners from time and place constraints which leads individual and group learners to benefit from its flexible learning opportunities. Distance learning is considered as the most rapidly expanding sector of education, due to the development of internet-based technologies particularly the World Wide Web, that has highlighted the potential impact of distance learning on all aspects of education. Thus, it can be described as a type of learning which involves the implementation of information, computing and communications technology applications in more than one location, and provides both individual and group learners with customizable learning options.

The United States Distance Learning Association (2001) defines “distance learning” as the delivery of education or training through electronically mediated instruction including satellite, video, audio graphic, computer, multimedia technology and other forms of learning at a distance. This association notes that distance education refers to teaching and learning situations in which the instructor and the learners are geographically separated and therefore rely on electronic devices and printed materials for instructional delivery. That is to say, distance learning is the delivery of education or training via electronic means, and other kinds of remote learning.

Furthermore, Holmberg (1989) suggests the following characteristics for distance education: the segregation of both teachers and students, facilitation in terms of organization and planning, establishment of the material and assessment for the students, utilization of media and technology to establish connection between student and teacher for the dissemination of content and critical feedback, facilitation of engagement between students and teachers, and segmentation of the learning groups. In addition, distance learning is a driving factor in social and economic development. It is instantly becoming an important element of the mainstream educational system of both developed and undeveloped countries. The internationalization and the advancement of distance learning offers numerous opportunities for countries to achieve the objectives of their educational system.

Blended learning is a versatile notion that takes different formats. The subheading below provides several models to classify the diverse aspects of this method.

2.2 Blended Learning Models

Graham (2013) observes that several universities and colleges have developed their own Blended Learning models, which vary depending on how much of a course is taught Face-to-Face or remotely. Staker and Horn (2012) categorize Blended Learning into four models which are rotation, flexible, self-blended, and enriched virtual. The four models have a common strength which represents the ability to place more into the hands of students.

2.2.1 The Rotation Model

It is a program in which students rotate on a fixed schedule or at the teacher's discretion between learning in groups in a classroom setting to completing lab course work. Other learning environments involved in this model are online learning and individualized training (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.2.2 The Flexible Model

It is a program in which content and instruction are delivered primarily by the Internet. Students move on individually, but under the supervision of the teacher who is physically present. The teacher-of-record provides Face-to-Face support on a flexible and adaptive as-needed basis through activities such as small-group instruction, group projects, and individual tutoring (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.2.3 The Self-Blended Model

In this model, students pick different courses to pursue autonomously while being supervised by a teacher and other students. Students self-blend some individual online classes while taking others in person (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.2.4 The Enriched-Virtual Mode

It is a sort of a program implemented across the entire school in which each subject involves a mixture of Face-to-Face instructions and learning remotely using online delivery of content, students alternate their time between the two methods (Staker and Horn, 2012).

2.3 Blended Learning Constituents

Carman (2002) identifies five key constituents for a Blended learning process: Live events, Self-paced learning, Collaboration, Assessments, Support materials.

2.3.1 Live events

It means that most students believe that nothing matches having access to a live instructor. For this reason, Blended Learning refers to synchronous instructor-led activities in which all students take part simultaneously, such as "virtual classrooms".

2.3.2 Self-paced learning

It refers to that learners should complete their learning experiences individually in their personal adequate space and time, by means of interactive web-based, or CD-ROM instructional techniques.

2.3.3 Collaboration

It means that students build a community of debate and communication where they all work to increase their knowledge through email and online chats.

2.3.4 Assessment

It serves as a gauge of students' knowledge, pre-assessments can be used to ascertain prior knowledge before online learning, and post-assessments can be used to determine and evaluate the progression of the students' learning post online learning. Assessment is considered one of the most crucial and vital components of Blended Learning since it gives students the opportunity to check their understanding and design their own mixed learning environment. The efficiency and advancements of every learning event are also measured.

2.3.5 Support materials

It includes printed references, job aids as charts, summaries, checklists, and personal digital assistants (PDAs), as examples of physical and digital reference resources that encourage learning, retention, and transfer (PDAs).

2.4 Benefits of Blended Learning in the (EFL) Teaching/Learning Context

In the last few decades Blended Learning has arisen as a new and significant educational trend. Research on this hybrid method is relatively new and is linked with multiple educational fields such as English teaching methodology, educational technology, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and distance education. According to Graham (2006) Blended Learning in higher education occurs based on several levels: activity-level blending, course-level blending,

and institutional-level blending. Each one of these levels uses a combination of traditional ways of teaching and online elements depending on the type of learning, whether it is an activity, course, program or institution, and illustrates the Blended Learning environment as it relates to Face-to-Face learning and online learning.

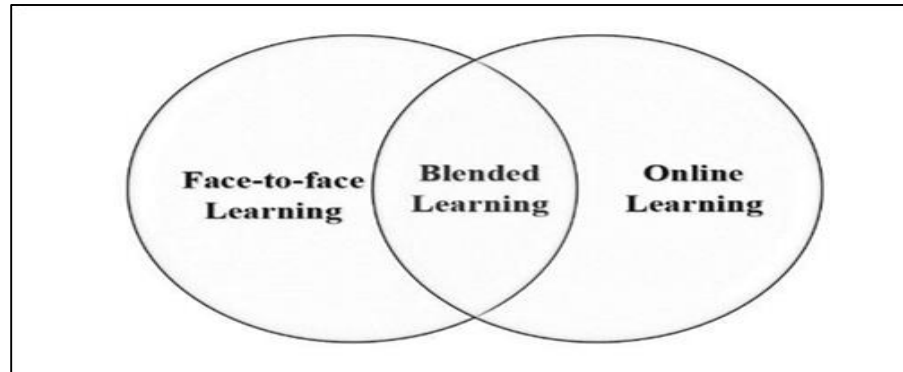


Figure 01: Blended Learning Environment (Graham 2006)

According to Riel, Lawless, and Brown (2016:189), “Blended Learning environments provide students with online and Face-to-Face places to meet, collaborate, and work on meaningful projects. Each of these spaces has particular benefits to successful learning”. The main characteristics of this method is that it allows teachers to provide their students with classroom activities in two different settings: in-person and online.

In addition, Stein and Graham (2014) suggest that Blended Learning has several advantages for students, teachers and administrators such as increased access and convenience, improved learning, decreased or more flexible expenses. First, in terms of increased access and convenience for many students, the benefit of taking classes online consists in decreasing the need to in-person attendance, in particular the students work or a family to care for. Second, BL improves learning and it is considered to be more effective than any other learning method for the following reasons: improved instructional design, increased guidance and trigger, easier access to

learning activities, individualized learning opportunities, increased engagement through social interactions, time-on-task (accelerated learning). The third benefit of BL consists of lower or flexible course costs for teachers, students, and institutions, as well as less travel time that leads to transportation savings and lower parking costs.

Furthermore, Neumeier (2005:164) states that “the most important aim of a Blended Learning design is to find the most effective and efficient combination of the two modes of learning for the individual learning subjects, contexts and objectives.” Thus, he provides a framework design that consists of six parameters to identify the main factors in designing a Blended Learning environment for language Teaching/ Learning. These parameters are: mode, model of integration, distribution of learning content and objectives, language teaching methods, involvement in Learning subject and location. Each one of these parameters is significant for language teachers to determine whether to integrate Blended Learning into their teaching practices.

3. Theoretical Framework

The current study seeks to identify the attitudes of students and teachers towards Blended Learning, by relying on Davis’ (1989) ‘Technology Acceptance Model’ (TAM). This model seeks to measure the willingness of people to accept or reject any new information technology innovation. Davis (1989) conceptualizes (TAM) relying on the prior work of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) who have formulated the theory of Reasoned Action. TAM is developed specifically to predict and explain technology usage behavior and to identify the factors leading to the acceptance or rejection of technology. Davis (1989) suggests that users’ motivation can be explained by two factors: Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness.

- **Perceived Ease of Use**

According to Davis (1989:320), Perceived Ease of Use refers to “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort”. This follows from the definition of ‘ease’ as the freedom from difficulty or great effort. The importance of Perceived ease of use is supported by Bandura's extensive research on self-efficacy (1982:122) who defines it as “judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations”. To put it in another way, the positive or the negative attitude of a user towards technology is influenced by the degree of the effort it requires.

- **Perceived Usefulness**

It is the second factor of TAM which is defined as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” (Davis, 1989:320). This follows the definition of the word useful as ‘capable of being used advantageously’. Similarly, Mathwick et al. (2001) define Perceived Usefulness as the extent to which a person deems a particular system to boost their professional and academic performance. In other words, it is the individuals’ perception of the degree a technology or tool is able to help them achieve their goal. Technology is perceived as being useful when it offers several advantages for its users even if it requires a certain degree of effort. Additionally, Perceived Usefulness is also considered to be influenced by Perceived Ease of Use as Davis & Venkatesh (2000:187) note: “the easier a technology is to use, the more useful it can be”.

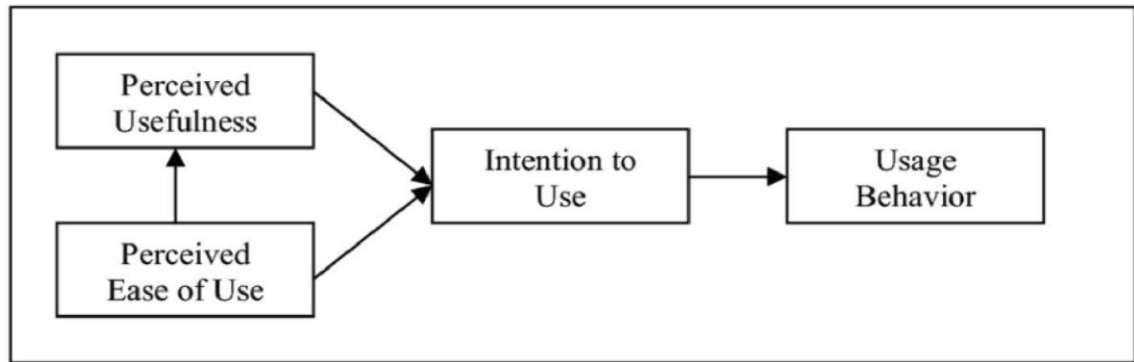


Figure 02: The Earliest Technology Acceptance Model (Davis1989)

Davis (1989) claims that Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness predict the attitude towards using the technology, which in turn determines the users' behavioral intention to use the technology. The attitude to use is concerned with the users' evaluation of the desirability of employing a particular information system application while the behavioral intention is the measure of the likelihood of a person employing the application. Moreover, Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of use are influenced by external factors such as social, cultural, and political factors. Social factors include language, skills, and facilitating conditions. Political factors are mainly the impact of using technology in politics and political crises. Garg and Garg (2013) suggest that in formulating perceptions regarding new technologies, subjective and social norms influence consumers as well as perceptions of the quality of service.

