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An Investigation about the Effect of Blended Learning on Enhancing EFL Learners' Speaking Ability: the Case of Third-Year Students of the Department of English at Tlemcen University

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Dedication

In the name of **Allah**, the most gracious, most merciful, all the praise
is due to him alone

I would like to dedicate this humble work, the accomplishments of the past and
the ambitions of the future to two individuals who I can state
emphatically they are my inspiration, and my support.

To My mother “Naima” and my father “Zakaria”. I would like to take this
opportunity to say thank you for your endless love, sacrifices, patience and best
wishes, you were and still the source of my gladness and strength.

To my wonderful sister “Wided” who has always been there for me, her
husband, my brother, my little angel niece “Roumaissa”, and my little nephew
“Mohammed”.

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Abstract

The mastery of the language skills is a priority to successful teaching. To this end, educators continue to search for innovative and new teaching methods to develop the four language skills and enhance education. Learning how to speak is regarded as one of the complex task that need much attention and interest from instructors, and most EFL learners struggle to acquire it due to the lack of speaking opportunities inside the classroom. For this reason, this study suggests blended learning as a teaching method that could be implemented to provide better chances and facilitate the teaching of speaking skill. Blended learning is described as the best of both worlds, face-to-face and online learning. This study aims to investigate the effect of blended learning on EFL learners' speaking ability and explore students and teachers' perception about its use. The researcher hypothesize that implementing blended learning in EFL classes has a positive impact on enhancing students' oral ability. To test this hypothesis, a case study was conducted at Abou Bakr Belkaid University of Tlemcen. A questionnaire was designed to thirty-five students, while six teachers were selected to be interviewed. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used. The findings revealed that both teachers and students hold positive attitudes towards the use of blended learning, also the results attained from the questionnaire confirmed that students believed that BL provides them with more speaking opportunities, allow them to learn independently and make the learning process more enjoyable. Accordingly, this work highlights the role of blended learning in changing the educational system and boost students' performance.

Key words: Blended learning, speaking opportunities, perception, speaking ability

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Key Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAI: Computer Assisted Instruction

SLT: Second Language Teaching

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

FtF: Face to Face

CMC: Computer-Mediated Communication

EFL: English as Foreign Language

CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning

CD ROMs: Compact Disc Read-Only Memories

CD: Compact Disc

BL: Blended Learning

ICA: Internal Continuous Assessment

LMS: Learning Management System

PDFs: Portable Document Formats

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

TELL: Technology Enhanced Language Learning

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

MALL: Mobile Assess Language Learning

ELLS: English Language Learners

BLL: Blended Language Learning

AMEP: Adult Migrant English Program

ESL: English as a Second Language

General Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Technology plays an important and indispensable role, as the past decades show its fundamental part in most of peoples' daily activities, such as communication, shopping, transportation, and education. As this later is the concerned field in this study, teaching and learning English, as a second or foreign language is important (ESL/EFL). Technology integration in the ESL/EFL classroom is improving every day and this not only for students, but also for teachers with many benefits such as phone learning apps, online learning platforms and websites, online assessment tools, dictionaries, and many resources to help English teachers tackle different challenges in the classroom and develop successful teaching materials for their courses. It can help strengthen and nurture relationships between educators and students, reshape the approach to learning and collaboration, close long-standing gaps in equity and accessibility, and tailor the learning experience to the needs of all learners.

The result from the combination of technology and education is the birth of e learning. The cost of traditional face-to-face learning has been around for centuries. In this respect, technology provides an instant availability to information; this is why its presence in the classroom is so crucial. Technology has changed even the role of teachers and students; the teacher is the primary source of knowledge in a classroom setting and learners passively receives information. This model of the teacher as "the sage on the stage" has been in education for a long time ago, this has shifted from teacher-centered to student-centered. It is highly recommended that educational institutions should be aware of the rapid changes all over the world and prepare students to deal with it.

In this regard, combining traditional learning with online learning paves the way for a new approach to emerge, which is "blended learning". In this sense, blended learning aims at combining the benefits of in-classroom learning and online environments. The term blended learning generally refers to the practice of merging online and face-to-face learning experiences in teaching. For example, in a blended learning program, students can take an instructor-led course in a traditional classroom

while completing the online portion of the course independently outside of the classroom. . In this case, face-to-face time can be supplemented by an online learning experience, where students learn online the same topics as face-to-face classrooms.