Technology acceptance model is used in a wide variety of domains. Scholars test the models of technology acceptance in different contexts and explore the acceptance of different technologies such as mobile banking, telecommunication technology, virtual reality, and e-learning systems, to name few (Adams, Nelson & Todd, 1992; Venkatesh & Davis, 1996; Wilson, 2004; Al-Gahtani, 2016). Moreover, Scherer, Siddiq & Tondeur (2018) state that in the field of education, it is applied to explain teachers' adaptation of digital technologies in education.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the review of the major concepts that our research topic is based on. First, it has provided the definition of attitude and its importance in the context of language teaching/learning. Second, it has also explained the Blended Learning concept which is the combination of Face-to-Face learning and distance learning. Lastly, the chapter concludes with the presentation and explanation of Davis' (1989) "Technology Acceptance Model" which is the theoretical framework that has guided the current investigation. The next chapter introduces the research design process of the study.



Research Design

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the methodology. It describes the research design of the current study, which consists of the data collection instruments that have been used to gather information, and data analysis procedures that explain to the way the data are analyzed and interpreted. Both procedures are adopted to investigate students' and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning in the English Department at MMUTO. This chapter is divided into two parts that elaborate the procedures for data collection and data analysis. First, it explains the data collection tools which combines a questionnaire and a structured interview. Second, it defines data analysis procedures that contain two methods; the Descriptive Statistical Method analyzes the quantitative data obtained from the students' questionnaire. Lastly, Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used to analyze and interpret the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions included in both the questionnaire and the interview.

1. Procedures of Data Collection

1.1 Research Method

This inquiry opts for the mixed-method research to collect the appropriate data. It is defined by Tashakkori and Creswell (2007: 04) as a “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study”. In this study, the quantitative method is used to collect numerical data from the closed-ended questions of the questionnaire, while the qualitative method is used to gather the qualitative data from the open-ended questions included in both the questionnaire and the interview.

1.2 Context of the Investigation and the Sample of the Participants

This study has been conducted in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. The overall objective of this research is to discover what kind of attitudes students and teachers have towards the Blended Learning Method. The target sample

encompasses thirty-five (35) Master Two students from DLE and Lge and Com specialisms, along with eleven (11) teachers selected randomly at the department of English.

2. Data Collection Tools

In order to answer the advanced research questions and to confirm or refute the suggested hypotheses, this study adopts two different kinds of data collection tools: A questionnaire and a structured interview.

2.1 Questionnaire

Brown (2001:6) defines a questionnaire as “any written instrument that presents participants with a series of questions or statements to which they should react either by selecting from existing possibilities or writing out their answers. A questionnaire is particularly efficient for gathering information on a large scale”. It is a set of structured items that are used by researchers to gather information needed from the answers of the respondents without requiring much time and effort.

The questionnaire included in this study aims to discover the attitudes of the students from DLE and Lge and Com specialisms towards Blended Learning and the implementation of this method during the learning process. The questionnaire consists of twelve (12) items divided into two sections. We have relied on the Davis’ (1989) Technology Acceptance Model in order to formulate the questions, based on the two variables: Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness. The first section is entitled “Students’ Attitudes towards the Integration of Technology in their Learning”, which covers eight (08) close-ended questions that aim to uncover the students’ stance towards the use of technology as an educational tool. The second section is “The Students’ Views on the Incorporation of Blended Learning into their Learning Process”. It is composed of a set of four (04) open-ended questions.

The questionnaire is delivered to five students during the process of the pilot study to test the accuracy and relevance of the questions. After the feedback, we have added some items

and have omitted the ones that have been found impertinent such as the questions related to the profile of the students. We have reformulated unclear questions, as well as the titles of the two sections to ensure the practicality of the questionnaire.

2.2 Interview

The structured interview is the second supportive instrument used to gather the qualitative data for this research. It is defined by Gillham (2000:01) as “a conversation where one person—the interviewer—is seeking the response for a particular purpose from the other person—the interviewee-”. Indeed, it is a two-way method which permits an exchange of ideas and information. The structured interview is conducted with eleven (11) randomly selected teachers at the department of English at MMUTO. It comprises six open-ended questions that are asked in a set order to obtain in-depth answers and get detailed insight about teachers’ attitudes towards Blended Learning, and its integration into university. In order to facilitate the analysis of these answers, the Face-to-Face interviews are recorded after getting the interviewees’ permissions,

3. Data Analysis Procedures

For the analysis of the collected data, we have selected two data analysis procedures. The Descriptive Statistical Method is used to analyze the quantitative data that have been gathered from the questionnaire as well as the structured interview. The Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) method is used to examine the qualitative data that are gathered from the open-ended questions in the students’ questionnaire and teachers’ interview.

3.1 Descriptive Statistical Method

Bell (1987: 119-120) states that “in order to decrease the complexity of raw data, provide precision to the analysis and assure research validity and reproducibility, quantitative data are elicited using a descriptive statistical method”. We have proceeded in the calculation of the percentages using the descriptive statistical method also known as the Rule of Three. Its

equation is $(X = Z \times 100 / Y)$, in which **X** is the calculated percentage, **Z** is the value of the similar answers, **Y** is the total number of the participants. The results of the students' questionnaire are highlighted by means of diagrams. In fact, a quantitative research is used specifically to analyze and organize information.

3.2 Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

Krippendorff (1980, cited in Micheal and Andrea, 2005: 191) claims that “content analysis is a research method for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action”. QCA is a method that is adopted for the analysis of qualitative data that are mainly obtained from M2 DLE and Lge and Com students' questionnaire, and from the teachers' interview in the English department. We have used this method through the examination and interpretation of the participants' answers. The results are transformed into written material and transcribed in form of texts.


4. Limitations of the Study

The limitations we have encountered throughout this investigation include time constraint and lack of participants. We have gathered the data from the questionnaire and the interview during the two last weeks before the summer vacations. Due to a shortage of time, we have been unable to enlarge our research by conducting an experimental research. In terms of the lack of participants, we have relied on an online questionnaire to gather the needed data since we could not find students at the department of English due to the summer vacations. We have also faced some difficulties in conducting interviews with more teachers as some of them have been out of reach.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research design and the methodology used to carry out our investigation. First, it has presented the research method, the context of the investigation

and the sample population that has participated in our study. Second, it has described the data collection tools and has explained the way the data used in the study have been collected. Then, it has provided a clear insight into both procedures of data collection and data analysis. The quantitative data that have been collected through the questionnaire, are analyzed by means of the descriptive statistical method. The qualitative data, which are obtained from the interview and the open-ended questions from the questionnaire, are examined by means of the Qualitative Content Analysis. The next chapter presents the findings of the research.



Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the presentation of the findings of this research. It is divided into two sections. The first section is devoted to the findings of the students' questionnaire. The second section presents the results obtained from the teachers' interview. The results of this study are reported in percentages and illustrated in the form of diagrams.

1. Presentation of the Results of the Students' Questionnaire

1.1. Section one: Students' Attitudes Towards the Integration of Technology in their Learning

Q.01 Have you ever faced difficulties with the Face-to-Face teaching?

a- I have

b- I have not

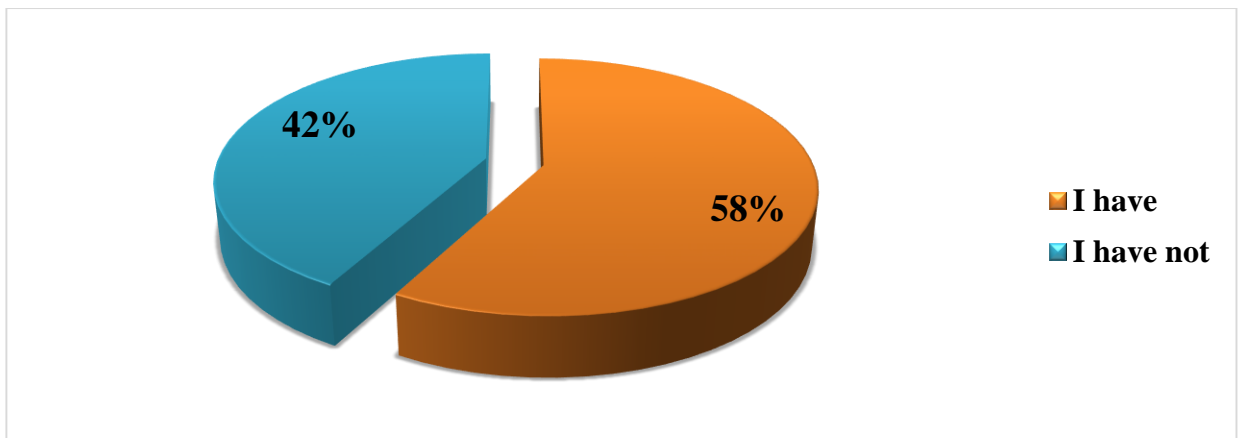


Diagram 01: Students' Difficulties with Face-to-Face Teaching

Diagram (01) above displays that (58%) of the participants face difficulties with the Face-to-Face teaching while (42%) do not have any difficulty with it.

Q.02 Do you enjoy using technological tools when learning?

a- Yes

b- No

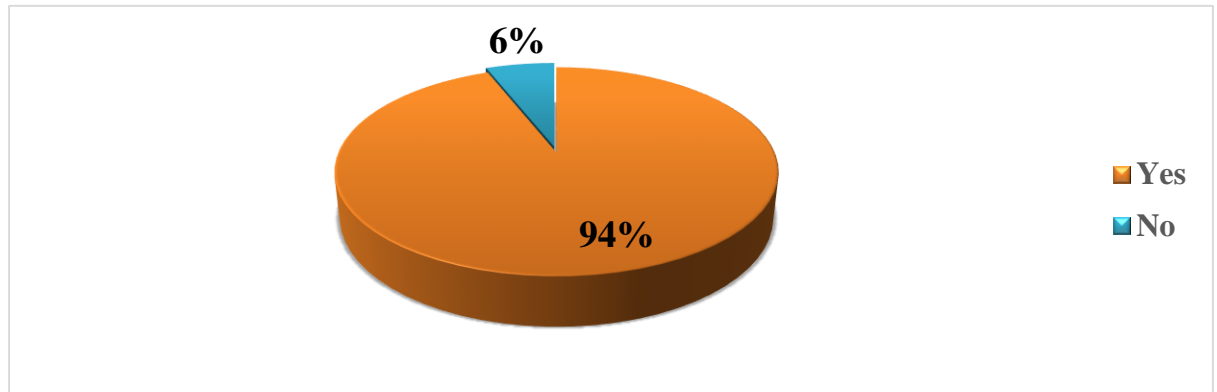


Diagram 02: Use of Technological Tool

The results of Diagram (02) demonstrate that (94%) of the participants enjoy the use of technological tools in their learning while (6%) do not enjoy it.