In today's globalized world, the most commonly spoken language is English. It is the lingua franca common language for communication, economy, and education. In learning English, students need to master the four language skills. Teachers should be aware of how to teach these skills carefully and effectively, which are: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Speaking is regarded as the most interactive skill. Therefore, learning to speak becomes the greatest interest of foreign language learners. As English is widely used all over the world, learners need to acquire the communication skill while teachers are supposed to understand the problems of the ELLs (English Language Learners) and try to implement various teaching strategies in order to help and push students to improve their speaking ability. Based on this consideration, students need more time and opportunities to practice speaking both inside and outside the class.

Within this content, one of the main reasons for using a blended approach is to increase student motivation and encourage a more active rather than passive approach to learning, which is especially difficult in large classes. Given the overcrowding of courses at Algerian universities, one has to admit that it is difficult to create a stimulating environment that encourages students to actively study and enhance their speaking abilities. Additionally, teachers still opt for the traditional methods in teaching because of the challenges and limitations that they face when trying to integrate technology. In this problematic situation, blended learning seems to be a solution to be tested.

Thus, this research is an attempt to investigate the effect of blended learning on EFL learners' speaking ability. The current study might be significant for EFL teachers along with students as it provide teachers with new and innovative teaching methods that help them, and it facilitate the process of learning for students. This study aims at investigating whether blended learning has a positive or negative effect on learners' speaking ability, also identifying students weaknesses while speaking EL and exploring students and teachers' perception about the use of blended learning in EFL classes.

Then, on the basis of that investigation, some solutions will be suggested to help learners overcome some speaking difficulties.

Consequently, the researcher strives to answer the following research questions:

- Q1: Does blended learning offer students more opportunities to practice speaking inside and outside the classroom?
- Q2: Does blended learning enhance EFL learner's speaking ability?

Based on the above listed questions, it is hypothesized that:

- Blended learning can provide learners with more opportunities to practice speaking inside and outside the classroom.
- Blended learning can enhance EFL learner's speaking ability.

In fact, the eagerness to reach the previously set objectives drive the researcher to conduct an exploratory case study research study dealing with third year LMD students at University of Tlemcen. This case study is based on a mixed method approach to gather both qualitative and quantitative analysis relying on two research instruments: a questionnaire for students and interview for teachers.

This research paper comprises two chapters, a theoretical and practical one. The first chapter which is considered as the Literature review shed light on the importance of speaking skill and it shows how blended learning can help learners enhance their oral skills, it investigate speaking difficulties and outlines the characteristics of a good speaker. Besides that, it deals with the role of technology in teaching English generally and speaking skill particularly. The second section gives an overview about blended learning, its definition, components, History and background, the role of teachers and learners in blended learning, advantages, and disadvantages. Moreover, it discusses synchronous and asynchronous learning.

General Introduction

The second chapter is considered as the practical part, which investigates in a practical way the effect of blended learning on enhancing EFL learners' speaking ability.

It discusses the research design including type and nature of research, sample and research tools. The current study attempts to explore students and teachers' perceptions about the blended learning use. For the sake of gathering data, a questionnaire and interview was administered to third year students and their teachers of oral expression and it discusses the main findings to suggest some solutions.

To sum up, the implementations of new teaching methods along with educational technologies is very beneficial to the educational system.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

The current chapter is concerned with literature review; it provides an overview about blended learning use and its effect on EFL students' speaking ability. It is divided into two sections: the first one is devoted to speaking while the second is about blended learning. The first section begins with showing the importance of speaking, besides that, how blended learning helps learners practice more and improve their oral communication skills. Then, it deals with speaking difficulties in foreign language learning and it outlines the characteristics of a good speaker. Additionally, this section shed light on the fundamental role that technology and modern technologies play to facilitate the teaching of speaking skill.

One the other hand, the second section is allocated to "blended learning", it highlights the various definitions provided by different scholars, it covers BL components. Moreover, it gives an overview about the history and background of BL, pre-requisite, advantages and disadvantages of BL, it also mentions the role of teachers and learners. Furthermore, it discusses synchronous and asynchronous types of learning.

1.2 The Importance of Speaking

Language is used as a tool for communication, perfect communication is not possible for people without using a language, and people use it in a variety of situations. Moreover, they can not achieve their goals without using proper language to communicate. Speaking is deemed to be the most significant skill in learning a foreign or second language. Good communicators have better chances of success, they are able to influence people, and provide valued feedback. Speaking skills are important for career success, but certainly not limited to one's professional aspirations, they can enhance one's personal life. The importance of speech is irrefutable. The process of learning a language remains incomplete without mastering

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and shaping the spoken language. Researchers observed that developing other skills would be relatively easy if based on spoken language. In the 21st century, various technology advancements are developed to teach speaking skill in a creative way. In this respect, blended learning will help learners to practice more their speaking by providing them the resources and materials that support the speaking activities in particular.

1.3 Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning:

Speaking is the active use of language to express meanings and share ideas; however, it is regarded as a complex skill that is unique to human. From another side, English language is a highly significant subject for learners whose English is not their native language. For interacting with their teachers or their mates, they have to learn, understand and speak English language. For communicating and sharing opinions with people from other regions who speak different languages, English is an alternative language to communicate with them.

In every country, students are compelled to study and learn English language. For people who want to travel for studying or for other reasons, they have to understand and speak English so that they can survive in foreign countries. In Algeria, students study and learn English from middle school to the higher-level university almost 12 years of learning and studying English, but after 12 years of education and especially when they reach university level students are not able to speak English fluently. Through this study, the researcher is seeking to discuss and mention these problems that EFL learners may encounter.

The problems faced by learners themselves are given below:

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1.3.1 Grammar Mistakes while Speaking

Learning English grammar seems to be very difficult for EFL students. When speaking English language, students make grammar mistakes. Generally, students face

difficulties in tenses, they do not know when to put the right tense sometimes they want to speak in the present tense but they use the past instead of the present tense, they cannot distinguish between when to use the past, present and future tenses.

1.3.2 Lack of Confidence

It is one of the factors which influence students' performance and prevents them from speaking fluently, they are not confident about themselves, they take into account what other people think and may say about them when they express themselves. They learn English language but they did not know how to speak it, this is a major problem, which most learners struggle every day. The self-confidence and beliefs of students are largely depending on teachers. Instructors play a highly important role in supporting their learners to speak English language in public. If students are stressed about making mistakes, instructors have to teach them that no one can be born ideally, all humans learn from their mistakes and by them, they improve themselves. Therefore, self-confidence in speaking English is very necessary to build.

1.3.3 Shyness in Speaking English Language

Shyness is also one of the biggest problems, which EFL learners encounter, students feel themselves block when they speak EL.

By shyness, they are incapable to speak what comes to their minds and what they want to express, it makes them not confident of themselves and unable to remember grammar rules and correct vocabulary. The role of teachers lies in supporting and motivating their students to be self-confidence and trust in their capacities. Instead of learning from books, the teachers have to focus on oral communication in learning English. Oral communication allows learners to easily learn and easily communicate.

1.3.4 Lack of Speaking opportunities and lack of practice

In an EFL classroom, many reasonable problems occur that may push teachers to search for more applicable ways and solutions to remedy them. Teaching speaking is regarded as one of the challenging tasks as teachers need more time and efforts to give their students more opportunities and manage the group class to speak. In this line of thought, speaking is seen as the most complex skill that needs a preference in any foreign language setting, however, what reduce chances to speak is the lack of speaking opportunities in classroom; this is why teachers use online learning to enhance the traditional learning. In this case, students need more time to practice especially in the overcrowded classes. To this end, teachers are in a continuing search for innovative and advanced teaching materials that yields them to better chances, spaces, and sources to teach speaking skill.

Students should not rely on classroom activities, they have to practice their speaking at home using applications that allow them to speak and communicate with native speakers.

1.3.5. Problems Related to Pronunciation and Lack of Motivation:

Pronunciation plays a key role and significant element in learning English language. Foreign words seems to be different in EFL learners' mouths because they do not exist in their native language, but this problem most of learners face it in the beginning of the learning process, later on when they start practicing and speaking they may see a big difference. According to the AMEP, research Central 2002: "learners with good pronunciation in English are more likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas. Whereas learners whose pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect, such learners may avoid speaking in English and this experience social isolation, employment difficulties and limited opportunities"(p. 1) To put it clear, good pronunciation is considered to be more significant than students' background knowledge about grammar and vocabulary . In this respect, what is more important is how a person pronounce words correctly, rather than how perfect his grammar is.

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Motivation plays a crucial role in learning how to speak, lack of motivation leads to lack of interest. In this sense, motivation is an integral part of learning, it encourages learners to do things for specific goals. When discussing a topic inside the classroom almost all learners prefer to keep silent while others might say " I have no idea" or " no comment" when the teacher asked them to participate in the classroom, these expressions are due to the lack of motivation in expressing themselves in the chosen topic. Harmer (2001) classify two distinct types of motivation: extrinsic motivation which is caused by a number of outside factors, while intrinsic motivation by contrast comes from within the individual. It is mentioned that motivation is a key factor in producing successful communication; learners with strong motivation could effectively improve their learning and get better grades.