Q.03 What sort of technological tool do you prefer using? (you can choose multiple answers)

a- Mobile phones

b- Tablets

c- Computer

d- Data show

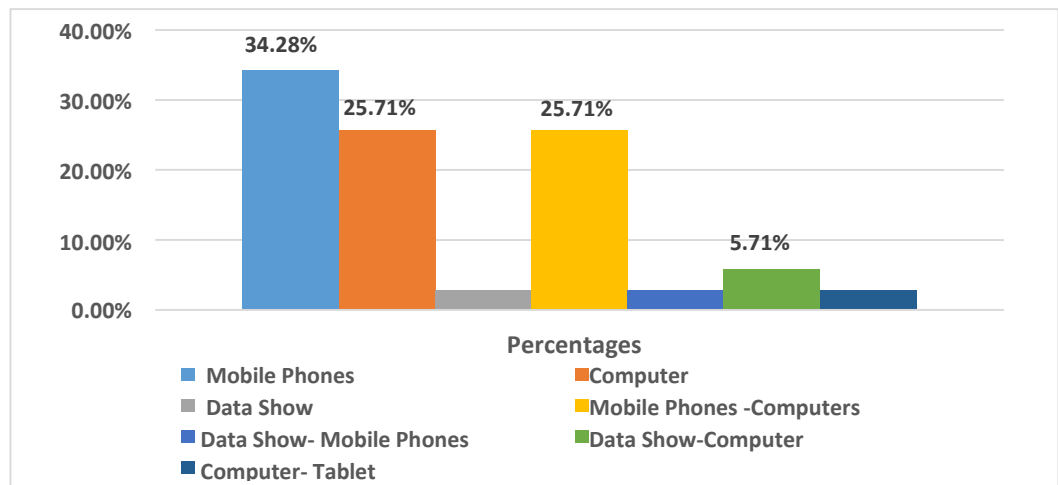


Diagram 03: Students' Preferred Technological Tool

According to the results displayed on Diagram (03), it is noticed that (34.28%) of the students prefer the use of the mobile phone for their learning. While (25.71%) of the participants have settled for the computer as their favorite tool, only (2.85%) have chosen the data show. On

the other hand, (25.71%) have selected both the mobile phone and the computer, (2.85%) have also picked both the data show and mobile phone. Lastly, (5.71%) have decided on both the data show and computer, and (2.85%) on computer and tablets.

Q.04 How do you find the integration of technology in EFL classes?

a-useful

b-not useful

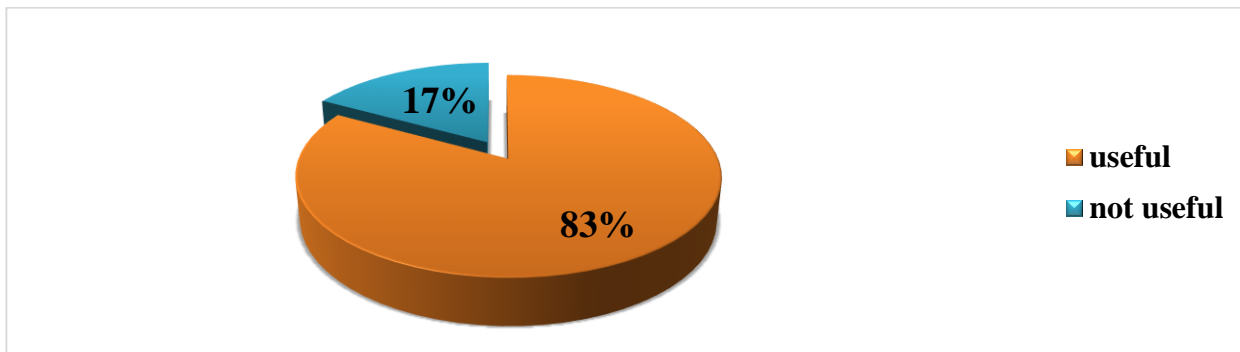


Diagram 04: Students' Opinions on the Integration of Technology in their Learning

Diagram (04) shows that (83%) of the students find the integration of technology to be useful for their learning while (17%) disagree and claim it is not useful.

Q.05 Have you ever taken an online class?

a- Yes

b- No

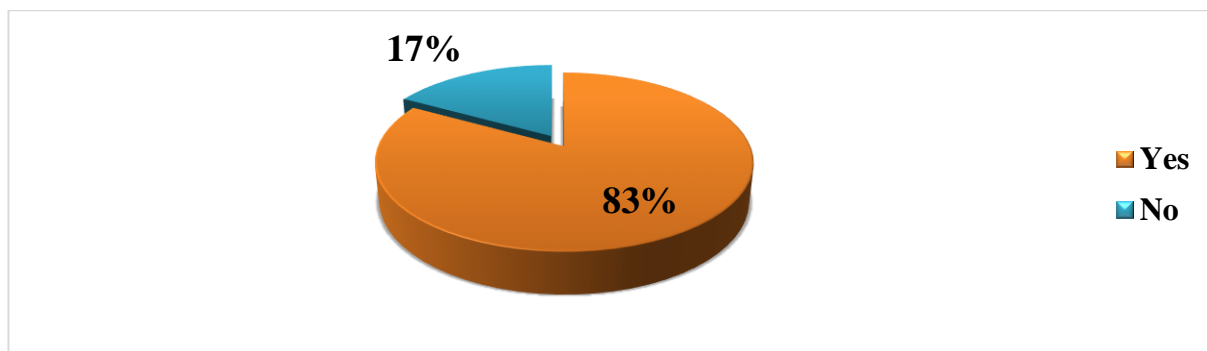


Diagram 05: Students' Participation in an Online Course

It is revealed from Diagram (05) above that (83%) of the participants have taken an online class before and (17%) have not had the experience.

If yes, how satisfied are you?

a- Very satisfied

b- Satisfied

c- Not satisfied

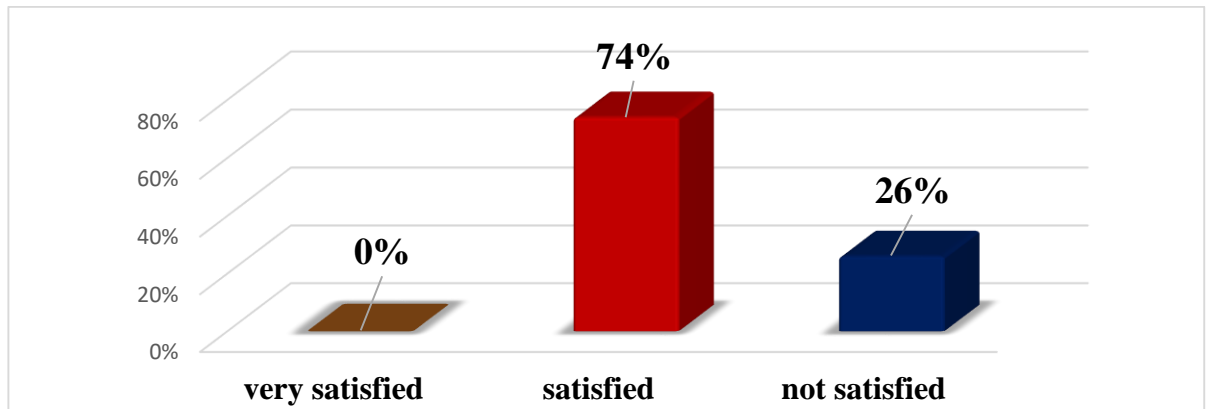


Diagram 06: Students' Satisfaction with Online Courses

Diagram (06) demonstrates that (74%) of the participants feel satisfied about their experience with taking an online course, and (26%) of the participant, are not satisfied with the experience but no one has responded with 'very satisfied'.

Q.06 Have you ever used online applications such as Google Meet and Zoom?

a- Yes

b- No

c- Others

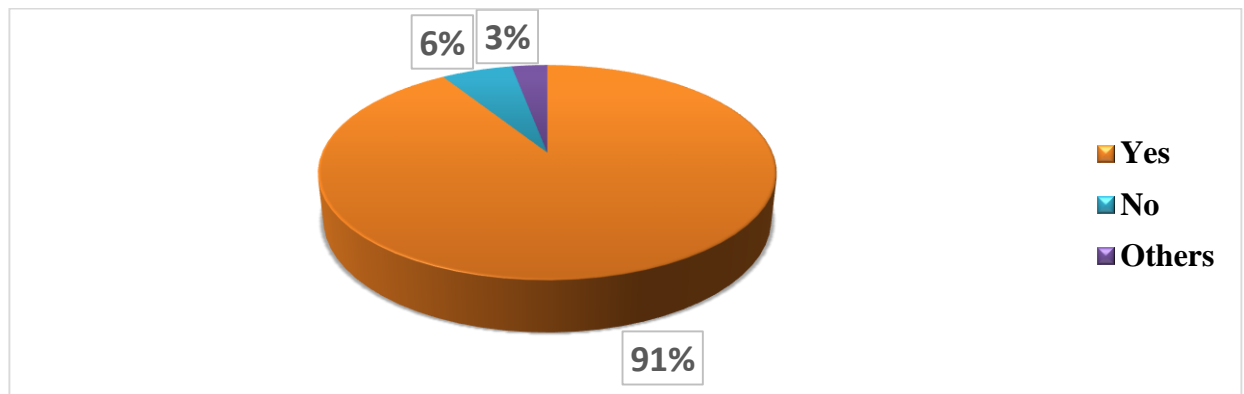


Diagram 07: Students' Use of Online Applications

Diagram (07) displays that a percentage of (91%) use online applications such as Google Meet and Zoom while (6%) do not use such applications and (3%) use other applications than the

ones mentioned in the question.

Q.07 What are the difficulties that you have faced during the use of those applications?

a-Lack of guidance

b-Technical Problems

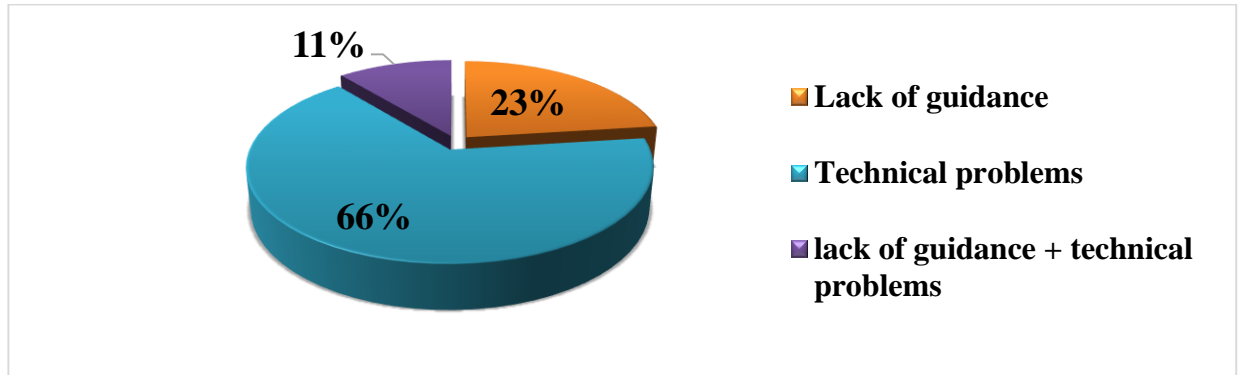


Diagram 08: Students' Difficulties with Online Application

The results on Diagram (08) show that (66%) of the participants face technical problems during the use of those applications and (23%) of them claim that their difficulty is the lack of guidance. However, (11%) of them state that they have faced issues with both lack of guidance and technical problems.

Q.08 Lessons are better delivered through online learning applications than through Face-to-Face learning?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

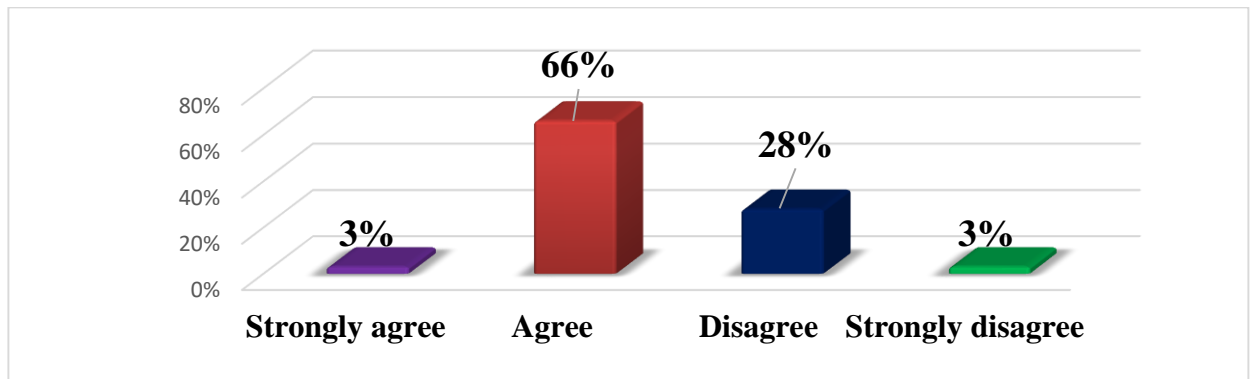


Diagram 09: Students' Preference Level of Online Course Delivery

As indicated on Diagram (09), more than half of the participants (66%) ‘agree’ that lessons are better delivered through online teaching. However, (28%) disagree that lessons are better delivered online and (3%) ‘strongly agree’ on the same statement but (3%) of the students ‘strongly disagree’ that lessons are better delivered online.

1.2 Section Two: Students’ Attitudes towards the Incorporation of Blended Learning into the Learning Process

Q.09 How important is Blended Learning?

Very important Important Slightly important unimportant

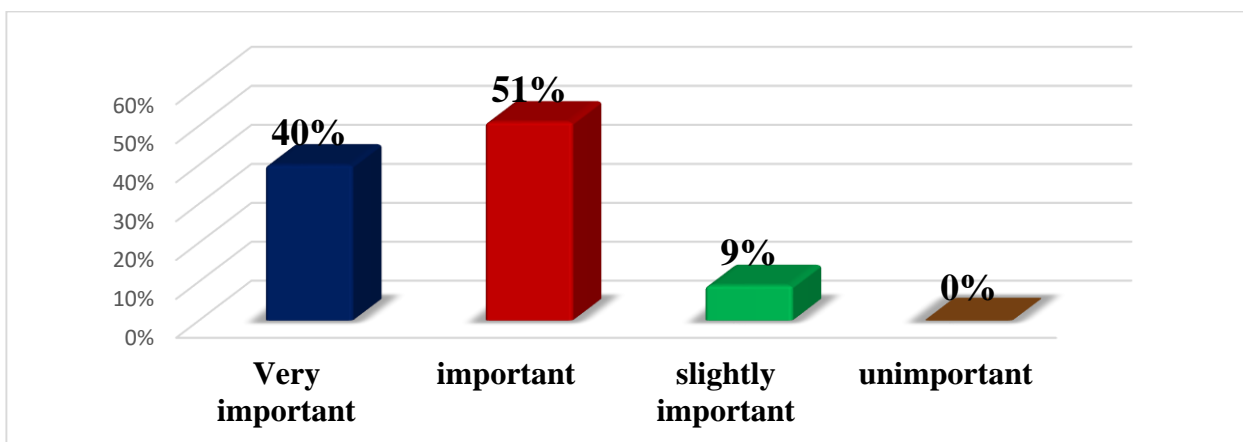


Diagram 10: Importance of Blended Learning

Diagram (10) above displays that (51%) of the students find the Blended Learning method important. Forty percent of them claim that BL is ‘very important’, whereas only (9%) of the participants have answered that it is ‘slightly important’ and none have answered with ‘unimportant’.

Would you justify your choice?

The majority of the students think that Blended Learning is important because it offers more options than Face-to-Face learning. With the emergence of the modern age, technology is being employed in a variety of setting, including education. Thus, it enables flexibility for

personalized learning while also increasing students' autonomy, as one participant states “it encourages students to use their full potential”. Additionally, the students who believe Blended Learning is very important have mentioned the aspect of mental health. They claim that BL could provide those that suffer from anxiety a chance to lessen the pressure that traditional ways of learning make them go through. One student states “it could be a great idea to use Blended Learning to help both students’ and teachers’ mental and physical health, because in my opinion, many students who suffer from anxiety and stress would do better when taught online than in a traditional manner”. However, for those who think that BL is only slightly important they believe that yes it has positive points but it is not that important.

Q.10 Do you think that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning?

Yes

No

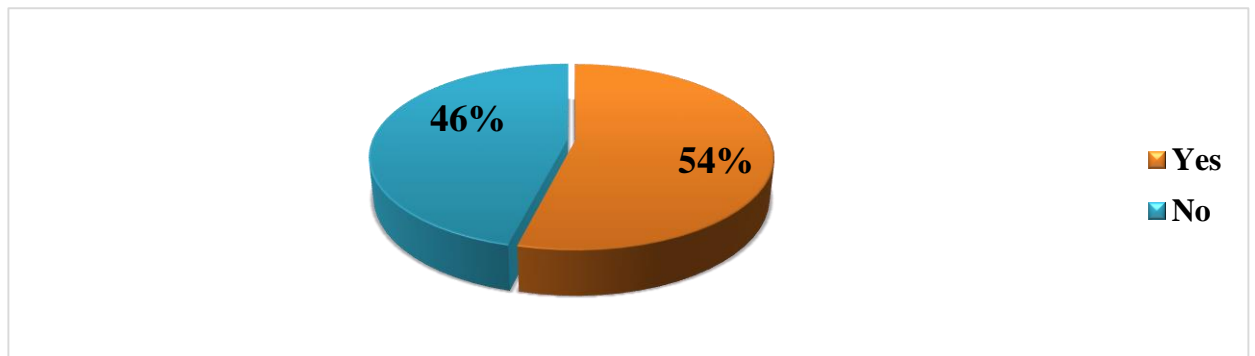


Diagram 11: Blended Learning Outperforms Face-to-Face Learning

Diagram (11) demonstrates that (54%) of the target participants believe that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning, contrary to the (46%) of the participants who think that BL is not more effective and prefer Face-to-Face learning.

Why?

The participants who have responded by ‘yes’ to the question consider BL to be a complementary method as it is more convenient to the modern world since it combines both the

advantages of distance learning and Face-to-Face learning. In contrast, to those who have responded by 'No' they refute the fact that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning because of the lack of guidance from the teachers as well as technical problems and consider F2F to be a more appropriate method of learning.

Q 10. Did the use of Blended Learning offer you more flexibility and convenience in the management of your courses?

Yes

No

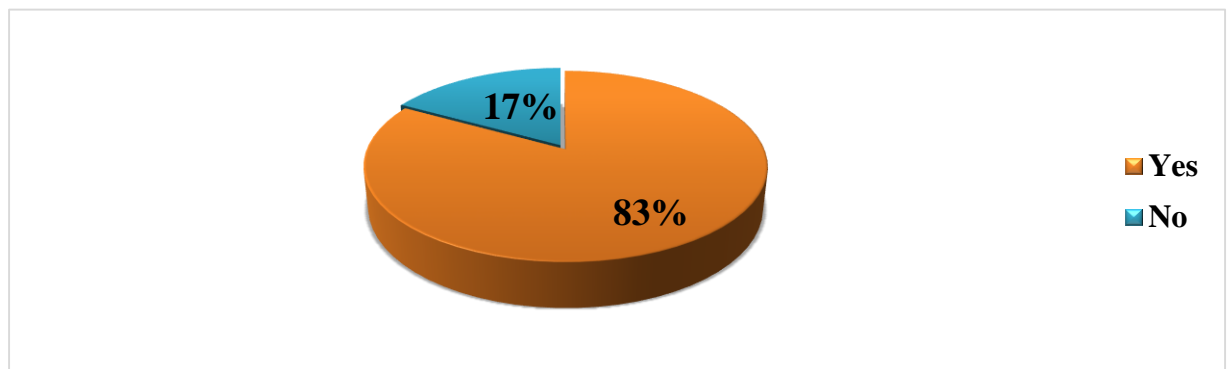


Diagram 12: Course Management Flexibility and Convenience in Blended Learning

Diagram (12) denotes that (83%) of the participants state that Blended Learning offers flexibility and convenience in course management, whereas (17%) have answered that it does not offer flexibility and convenience in the management of their courses.

How? Provide an example

Blended Learning offers more flexibility and convenience in course managements in terms of time and space management as an example from one of the students “ I recall a case where we had a catch-up session , which we could not attend during the week, the teacher agreed to a virtual lecture on the Google Meet platform on the weekend. The lecture was successful and we had the chance to study in the comfort of our homes”. In addition, another positive aspect of BL is that it is convenient for the students as it gives them the freedom to study at their own pace,

for example: “I was able to study at my own rhythm and it offered me new ways to search for knowledge. With BL, we can use technology tools along with books, we do not have to feel restricted to one thing only”, whereas (17%) of the students disagree that Blended Learning offers more flexibility and convenience than Face-to-Face learning; they claim that they prefer the traditional F2F teaching because BL causes them lack of motivation.

Q.10 Do you think that Blended Learning should be integrated in all your university courses?