1.4 Characteristics of a Good Speaker

Speaking activities can give students great confidence and under the guidance of a satisfying and sensitive teacher, they can be encouraged to do further research. A good speech can and should be very motivating, includes many speaking tasks (Role-play, discussion, problem solving, etc.) Mastering the art of speaking is regarded as one of the significant factors of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured by the ability to do so. However, sometimes spoken language is easy to perform, but in some cases there are situations where it is difficult, and when students want to speak fluently, sometimes they have a hard time doing it. In order to fulfill effective speaking, they must meet some characteristics of successful speakers such as:

1- The learner speaks a lot, as much as possible this activity is allowed to speak for the learner. This may be obvious, but usually most of the time is interrupted by pauses.

2- The participant is straight. A Monitor for active participants does not conduct class discussions. Everyone has their own say and contributions are fairly even.

3- Motivation is high. The learner enjoys talking because they are interested in the topic and have a new perspective on it, or they want to contribute to accomplishing mission goals.

4- The language is at an acceptable level. Learners express themselves in terms that are relevant and understandable at other levels.

1.5 Technology in Teaching Speaking Skill

It is very important to talk about the implementation of technology in education. Technology in language teaching is not new; it has been around for decades, exist In the 1980s, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) provided language teachers and Learners with real input using CD-ROMs to improve their level. However, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) become more prevalent, CALL has evolved from using computer programs to using the Internet Web-based tool. The term TELL (Technology-Enhanced Language Learning) appears in The 1990s, Responding to the Growing Opportunities Offered by the internet and communications technology. David Warlick (2016) states that technology is needed in every classroom and in every student and teacher's hand because it is the pen and paper of this time and it is the lens through which people experience much of the world.

1.5.1 Modern Technologies used in Education

With the rapid development of the 21st century, various innovative technologies are emerging to teach English in the classroom. The knowledge base has rapidly tripled in such a short period. To counter this trend, instructors need to teach English to students using modern technology. Technology can inspire and immerse learners in a variety of scenarios. Technology enables learners to act autonomously, opportunities for autonomous interaction, privacy, and a safe environment to correct mistakes and provide concrete feedback. Links are provided to find explanations, additional help, and references that further enhance the value of the technology. Modern technology can relax students' minds, allowing them to focus on the subject at hand rather than tackling difficult tasks. Modern technology available to English teachers helps them

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improve their learners speaking and experience new technology tools are mentioned below:

1.5.1.1 Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

The teaching role of computers and its role in learning a second language is highly important. Teachers can use the latest potential to transform students from passive recipients to active participants. CALL is defined as search and research for the application of computer in language teaching. Spoken language is a language skill that makes more use of CALL as a technique related to audio advancement applications that can be video, audio, recording or live streaming. Learners have the opportunity to exchange ideas with other learners combined with other teaching methods, it provides a great way to support language learning.

1.5.1.2. Video Conference

Video conferencing is a method that allows one to access speeches of other people in other parts of the world. This is a live relay mainly used to watch programs taught by foreign professors. Overall, it is very helpful for students to understand what is going on in this world and lively listen to the speeches of the best minds. Most striking in the point of video conferencing is that students can immediately ask questions and get their answers right away. Video library is a fast and most important modern world. This is great for students who are missing something interesting like meetings. During this process, the instructor's teaching is recorded and made available to the students. Learners can watch the tapes at their leisure. Advantages of this method is that students can repeat it if necessary. Teachers can create a shared experience for all students that sparks interest and stimulates imagination, as it is also a motivational tool in the classroom. In addition, it promotes the development of critical thinking skills, which can also improve students' language skills. Teaching with video reinforces speeches with concrete images, providing a rich emotional picture that forms the basis for learning. Methods become usable when materials are used in a coherent way that makes learning durable. They bring the outside world into the classroom, enabling trainers to teach effectively

1.5.1.3 Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)

Thanks to TELL, learners can apply their knowledge, and they can foster their language. TELL encompasses the use of technology on the process of teaching and learning a second language, which is also called the L2. It deals with the use of computers as a technological advancement to display multimedia as a way to complement a teaching method.

TELL supports (CMC) or Computer Mediated Communication. CMC is considered as being very useful for helping students speak foreign languages. Technology-Enhanced Language Learning uses computer technology including software, hardware and the internet to enhance the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, TELL allows learners to practice more English speaking skills. It enables them to learn all features of English such as vocabulary, grammar, expression and conversation. Also, improve their English communication skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

1.5.1.4. Mobile Asses Language Learning (MALL)

This is a way of using a mobile device for the teaching process. It let learners learn anytime, anywhere. Since individuals have quick access to mobile devices with the development of wireless and mobile technology, the use of mobile learning has become a reality. First, learning a language with a mobile phone is limited to understanding the meaning or pronunciation of words. However, current multimedia mobiles make Language Learning easier to teach languages with mobile smart.. Mobile phones have the ability to provide and store video and audio content that enhances language learner's listening and speaking skills.