Yes

No

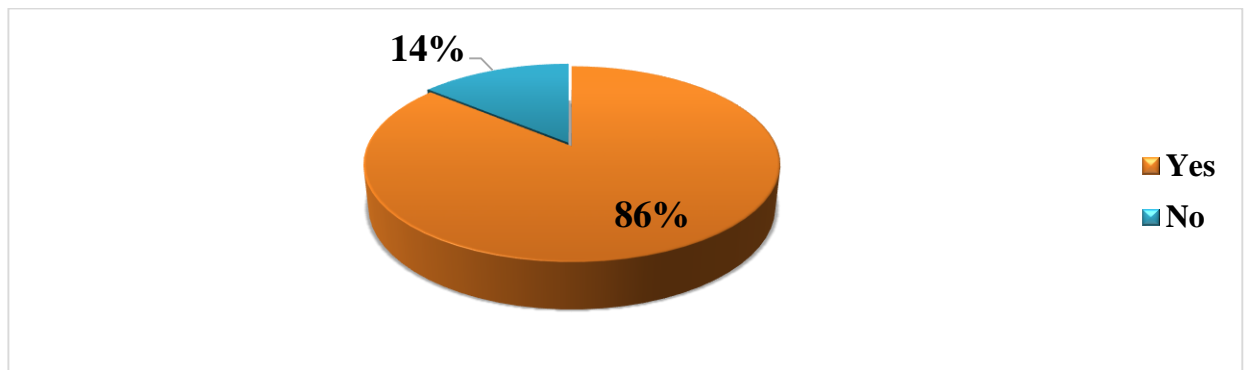


Diagram 13: Integration of Blended Learning into University Courses

The statistics above show that (86%) of the students answer that Blended Learning should be integrated into all their university courses. Yet, (14%) of them do not want Blended Learning to be integrated.

Justify your answer

According to the students' answers, (86%) of the students who agree on the integration of BL into university courses believe it is for various reasons such as to make the learning experience more interesting and convenient for everyday life unexpected circumstances like the outbreak of a pandemic or even more common the lack of public transportations due to strikes. In addition, being able to access lectures without the constant need to be physically present in the

classrooms is really helpful for the students who have double lives as a student and a part time employee. Conversely, (14%) of those who disagree on the integration of Blended Learning in university courses believe that courses are better delivered in the traditional Face-to-Face way especially for certain subjects. For instance, the subject of listening and speaking can not be taught online as it requires the co-presence of both students and teachers for better interaction.

2. Presentation of the Findings of the Teachers' Interview

The interview is the second data collection tool that has been employed in this research to gather data. It is conducted with eleven (11) teachers of all grade levels and specialties. The information below provides the complete outcomes of conducting the interviews.

Question 1: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

This question is asked for the purpose of discovering whether the teachers of the Department of English at MMUTO are familiar with the term Blended Learning or not. Based on their answers, it is revealed that all of them are familiar with it, but they have different degrees of knowledge about the concept. Most of the teachers have been introduced to BL during the Covid-19 pandemic due to the circumstances that have obliged them to use distance learning. They define this method as a modern method of learning where Face-to-Face teaching is carried out along side distance learning.

Additionally, some teachers have shared their experiences that have lead them to discover Blended Learning like for example through internships and practical trainings. Some of the teachers' answers are as follow "we have been introduced to it in 2018 since I was part of internship that we did for new recruits teachers late 2017 early 2018, where we were taught methods of how to use Moodle, how to use platforms that should help the students in their learning. We were trained for about six months and we were given tasks to complete and to hand

through the internet because the supervisor was actually located in Constantine. It was the first experience in Tizi Ouzou”. Another teacher has also shared her experience as follow “I have participated in an online training program on Blended Learning with the University of Constantine from January to July 2021. This training helped me to know what is Blended Learning and what are the different tools and platforms that can be used to carry out this form of learning like YouTube, Moodle, and Edx platforms.”

Question 2: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

The purpose of this question is to discover what the teachers use to perform their distance teaching, that is, the online platforms and applications that help them to accomplish the delivery of their online courses. The platforms that almost all of the teachers made use of are the MMUTO E-learning platform and Moodle. As for applications, they have mentioned the utilization of Google Meet and Zoom. Furthermore, in the case of some teachers who are more experienced with online learning they have answered this way: “I use Quizlet, Moodle and I also tried Google Classroom during the pandemic period. I also like to use Google Drive with my students. I recorded my lecture and then shared the link with them”, and also “The applications that can be used are the following: Skype, blogs, Yahoo, Sonic Educational Websites, YouTube and Messenger.” However, some teachers have expressed their discontentment with the use of any online application or platform saying they are pleased to continue using traditional tools of teaching.

Question 3: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

This question seeks to discover whether the teachers perceive Blended Learning as an important method of learning or not. According to the findings, all the teachers agree that BL is a pertinent method that can offer many benefits when applied under the right circumstances. The

majority of the teachers share their approval of the use of online tools for the sake of learning as it can enhance the autonomy of students and it could also motivate both the learners and teachers to enhance their technological abilities.

Question 4: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

This question aims to provide a variety of examples illustrating the flexibility and convenience that Blended Learning can offer. Based on the responses, the majority of teachers believe that Blended Learning encourages students to become autonomous as one teacher states “the students can learn at their own pace. I give them the lesson, perhaps use videos by recording yourself explaining and sending it to the student.” Additionally, according to the teachers’ answers, BL provides the students complete access to all the lectures and information whenever and wherever they choose, which can significantly lessen their anxiety and increase participation.

Moreover, BL offers time management for students and teachers, as another teacher suggests, “I can present the theoretical part of the course in the classroom, and then I can put the course on the University website or any online platform that students can have access to and assign them online homework with regards to the course we have seen in class. In this way, me as a teacher, I can save time, and the students can have access to the online version of the course from anywhere at any time.” However, one teacher expresses her dissatisfaction and claims that Blended Learning is not always practical due to the shortage of materials and internet connectivity.

Question 5: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

This question has been asked in an attempt to ascertain the teachers’ attitudes concerning

the combination of Face-to-Face and online teaching as a new method of teaching. According to the results, most of the teachers support the use of Blended Learning and have responded as follows “I would say the combination of the two would be the ideal teaching the utopian teaching that would be fruitful in the right circumstances”, “I think that Blended Learning is a valuable teaching-learning approach. It can be beneficial for both teachers and students if used properly”. Another teacher has shared her experience to support the idea of combining the two methods with the following statement “I think that as a new method, the teacher should try it and take risks It is not perfect but we should learn from our mistakes. The first time I taught online I knew I was going to face difficulties but I had to do it anyway or otherwise I would never learn”. However, one teacher shares their preference for Face-to-Face instruction, despite the fact that Blended Learning is a solid method. In their opinion, Face-to-Face instruction is superior since it offers more direct contact with students.

Question 6: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

The final question seeks to determine if the teachers of the department of English support the integration of Blended Learning and whether it can benefit the students and teachers. From the interviews, nearly all the teachers express their support for implementing BL at the university. They agree that this method has benefits both for teachers and students but emphasize the importance that both sides receive training to become more acquainted with the concept. Two teachers claim, “It is something that I really hope our country will develop and take into consideration in a serious manner because it is helpful, practical and can motivate learners”. “The integration of Blended Learning at the level of our department will have many benefits in the case of the learners to learn according to their needs and interest, and the teacher can boost their motivation from all the materials that are on the net”. Nevertheless, one teacher states that even

though Blended Learning is a good method, the direct interaction between teachers and students is irreplaceable as online education is an unreliable method.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of our study obtained from the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. The findings have deduced that Blended Learning is an important method of learning and that it could be a great source of advantages if incorporated in the right way. These findings are discussed in details in the discussion chapter.



Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss and interpret the results obtained from the questionnaire distributed to thirty-five (35) Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms, as well as the results from the structured interview that has been conducted with eleven (11) randomly selected teachers in the department of English at MMUTO. Therefore, this chapter is divided into four sections. The first section deals with the students' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The second section is concerned with the teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The third section discusses Blended Learning in terms of flexibility and convenience according to the students and teachers. The fourth and last section is devoted to the attitudes of students and teachers towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process.

1. Students' Attitudes towards Blended Learning

According to the questionnaire administered to the students, the results of the first question have revealed that (58%) of the students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms encounter difficulties with Face-to-Face learning instructions (see Diagram 01, page 26). In order to improve their education and decrease these obstacles and difficulties that can negatively influence their learning, the students do not refuse to be exposed to new methods of learning. Therefore, the incorporation of technology can play a major role to ameliorate the learning environment and improve their education. According to the results of the fourth question from the questionnaire, (83%) of the participants have expressed that the use of technology is useful in their learning, while (17%) do not consider the addition of technology to their learning to be useful (see Diagram 04 page 28). This question has been asked to the students to discover if they perceive technology to be useful for more

educational purposes rather than just for entertainment. Accordingly, Balanskat (2006) observes that ICT's is employed as a tool to achieve a wide range of educational aims, hence digital integration is widely promoted. These goals are acknowledged as modernizing teaching, planning, and evaluation processes, as well as more modified learning.

In addition to that, the results from the fifth question show that (83%) of the students have taken an online course before through Zoom and Google Meet online applications (see Diagram 05, page 27), and (74%) of them have rated their experience as being 'satisfied', while the remaining (26%) feel 'unsatisfied' (see Diagram 06, page 29). The participants have shared the most frequent obstacles that they have encountered during those online courses, (66%) of the students have faced technical problems, (23%) of them state that it is lack of guidance and the remaining (11%) claim that they have faced both technical problems and lack of guidance. Despite the difficulties that students have encountered with their online learning experiences, they do not reject the use of technology as a learning tool and they are open to learn remotely. Brown (2004) claims that the integration of ICT's into education can enhance the way students discover and evaluate the fundamentals of knowledge. That is, it can help students produce ideas, analyze facts, collaborate and communicate productively.

Moreover, the results from the ninth question reveal that (51%) of the students think that Blended Learning is an important method of learning (see diagram 10, page 31). As one student states "It pushes the learner to discover new techniques for learning and makes use of different tools especially with the evolution of technology" .Thus, Blended Learning provides a customized training experience for the learners, permitting them to learn more about the proper use of ICTs tools and ameliorating the students' information literacy. As Dangwal and Lalima, (2017: 132) declare "Learners increase their experience concerning the use of technology: Since the present witnessed the sophistication of ICT's, it is recommended in most professions and

domains”. Additionally, in reference to the students’ answers, Blended Learning is also important because it enhances the learners’ autonomy as one student notes “It makes it easier for the learner to learn and become autonomous”. To put in another way, BL allows the learners to discover their full educational potential outside the usual traditional ways of learning. It boosts students' self-confidence and openness to new experiences as well as creating a dynamic and enthusiastic environment that promotes students' interpersonal and social relationships, as well as their capabilities and sense of ease. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) have examined higher rates, better retention and higher level of student satisfaction due to the transformative potential of Blended Learning.

As far as the effectiveness of Blended Learning is concerned, it is noticed from the answers obtained through the tenth question that (54%) of the participants agree that BL is more effective than Face-to-Face learning. Blended Learning is a modern method that is more compatible with the current digital world, so it offers more comfort and motivation for the learner. As one student declares: “I strongly believe that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to-Face learning as it is more convenient for teachers and students as they feel more at ease with this type of learning especially students, they seem to be more motivated and less anxious”. However, the remaining (46%) of the participants do not agree that Blended Learning is more effective than F2F because they have a preference for traditional classroom learning for reasons such as the lack of direct interactions with teachers and the lack of ICT’s knowledge, as one students declares: “I like Face-to-Face learning since it is more convenient to me. I personally feel more comfortable with it”.

As a result, the findings demonstrate that despite the contradicting answers from the participants but a substantial percentage of the students have a positive attitude towards Blended Learning. Concisely, BL is a method that encourages a variety of educational approaches and

learning style. It is all about strengthening the students' active participation throughout their classes using a range of strategies, offering them the alternative choice to initiate their own learning, and establishing an energetic and autonomy-oriented atmosphere.

2. Teachers' Attitudes Towards Blended Learning

BL is not a foreign concept to the teachers of English at MMUTO. The interview that has been conducted with the teachers has revealed the various online platforms and programs that the teachers use to accomplish their teaching as well as their perspectives on the usage of technology as a teaching tool. The majority of teachers are familiar with the use of the MMUTO E-learning platform and the Moodle platform. Some teachers also have claimed to have further knowledge and skills with the utilization of other online tools such as Google Meet and Zoom. One teacher has mentioned that during the pandemic, she has tried Google Classroom in addition to Quizlet, Moodle, and other platforms. She has also enjoyed using Google Drive with her students, therefore she has recorded her lecture and then provided them the link. Additionally, there are a variety of applications that can be used, including Skype, blogs, Yahoo. Sonic educational websites, YouTube, and Messenger. In addition to using technology in the classroom, the recent emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has compelled instructors to rely on distance online course delivery to complete the university academic year. As a result of the esoteric circumstances, some teachers have decided to adopt online teaching as an additional teaching potential substitute. In fact, the use of technology in their teaching is quite common throughout the academic year.

As it is displayed in the results of the previous chapter, the teachers that have participated in the interview are familiar with the concept of Blended Learning and define it as a contemporary method of teaching and learning that has gained a significant recognition and

flourished recently in the Algerian educational field. However, each teacher has been introduced to Blended Learning in a distinctive way. The majority of the teachers are first exposed to this strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic, since the circumstances at the time required them to rely on distance learning. Thus, nearly all the courses have been shared with the students of the department of English on the university platform 'E-learning', and have been reviewed afterwards when the students joined their classrooms, as one teacher declares " we have been introduced to it or we found ourselves compelled to use it when the COVID-19 first appeared in Algeria except some modules like E-learning". Moreover, the other teachers have indicated that they have been exposed to the BL method through a special training during which they have received multiple instructions on how to employ online teaching/learning platforms, as one teacher asserts " We have been introduced to it in 2018 since I was part of internship that we did for new recruits teachers late 2017 early 2018 ,where we were taught methods of how to use Moodle, how to use platforms that should help the students in their learning". Consequently, these trainings had a significant impact in ameliorating the teachers' use of technological devices. The technological skills they have obtained from this trainings along with their previous knowledge and experience with Face-to-Face learning has enabled them to execute Blended Learning in an appropriate way.

As far as question three of the interview is concerned, teachers have shared their tenet in regards to the importance of Blended Learning as a teaching and learning method. The majority agrees that BL could be beneficial for both teachers and students due to the fact it combines the advantages of Face-to-Face Learning and distance learning. As one teacher quotes "I think it is really important, [...] What we can do with Blended Learning is that we can evaluate some skills that cannot be evaluated in the classroom [...] sometimes with the lack of time I cannot do some exercises so I post them online on the platforms". In accordance to these results, Staker and Horn

(2012) state that Blended Learning occurs within a formal educational setting. Teaching and learning in a Blended Learning environment includes an online delivery of content and instruction and allows learners and teachers to have some control over the time, place and pace of instruction.

Furthermore, from the interview answers the teachers emphasize that Blended Learning is a learner-centered learning method because it creates autonomous students and significantly increases students' self-efficacy, which can significantly encourage them to be more active learners by allowing them to construct their own knowledge as one teacher claims “it is important because it motivates students and allow them to participate in their learning process. They are not passive but active learners”.

To sum up, the interview with the teachers have demonstrated that all of them are acquainted with the concept of Blended Learning, as they have provided us with a brief description of what this method is, their knowledge and their experiences with BL. Thus, it is worth mentioning that teachers' knowledge and understanding of Blended Learning is of a great significance in determining their positive attitudes toward it.

3. Blended Learning in Terms of Flexibility and Convenience According to the Students and Teachers

From the analysis of the previous section, it is noticed that the majority of the students and teachers have positive attitudes towards Blended Learning. BL is a recently developed innovative learning strategy that combines technology-based learning with traditional Face-to-Face learning methods. There are many perceived benefits of adopting BL in higher education.

In order to answer the third research question of the present investigation, Davis' (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' is relied on to investigate how the students and teachers perceive Blended Learning in terms of flexibility and convenience based on two variables:

Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness. Perceived Ease of Use is the degree to which an individual believes that using a specific system would be effortless. In other words, ease of use entails freedom from complexity and difficulties. Moreover, Perceived Usefulness is the extent to which a person considers using a specific strategy or technique to improve their performance.

Davis (1989) has worked on the development of the ‘Technology Acceptance Model’ by defining the processes that mediate the relationship between external factors and actual system use. The findings of this study reveal that Perceived Ease of Use is determined as the degree to which the participants perceive that participating in Blended Learning is convenient to their educational needs such as the accessibility to the materials anytime and anywhere. In this investigation, Perceived Usefulness has been defined as the extent to which the students and teachers believe that engaging in Blended Learning can enhance their academic performance, by allowing them to be more flexible with their teaching and learning in terms of course management. Flexibility and convenience are important aspects of Blended Learning that both the teachers and students interpret based on their own personal experiences.

The results from the eleventh question of the questionnaire show that (83%) of the students agree that Blended Learning offers them more flexibility and convenience in their course management. We have asked the students to provide some examples. (see Diagram 12 ,page 33). One student has responded as follows “Blended Learning enables the student to access the materials from anywhere at any time while enjoying the benefits of Face-to-Face support and instruction”. In this sense, Hansen (2001) claims that when students are given a choice in their learning, they could feel more motivated to work.

Additionally, according to the students’ answers obtained from the questionnaire, Blended Learning allows flexibility for course managements in terms of time and space organization. It gives learners a degree of control. They can choose the platform that aligns with their preferences,

as another student states “I was able to study at my own rhythm and it offered me new ways to search for knowledge. With BL, we can use technological tools along with books, we don’t have to feel restricted to one thing only”. From the viewpoint of the students, learning has evolved with the use of various computer programs, and the use of personal electronic devices (mobile, tablet, laptop). Thus, the possibility of obtaining more information from electronic e-learning platform leads to their self-development and motivates their learning.

Furthermore, Garrison and Kanuka (2004) argue that Blended Learning offers opportunities to create transformative learning environments that can effectively encourage critical, creative, and complex thinking skills. In this context, one student has shared that they had a catch-up session that they could not attend during the week, and the teacher agreed to give a virtual lecture on the Google Meet platform on the weekend. The lecture went well, and the students were given the opportunity to study at home. Consequently, this experience is another example of how Blended Learning has allowed them to be flexible in their learning. Wingard (2004:27) claims that the idea of accessibility motivates students as “They like to have the ability to access course materials anytime, anywhere and are positive about the convenience and flexibility this provides them. Because Blended Learning courses help in providing them with the flexibility they need to juggle jobs, school and family”. In other words, students acknowledge the convenience and flexibility of being capable of accessing course materials at any time and from any location. Since Blended Learning offers them the flexibility they need to balance work, school, and family life.

In addition, in the fourth question of the interview, the teachers are asked to provide examples on how Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience. Based on the responses, some teachers believe that BL encourages the students to be more autonomous as it provides them with complete access to all the lectures and information whenever and wherever it

is convenient for them. As one teacher states “Flexibility is the first and major characteristic of online learning like in terms of time and space. As an example, I have taught my students even when I was outside like at home or at restaurants. All I needed was the internet and my phone. Flexibility is something lacking in face to face classes. In terms of convenience it offers practicality”. Hence, from the teachers’ answers, Blended Learning can enable them to improve their existing teaching practices. In other words, many benefits can be generated when Blended Learning is implemented in the learning environment. By mixing online instructions and one-on-one face time, learners can work independently with new concepts while the teacher circulates and supports learners who may require assistance.

4. The Attitudes of Students and Teachers towards the Integration of Blended Learning into the Teaching/Learning Process

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is used as a theoretical framework for the definition of the variables that contribute to the discovery of the teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards the adoption of Blended Learning in higher education contexts. Students’ and teachers’ attitude towards Blended Learning is decisive in determining the success or failure of its implementation into the teaching/learning process. In this study, it is revealed that the majority of the participants have expressed positive attitudes towards Blended learning. According to Davis (1989), Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use predict the users’ attitude towards using the technology and subsequent behavioral intentions. Perceived Usefulness has a direct impact on attitude toward using a technology and behavioral intention to use the technology, whereas Perceived Ease of Use has an indirect impact on attitude toward technology use and behavioral intention to use technology. In order to answer the fourth and last question stated in the general introduction, the same question has been asked for both the students and

teachers in the questionnaire and interview.

The answers from question twelve of the questionnaire have revealed that (86%) of the students from the DLE and Lge and Com specialisms are supportive of the integration of Blended Learning into their university courses (see diagram 13, page 34), as they claim that BL could create an integrated classroom where the needs of all types of learners could be met and it would also help enhance the technological skills of both students and teachers. One student states “Relying on Face- to-Face learning would not strictly be a good choice. One example is the recent pandemic where in-person interactions were prohibited and all institutions have shifted to online school. I'd say Blended Learning is essential and quite unavoidable too”. In this context, Riel et al. (2016) state that a Blended learning environment allows students to connect, communicate, and engage on worthwhile projects both online and in-person. Each of these areas offers unique advantages for effective learning. In other words, Blended Learning is an appealing remedy to the constraints of adapting learning and development to every individual's requirements. It provides an opportunity to merge the innovative and technological breakthroughs afforded by online learning with the interaction and the participation offered in conventional learning.

Moreover, the teachers' answers to the sixth questions from the interview reveal that nearly all of them are amenable to the idea of integrating Blended Learning into university by expressing their favorable viewpoints and sharing their own experiences on online teaching. It can be deduced from their answers, that BL or the combination of distance learning and Face-to-Face learning is described as the ideal teaching. As one teacher declares “I would say the combination of the two would be the ideal teaching the utopian teaching that would be fruitful in the right circumstances”. Accordingly, Occhipinti (2017) asserts that the combination of Face-to-Face and online learning is the best approach to motivating students to learn, since all essential learning activities can be integrated including thinking, interaction, adaptation and discussion As

another teacher says: “ The integration of Blended Learning at the level of our department will have many benefits in the case of the learners to learn according to the needs and the interest and the teachers can boost their motivation from all the materials that are on the net”.