Develop speaking skills through MALL Smartphones push traditional advancements listen and respond to CDs systems for cognitive self-learning. MALL provides the following facilities to encourage speaking skill.

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- Students can act and listen to the context again recording.
- Students can record their own spoken words and send them to the teacher for correction.
- They can rehearse as often as they want.
- Repeat until they feel comfortable to learn.

1.6 Definition of Blended Learning

Defining the concept of blended learning has been the topic of much discussion and debate by those searching it. In order to define the concept of "blended learning", it is best to define first the verb "to blend". According to the oxford dictionary, 'to blend' means mixing or combining things, but most importantly combining different degrees of the same subject to obtain a combination with a certain characteristic or type. Therefore, blended learning does not imply a random combination of teaching tools and methods. Instead, a balance must be struck between its various components to achieve a balanced teaching experience. This definition can be a bit confusing, since almost any teaching experience, even those based on traditional methods, can be the result of a mix of teaching tools and strategies.

An example is a class that collects certain aspects of auditory language and communication methods. According to Graham, it is an instruction that combines FTF and an online learning model. Again, this definition does not specify which patterns to use or how to combine them in a way that is unique to BL as a new method.

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This is particularly mysterious because most teachers use computer-Assisted-language-learning (CALL). This has led some researchers, such as Williams to say, “the term BL is not new, but it's been around since people started thinking about teaching”.

Oliver and trigwell come to an end that blended learning simply involves two or more diverse things that after they can be blended. There are two blended learning definitions, which are most repeatedly quoted in the literature. These definitions are suggested by Graham (2006), Garrison and Kanuka (2004). Graham (2006) defines the term blended learning as follows: "Blended learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction" (p. 96). Furthermore, Garrison and Kanuka (2004) state that blended learning is "the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences" (p. 96).

Thus, one can wind up that the key ingredients of blended learning are traditional and online instruction or learning. In this vein, by combining these two modes of learning now a new way of thinking emerged to facilitate learning language courses are called 'blended', 'hybrid' or 'mixed' learning. This combination of online activities and FtF courses is the right philosophy of blended learning approach. To this end, one can conclude that BL offers the best of both FtF and online learning. BL provides appropriate compensation between online instruction that provides interactive, technology-based learning, personal pace and privacy for ongoing student engagement, and teacher-led instruction for a personalized learning experience.

According to Stacey and Gerbic (2007): “students learning experience and performance can be improved when online resources are integrated with traditional forms of course delivery such as face-to-face lectures and tutorials”.

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Based on this consideration, the main reason for this method gains momentum due to the fact that educators use online learning not to completely replace traditional FtF classroom teaching, but to supplement or overcome some of its shortcomings.

Blended learning comes in several forms. It can include PowerPoint slides from lectures and online additional assignments after face-to-face classes. Flipped classrooms can be incorporated into blended learning, where lectures are recorded and delivered online, and class time is used for discussion and questioning videos. Examples of blended learning students work in face-to-face groups in the classroom then go home to analyze the work and submit a video as an assessment form; take an online course and receive personal tutoring between online classes. Blended or hybrid learning is a chic but relatively new tool that not all professors use in the same way. However, trends have emerged. For example, professors at most co-educational schools use some version of the course management system application to connect with students online besides other tools such as: Google Classroom, YouTube, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Moodle, Blackboard

1.7 Blended Learning Components

Two key methods are regarded as the main components of BL, which are FTF learning or what is called as traditional classroom, and online learning comprising all digital devices in connection to the internet.

1.7.1. Face-to-face (FTF) Classroom Learning Definition

It introduces a kind of traditional learning instructors, which are the main source of knowledge (the "sage-on the-stage) and help learners and teachers to know each other, learners can ask teachers about their queries and share their ideas with their instructors and students directly, this creates a better learning environment which involves direct interaction between student-teacher and student-student. Traditional or face-to-face learning is the most common and the main method that almost all teachers over the world use it. That is, the instructor explains the lesson and learners should take notes and write down their courses.

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1.7.2 Online Learning

It is learning that takes place over the internet; methods of delivering educational material and courses are over the internet, it is often known as "e-learning". Yet, online learning is just one types of distance learning. Students learn in a virtual environment such as Google classroom, zoom, Microsoft teams and others. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. In this type of learning, the teacher is considered as a mentor and it is more learner-centered approach.