However, from the answers obtained from the teachers’ interview, in order to successfully implement Blended Learning, teachers and students ought to be digitally literate, that implies the ability to assimilate and properly understand information from various sources. In the case of the department of English at MMUTO, many teachers have addressed the issue of a shortage of materials and a lack of technological experience, as one teacher affirms “In the case of our university, I think Blended Learning should be used carefully in a relevant way since we do not have the needed material and conditions”. In this context, Zhang and Zhu (2018: 268) note that “Finding a suitable environment for all students is a difficult task, but the Blended Learning approach facilitates an ‘accessible, flexible, active, interactive, encouraging, and inspiring’ teaching and learning environment”. Thus, Blended Learning needs to be applied in the right way and under the appropriate circumstances in order for every body to benefit from.

To sum up, by relying on Davis’s (1989) ‘Technology Acceptance Model’ in our study, and based on the findings of the questionnaire and interview, the results show that Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and attitudes towards using technology are key determinants of behavior intentions towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process of the department of English at MMUTO. Accordingly, Hanif et al (2018) express that researchers have relied a lot on TAM in the context of higher education to determine the degree to which students as well as teachers accept modern information technology. The reason for this is that TAM is a simple and easy-to-understand model. The findings of this study demonstrate that the students and teachers perceive the incorporation of online resources along with classroom Face-to-Face learning as a useful blend, which can help them make the teaching/learning process

less stressful.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the results obtained from the two research tools; a questionnaire administered to thirty-five (35) Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms, as well as a structured interview conducted with eleven (11) teachers chosen randomly at the Department of English. The findings provide clear answers for the research questions of the study by relying on Davis's (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' theoretical framework. In addition, some hypotheses stated in the general introduction are confirmed whereas others are refuted.

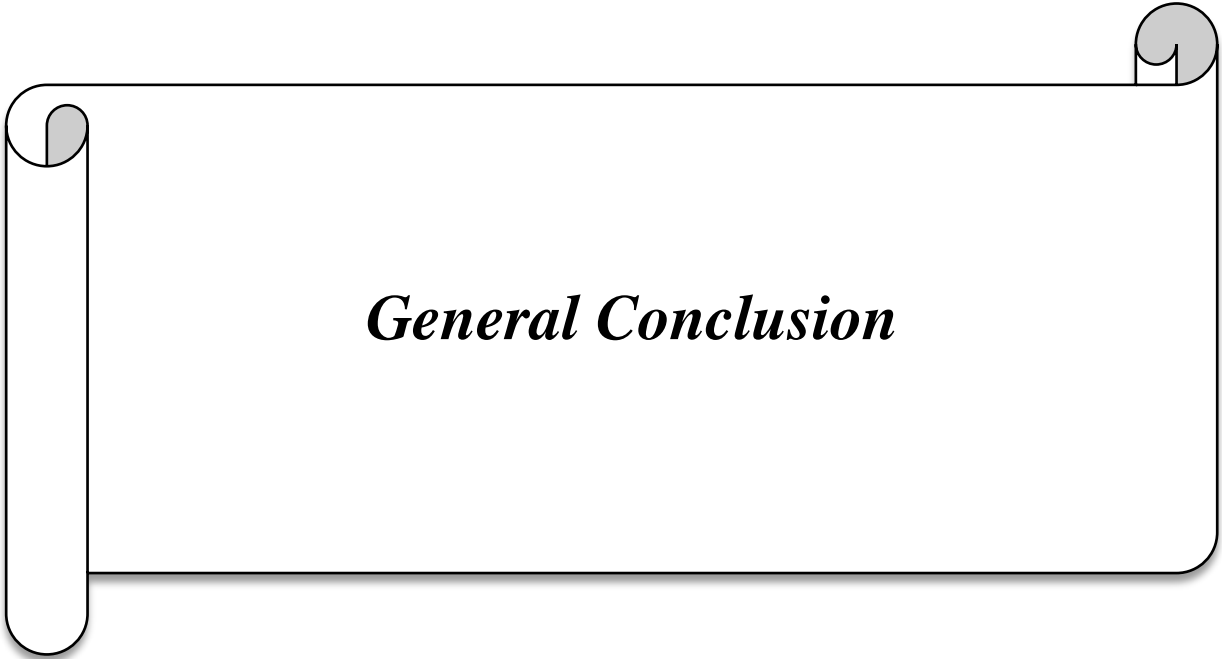
First, it is confirmed that most of the students have positive attitudes towards Blended Learning. They claim that BL allows them to remedy the obstacles they encounter with Face-to-Face learning. The addition of technology as a learning tool enables them to be more autonomous and access knowledge in more diverse ways since Blended learning includes both the learning styles addressed in traditional F2F teaching and distance teaching.

The second hypothesis which is "The teachers have a negative attitude towards Blended Learning" is denied, since the results have revealed that Blended Learning in spite of its complexity is viewed positively by the teachers. They acknowledge that they might encounter some difficulties with BL as a new method since some of them lack ICT's skills, but it is worth to try as it could help them improve the way they deliver their courses to the students and create enriched learning environment.

As for the third hypothesis, it is confirmed that Blended Learning offers flexibility and convenience. Based on the examples that have been provided by the students and teachers, they perceive BL a useful method since the incorporation of technology as a teaching/learning tool

allows them to facility their work and academic performances. This hypothesis is analyzed relying on the TAM model.

Lastly, after being introduced to Blended Learning in the light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, it is demonstrated that despite several technological and infrastructural challenges such as the lack of materials and minimal knowledge on information and communication technologies (ICTs), the students and teachers are supportive of the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process. Thus, the last and fourth hypothesis is also confirmed.



General Conclusion

The current dissertation has investigated the attitude of Master Two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms along with the teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning at the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou. This study seeks to reach four (04) objectives. The first objective aims to discover students' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The second objective is to determine teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning. The third objective is to identify whether Blended Learning offers flexibility and convenience according to the students and teachers or not. The last objective seeks to uncover the attitudes of students and teachers towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process.

To achieve these aims, we have relied on Davis's (1989) 'Technology Acceptance Model' (TAM) which determines how individuals come to accept or reject a piece of technology. TAM suggests that an individual's attitude regarding a particular piece of technology is either positive or negative when executing a specific action. This model relies on two main components "Perceived-Ease of Use," and "Perceived Usefulness," as well as other external circumstances that can influence the individuals' decision to accept or reject a piece of technology. In the case of our research, TAM is used to analyze the students' and teachers' attitudes towards Blended Learning as well as its integration into the teaching/learning process.

To resolve the research questions and assess the validity of our hypotheses, a mixed method approach has been adopted. The data has been gathered using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Two main data collection tools are adopted to carry out the study. A questionnaire is administered to thirty-five (35) M2 Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication students, and a structured interview is conducted with eleven (11) teachers selected randomly at the department of English. For

data analysis, the Rule of Three is used to analyze the data gathered from the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire, and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is applied to interpret the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the structured interview.

The results from the students' questionnaire reveal that the students exhibit positive attitudes towards Blended Learning which confirms the first hypothesis of our study. The second hypothesis which stipulates that the teachers have a negative attitude towards Blended Learning is refuted. The findings from the interview indicate that the teachers have positive attitudes towards BL. Moreover, the third hypothesis is also confirmed as both the students and teachers have provided examples on how BL offers them flexibility and convenience in terms of course management. It is also concluded that the students and teachers have positive attitudes towards the integration of Blended Learning into the teaching/learning process, hence the last hypothesis is also confirmed.

To conclude, as the primary research that has been conducted at the department of English at MMUTO, we hope that the findings of our work can lead to new prospects for future studies in this field. Regarding further investigations, we suggest an experimental study in order to examine the effectiveness of Blended Learning at the department of English as an official teaching method during the entire academic year. In addition we suggest an investigation on the impact of Blended Learning on students' autonomy



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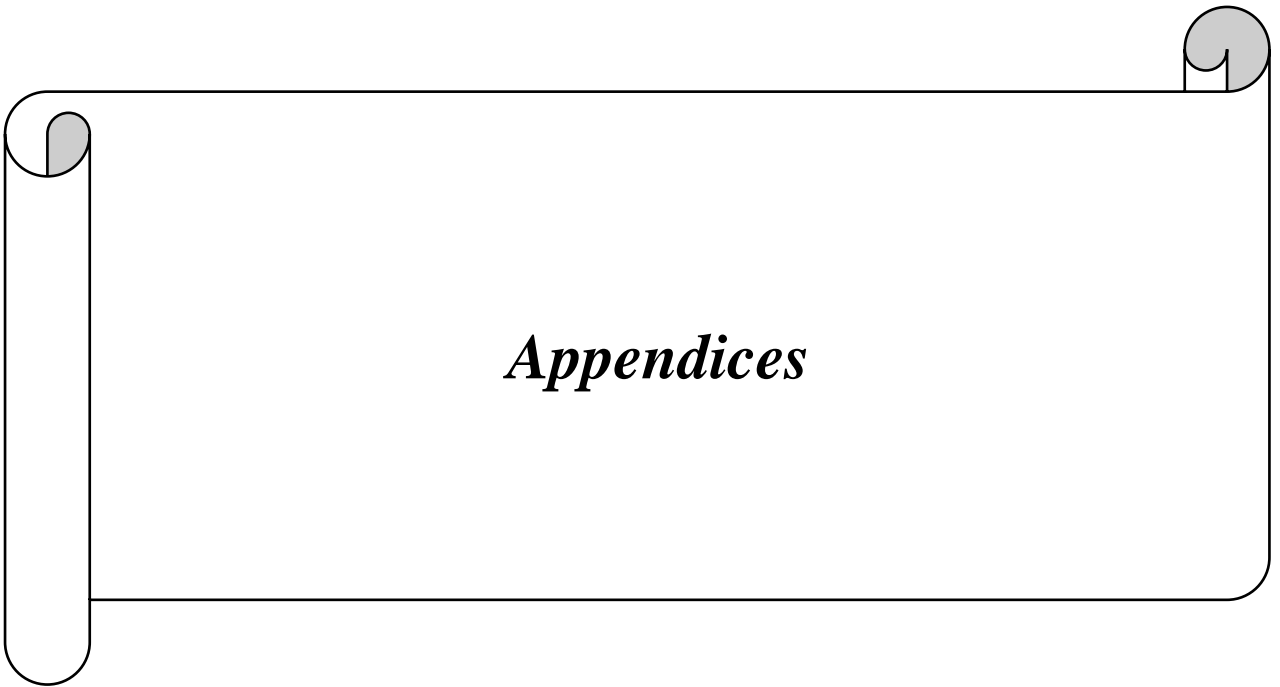
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Appendices

Appendix one: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

The present questionnaire aims to investigate the attitudes of master two students from Didactics of Foreign Languages and Language and Communication specialisms in the department of English at MMUTO towards Blended Learning.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and for the time devoted to answering this questionnaire.

Blended Learning refers to a method of teaching which combines Face-to-Face classroom learning and online learning.

Section one: Students' Attitudes towards the Integration of Technology in their Learning.