Table1.1: Examples of Blended Learning

Activity	Face-to-Face instruction	To blend it
Group project	-In a classroom setting, learners meet and discuss their projects to collaborate.	-In order to design the project, learners meet in virtual sites, online communities to plan their works and structure it. Besides that, they use file sharing services (Google docs, Google forms) to cooperate and engage on the project.
The practice of foreign languages in pairs or groups.	- The teacher divides learners into pairs or groups and then he introduces activities that allow them to practice the target language	Improving classroom discussions by additional practice using online services such as voice chat. Teachers can send recorded videos and ask learners to listen and repeat.

1.8 The history and Background of Blended Learning

BL is a developmental process over time and learning. However, Pappas (2015) claims that the first implementation of this method was in the workplace and industry. That is when companies invented video network as a training tool for new employees. He also reported that from the 1970s to the 1980s this switch was from industry to higher education. Gradually became so utilized in the 1980s and 1990s starting employing and developing CD-ROMs to support their teaching and deliver by the use of videos and sound properties. This e-learning strategy makes the process easier just as the role of teachers in traditional instruction in early 1998, interest shifted dramatically from CD-ROMs to create a website (Pappas, 2015). Students can find a variety of materials on the Internet without having to wait for a CD. They can be easily reached with one click. Finally, the authors claim that this e-learning was mixed with FTF from 2000 to the present learning which has led to the emergence of a new teaching method known as “blended learning”. In 2006, the term became more concrete with the publication of the first handbook of Blended Learning by Bonk and Graham.

Blended education is a major concern in education, but recently this field gain greater attention especially after COVID-19 outbreak, forcing people to stay at home for longer periods prevented them from attending in-person classes. Many researchers have looked into blended education to facilitate the integration of this modern tool, the process of learning and teaching. In their study, Debbache and Zidoune (2018) found that blended instruction intensified through a given course could improve student performance when acquiring a new course language. Teachers who participated in the study also found that BL facilitated and helped teaching respond quickly to student needs. Students claimed that it provides a growing environment. Furthermore, blended education is as important for the development of knowledge and skills as face-to-face learning (Alonso, Genoveva & Jose (2005). Blended learning is an area of international interest and previous research has examined teachers and student's perceptions, which indicated that their attitudes were optimistic and their perceptions of BL were positive (Drysdale et al, 2013; Shehab 2007). In her experimental study, Shehab (2007) attempted to examine students' perceptions of mixed Learning, the

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results are positive. Finally, the students were highly motivated and had positive feelings about this learning experience.

Previous research in the Algerian context focused on teachers and students at the university level, however, very few people study BL at the secondary or primary level (Berba, 2020; Gaisabi, 2021). It is worth mentioning that when researching blended education, most of the research seems to focus on the availability of equipment and the curriculum to follow, and very little attention is paid to teacher training in ICT. Fatiha Guessabi (2021) led a study titled : “Flipped Classroom in Higher Education in Algeria” In the Time of COVID19 Challenges and obstacls " at Bechar University, results indicated that the majority of teachers do not have sufficient knowledge about the use of ICT, and if they do, they do not have enough technical equipment to cover the entire sector.

This research paper seeks to understand how blended learning model can improve students' speaking ability, and examine students and teacher's perception about the use of BL. Many studies revealed that the combination of traditional classroom and online learning help students solve problems learning to speak.

1.9 Prerequisites of Blended Learning

Implementing BL is a difficult task, which requires certain major preparations in all aspects of teaching process; the following are the key requirement for implementing a successful blended learning.

1.9.1 Well-Trained Teachers

Though BL is learner-centered approach but the role of the teacher as a guide cannot be denied. Teachers should be well informed about the concept of blended learning and fully trained and proficient to blend both of approaches, traditional and technological. They should be qualified to expand content in digital form so that

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students find it available online. They should be acquainted with internet browsing and internet terminology, they should be knowledgeable about all sites that can be

beneficial and useful by students, teacher should know how to make use of blogs, YouTube facility, software like Google talk and others for conferences and social networking sites for educational aims.

1.9.2 Teachers with Scientific Attitude

Scientific attitudes are very significant for teachers, they are the most essential outcomes of science teaching, and they should be optimistic and good observers. Through it certain social ethics can be developed such as honesty, objectivity, rationality and making judgment based on dependable information, these values will be transformed from teachers to students to deal positively with obstacles and failures so that they would have problem solving skills.