Q.01 Have you ever faced difficulties with the Face-to-Face of teaching?

a- I have

b- I have not

Q.02 Do you enjoy using technological tools when learning?

a- Yes

b- No

Q.03 What sort of technological tools do you prefer using? (you can choose multiple answers)

a- Mobile phones

b- Tablets

c- Computer

d- Data show

Q.04 How do you find the integration of technology in EFL classes?

a- Useful

b- Not useful

Q.05 Have you ever taken an online class?

a- Yes

b- No

If yes, how satisfied are

you? a- Very satisfied

b- Satisfied

c- Not satisfied

Q.06 Have you ever used online applications such as Google meet and Zoom?

a- Yes

b- No

c- Others

Q.07 What are the difficulties that you have faced during the use of those applications?

a- Lack of guidance

b- Technical problems

Q.08 Lessons are better delivered through online learning applications than through Face-to-Face learning?

a- Strongly agree

b- Agree

c- Disagree

d- Strongly Disagree

Section two: Students' Attitudes towards the incorporation of Blended Learning into the Learning process.

Q.09 How important is Blended Learning?

a- Very important

b- Important

c- Slightly important

b- Unimportant

Would you justify your choice?

.....

.....

.

Q.10 Do you think that Blended Learning is more effective than Face-to Face learning ?

a- Yes

b- No

Why?

.....

.....

Q.11 Did the use of Blended Learning offer you more flexibility and convenience in the management of your courses?

a- Yes

b- No

How? Provide an example

.....

.....

.....

Q.12 Do you think that Blended Learning should be integrated in all your university courses?

a- Yes

b- No

Justify your answer

.....

.....

.....

Thank you

Appendix Two: Teachers' Interview

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your time and participation,

This interview forms part of our dissertation research on attitudes towards Blended Learning. The purpose of this interview is to obtain your attitude on a number of aspects related to the subject.

Question 1: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning ?

Question 2: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Question 3: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Question 4: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Question 5: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Question 6: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefits teachers and students?

Thank you

Teachers' interview transcription:

Interviewee one:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: we have been introduced to it in 2018 since I was part of internship that we did for new recruit's teachers late 2017 early 2018. We were taught methods of how to use Moodle and how to use platforms that should help the students in their learning. We were trained for about six months, we were given tasks to complete and to hand through the internet because the supervisor was actually located in Constantine. It was the first experience in Tizi Ouzou ,in other cities they started in 2017. It is a requirement for all new recruits it is still preferred now for all new teachers that have been newly recruited to take it, and it takes about 6 to 8 months. Where we are obliged to attend some courses and then we have an online evaluation. This is how I got familiar with that concept and how it allowed me to incorporate it in my teaching when the corona virus has emerged.

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: we had Moodle, and an application called 'Vu', it is to design maps and to design mind cards and to facilitate the learning for students. This is what they asked us to use and they actually told us how to use it, it was not just random. When we were asked to do the task, they would actually give us on their websites where to download videos, some guide minds , and note books in pdf versions. They explained us how to use it and we were supposed to read it and watch the videos in order to get familiar and then, later on, use it with our students.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Honestly, I would say it is important however I do not 100 percent believe in it in our context ,we lack so many means it is not efficient ,as myself I had all my means my own computer I had an internet connection at home and I faced some difficulties, because when they give you tasks they tell you to hand them back on a specific time and sometimes the internet is not working so you pass the deadline ,same for students there is some villages that have no connection. It would be really effective when we have the means that are necessary but in our context I do not believe in it. Actually when the corona virus started they told us to incorporate the online teaching, I actually did more than just publishing my courses on the university's platform. I contacted the members of the students committee who contacted my students and they created a group email, when I used to send them personally my courses however, when we came back in September and I asked them who received it none of them, I had five group out of five groups may be 20 students out 200 students had received the courses , as many of them had no cellphones. So when everyone is able to have the needed material and hopefully under better circumstances, perhaps the ministry will take charge of it.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: For example when I say flexibility meaning the learners can learn on their own pace I give them the lesson, perhaps using videos by recoding yourself explaining and send it to the students ,they can review the video as many times as they want ,they can pause it whenever there is a problem and go back , most students in the classroom are shy perhaps scared to ask questions ,perhaps they see that there is a distance between them and the teacher so they do not necessarily ask questions even though I really do encourage it a lot

but it feels like some students are uncomfortable ,they have another way to learn cause you cannot expect every student to have the same learning process. For convenience when the students do not feel like studying or going to university they can download the lecture and learn whenever they feel ready.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: I think it will be the best method of teaching, gathering all the right circumstances ,the good atmosphere , some students say they learn more and better online because they are in the comfort of their home rather than in the classroom. I would say the combination of the two would be the ideal teaching, the utopian teaching that would be fruitful in the right circumstances.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: It would actually decrease anxiety because each time I lost a session because of for example the students' assembly. It is stressful for both teachers and the students, cause for the students when they miss a lesson they need to catch it up and when they do perhaps it is a lot at the same time. I would suggest it just for the lack of anxiety it would be ideal just to be little bit comfortable and less worried I would say if we cannot have a lecture at school let's do it on Google meet or zoom.

Interviewee two

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Yes, I'm familiar with Blended Learning which is a way of teaching that combines or integrates Face-to-Face or physical and online learning.

interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: So the university allows us to display courses and drills to students on a platform called Moodle.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Well it is important because it motivates students and allow them to participate in their learning process, they are not passive, they are active learners.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: Well in my opinion, according to my experience Blended Learning allows me as a teacher to find documents online and to share these documents with my students so if my student have a pc or internet can easily search for information on the internet, I can provide them links, I can also ask them to do research and can find all the information.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: Of course the combination is going to be fruitful it would have a good result because a student who is involved in his or her learning certainly succeed or will progress compared to a student that is passive

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official

teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: Yes of course in our department it would be good that we as teachers combine physical and online teaching and learning, certainly it will be a good thing for the teachers and the students of our department.

Interviewee three:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning is a very important form of learning where Face-to-Face teaching is carried out alongside online learning. I am familiar with this form of learning because I have participated in an online training program on blended learning with the University of Constantine from January to July 2021. This training helped me to know what is Blended Learning and what are the different tools and platforms that can be used to carry out this form of learning like YouTube, Moodle, and Edu platforms. We can use these online platforms to support Face-to-Face teaching, by provide additional material like tests, quizzes, and activities for students to do at home).

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: I have used online teaching mainly during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown via the Moodle platform. I have uploaded many courses on this platform. However, this was not successful due to technical problems, Internet connectivity issues, and students' inability to access the platform. Currently, I am using just emails to send lectures and activities to my students. I am not relying on Moodle or any other platform because of the mentioned obstacles.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning can help students to be autonomous, learn at their own pace, and increase their engagement. Blended Learning can also save time meaning that the teacher can deliver the course in the classroom and upload the main material as well as additional material like activities and quizzes on a given online platform. Another benefit of Blended Learning is that students can have access to the material from anywhere and at any time.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: For example, I can present the theoretical part of the course in the classroom, and then I can put the course on the University website or any online platform that students can have access to and assign them online homework with regards to the course we have seen in class. In this way, as I teacher I can save time, and the students can have access to the online version of the course from anywhere at any time, review it at their own pace, and then do the homework.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: I think that it is a valuable teaching-learning approach. It can be beneficial for both teachers and students if used properly.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: For successful integration of Blended Learning in the department of English at the University of Tizi-Ouzou, it is important to familiarize both teachers and students with

this form of learning by providing adequate training. It is also important to provide the necessary technological devices and Internet access for both teachers and students.

Interviewee four:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: I was not directly introduced with that term, I was doing it without knowing it was Blended Learning. I was trying to find ways to incorporate technology knowing it is not easy at our university with the lack of materials and students' digital skills. My familiarity started with first year students, I introduced them to some websites starting by introducing them to new words in order to try to do exercises online on a platform called Quizlets. I also had my first online lecture experience on Google meet with masters one students.

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: I use Quizlet, Moodle and I also tried Google classroom during the pandemic period. I also like to use Google drive with my students, I recorded my lecture and then shared the link with them.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: I think it is really important, we should use all the means we have. What we can do with Blended Learning is that we can evaluate some skills that cannot be evaluated in the classrooms like for example when I teach speaking I have to develop students' fluency, accuracy, pronunciation and lexical diversity and sometimes with the lack of time I cannot do some exercises so I post them online on the platforms. With Blended Learning we can also

take advantage of the extra time that the students have outside the classroom because most of the modules we have we have class only one or two times a week.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: In terms of flexibility you can for example schedule lectures online at any time of the day and you can agree with your students. when it comes to convenience it is not always convenient because students lack the right equipment's and internet connection is not always good.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: I think that as a new method teacher should try it and take risks, it is not perfect but we should learn from our mistake. The first time I taught online I knew I was going to face difficulties but I had to do it anyways or otherwise I would never learn. When it comes to students it is also a way to break the ice and give them more confidence to use the internet cause sometimes students can have very negative attitudes towards the use of computers.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: I think that it can benefit both teachers and students because it can help them develop their digital skills and discover the kind of equipment they need and can use in the classroom. It can break so many barriers like geographical ones and time constraints. For teachers it can help them develop their information skills to learn how to plan a lesson online

and for students it will teach them how to interact online but in a formal environment not just social media.

Interviewee five:

Interviewer: Would you tell us about your familiarity with the concept of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning is a new concept that emerged these last years to link traditional pedagogy with online learning. The teacher has to design his own tasks and syllabus and use all the resources on the net.

Interviewer: What are the applications or platforms you use to perform your online teaching?

Interviewee: I will answer your question by a reference to the module of oral expression that I have taught using Blended Learning. The applications that can be used are the following: skype, blogs, yahoo. Sonic educational websites, YouTube and messenger.

Interviewer: How would you describe the importance of Blended Learning?

Interviewee: Blended Learning is highly needed in language learning as it provides a real and authentic input and exposure for language learners. The most important benefit is that it can enhance autonomy so that students discover their own interests for life long learning.

Interviewer: Could you provide us with examples of how the use of Blended Learning can offer flexibility and convenience?

Interviewee: Blended learning offers this aspect of flexibility as students are first initiated to material courses/tasks and then teachers can create a blog where they can use them outside the walls of the class. The classroom need to provide a good atmosphere for initiation and

evaluation of the improvement of the students. The following steps will take the cycle form which means that students learn and take the maximum of benefits outside and then get the stimuli of the necessary orientation and feedback from the teacher. If students use applications such as Skype they need guidance from the teachers so the role of the teachers is a catalyst for the success of any pedagogical task.

Interviewer: What do you think about the combination of Face-to-Face and distance learning as a new method of teaching?

Interviewee: this new method is very effective provided that the teacher plays an active role inside and outside the class for feedback, evaluation, orientation.

Interviewer: In which way may the integration of Blended Learning as an official teaching and learning method at the department of English benefit teachers and students?

Interviewee: The integration of Blended Learning at the level of our department will have many benefits in the case of the learners, to learn according to their needs and interests and the teacher can boost their motivation from all the materials that are on the net.