1.9.3 Teachers with Wider Outlook and Positive Approach towards Change

As it is required in the success of any creative idea or method, blended learning also demand teachers who have a boarder perspective and should be resilient, they should be ready to manage and accept the changes as well as prepare students so that they can deal with these changes.

1.9.4 Flexibility in the System

Flexible system permit learners to move within and across education, training and employment, it allows instructors to respond to distinct learner abilities needs and interests. The system should be flexible, timetable flexible, all this is essential for implementing BL.

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1.10 Advantages and Disadvantages of Blended Learning

Blended learning combines modern learning technologies with traditional learning methods. Like any learning method, blended learning comes with unique benefits and drawbacks that are important to consider when adopting a blended learning approach.

1.10.1 *Advantages of Blended Learning:*

The modern classroom is slowly taking a new approach to imparting wisdom and knowledge to the next generation. Traditional classroom teaching techniques are giving way to a new blended learning system. Teachers who embrace this new way of teaching can easily reap the benefits when their old methods are improved using new technologies. Overall, the student will benefit from this unique academic approach. First, blended learning offers students the opportunity to learn independently as technologies allow learners to engage the material at their own time and place. This helps reach a classroom that balance between quick and slow learners. This helps learning to promote, it also reduces stress and boost student satisfaction.

Second, another remarkable benefit is that blended learning makes traditional learning more valuable; when learners complete the online materials and assignments on their own and they prepare the lecture before class, they come to study with a previous knowledge, they participate and interact with the teacher and their mates so that they will not just sit as passive learners. This makes learning more active, which is one of the main benefits of blended learning.

Third, blended learning introduces new technologies as various innovative tools continue to emerge to teach English in the classroom. Technology can excite learners and immerse them in a variety of scenarios. Technology enables learners to engage autonomous action, privacy, and a safe environment for correcting mistakes and giving specific feedback. Blended learning also gives learners access to experience new software and hardware. Discovering new technologies, how to use them can prepare learners for future endeavors.

Furthermore, Instead of, or additionally to the use of papers and tests, teachers can assess their learners' progress in different and new ways:

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IN CLASSROOM: learners can listen to tape recordings uttered by native speakers then the teacher assess for example their pronunciation skills.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM: teachers ask their learners to write essays and send them via mails or teams, etc. The use of digital sources will synthesize and enhance students' understanding of content.

Finally, students and teachers become more engaged with one another as it offers learners the opportunity to connect and interact with their teachers and instructors, they can connect via mails, Microsoft Teams or on message boards. Both of them will benefit from this shift in relationship. Teachers can stay updated of students' progress, while learners can ask more questions and obtain deeper knowledge. Learning environment that integrates BL obviously requires learners to exhibit more autonomy, self-regulation and personalized education.

The advantages listed above all end up to one considerable conclusion: blended learning is more efficient option than either in person or online learning alone; it is more effective for teachers, more dynamic for learners and more satisfying to both.

1.10.2. Disadvantages of Blended Learning:

To start first with Technical challenges; a critical issue is access to network infrastructure. BL model often demand access to internet outside the classroom, not every learner will have equal access to the resources, which can make e-learning complex or even possible. Second, teachers may worry about their learners motivation levels while switching to blended learning approach, as there is less supervision as compared to face-to-face learning. While self-directed learning can be beneficial, learners who study materials online may not be able to find solutions on their own. Moreover, there are a number of unreliable online sources, which lead to falsehoods and misconceptions. Besides that, having digital educational materials may cause more plagiarizing from online resources, such as bias, distortion.

1.11 The Role of Teachers and Learners in Blended Learning

Blended learning converts the role of teachers from knowledge brokers to guidors and mentors. This transformation does not mean that teachers play a passive or less important role in student education; students still need the guidance of their teachers in

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learning how to be self-director and managing their time in the learning process. In both online and in-classroom learning student-centered should be promoted and learners must be responsible on their own learning by making them knowledge makers rather than consumers of it . In this respect, Sharma (2019) states that : ‘ In the traditional method, the teacher is the provider of knowledge. Blended learning, positions the students as an active pursuer of knowledge” (p.326)

Conversely, with blended learning, teachers can have a deeper impact on student learning. Traditionally, classroom teaching has mainly been teacher-driven, top-down, one-size-fits-all, slightly different, but with BL, now it is more student-centered, bottom-up, and customized differentiation is the main feature. This new learning dynamic is due to the improved role of technology that plays in classroom.

1.11.1. The role of Teachers in Blended Learning

Sharma (2019) lists the different roles teachers play in BL environment in which he/she acts as follows:

1.11.1.1. Classroom Planner and Content Experts

In blended classes, teachers are required to be able to plan for a long-term curriculum and instruction, that is to say, curriculum planning teaching strategies must have carefully curated content resources ; designed by instructors to teach the available subjects perfectly. In this vein, teachers are required to create appropriate content and master the art of using it in-classroom and online settings. According to Sharma (2019) the teacher role is to “render that content in different formats such as video, tutorials, e-books, online lectures, podcasts and others, so as to capture the learning style of diverse students in their classrooms” (p. 326). This is why, it is important for teachers as educators to have a strong background on how students learn differently, along with teaching methods and techniques that work best for them.

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1.11.1.2. Coach and Tutor

Coaching and tutoring simply refers to the teacher's role in supporting student achieve specific goals and are guided to reach their full potential. According to Sharma (2019), "a teacher needs to encourage students and celebrate their successes", this is mainly related to the importance of the psychological encouragement that teachers give to their students, which fundamentally affects their students' motivation to succeed and to improve their performance day by day.

1.11.1.3. Facilitator

In BL environment, the primary role of the teacher is to facilitate access to knowledge and help students understand the information provided in the course. In this regard, teachers need to use different strategies to support active learners in the classroom and keep them motivated and engaged; this will essentially make the acquisition information and knowledge simpler and smoother.

1.11.1.4. An Evaluator

A teacher as an evaluator should be able to assess and provide students with feedback. Blended learning encourages teacher interaction with individual students to deepen and strengthen student/teacher relationships. Based on this point of view, the teacher will be closer to his/her students and help them identify their challenges that after refer to 'learner disability'. To this end, since learners and teachers are essential actors in the learning process, their role is very important for a successful learning and teaching because their work complements each other. That is not only in traditional settings, but also in blended learning environments, in addition they have specific functions for effective use.

1.11.2. The Role of Learners in Blended Learning

Few people in the past would disagree in traditional courses that students are usually only recipients. Later, researchers have shown that their function in co-ed classrooms has been completely altered. Stracke (2007, p. 1, quoted in Marsh, 2012) claim: “The teaching rationale behind the BLL [Blended Language Learning] is the desire to promote higher level learning independence in Teaching and Learning a Second/Foreign Language” (p. 12). BL supports student-centered learning, taking into account certain elements (Marsh, 2012). The first element, management and plan independent study time, which means that an online learning environment gives students the freedom to study when and where they want. It also provides complete flexibility in choosing a time not bound by a fixed class time. Therefore, this will push them to work independently and take responsibility for their own decisions. In addition, another factor that researchers believe is important in individual learning is to collaborate with other students using different online platforms, to examine and self-correct many online platforms. Learning materials are automatically "marked". Therefore, students immediately get "Scores"; they correct themselves through a correction sheet provided or direct scores no teacher feedback and evaluation.

1.12 Blended Learning Basics: Using Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

1.12.1 Synchronous Learning

Synchronicity means doing something simultaneously. Same thing in learning, synchronous learning refers to group of students engaging with class materials at the same time. It is also called real-time learning; students can meet in person at the same place. When people think of traditional teaching in a school or classroom, this is synchronous learning. Today, with technology like Zoom, Live webinars and video conferencing, students can engage in real-time with their teachers and classmates as if they were all in-person in the classroom. In synchronous virtual learners can meet

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remotely at well-ordered time, just like in traditional classes. Students take part from their remote location;

they can interact from their computer or devices with the rest of the class, using their webcams and microphones. When students struggle to understand a course content, synchronous learning offers them the opportunity to ask questions and get instant answers. Teachers may choose synchronous delivery over asynchronous as this format asserts conversational language and direct interaction, especially if the course content requires immediate feedback and discussion.

1.12.2 Asynchronous Learning

If synchronous learning happens at the real time, then asynchronous is the opposite. Teachers and learners are not involved in the learning process at the same time ; there is no real interaction. Asynchronous courses are already made and available on internet in several formats and platforms. It give learners the flexibility to study at their own pace, although there is structured deadlines for the assignments and lectures, students are free to interact with instructors, materials and peers, it is not necessary to be in the same location or at a regular time as in synchronous courses. This type of e-learning is more learner-centered approach. Although asynchronous learning does not happen in real time, it still offers an opportunity for feedback ; students can ask questions and exchange ideas even though they may not get an instant response.

Some of the materials used in asynchronous courses are digital lessons, PDFs, pre-recorded video lectures and online forums. In this type of online learning, teachers post video lectures or audio files on Teams, Facebook, etc. Then, students are asked to listen or watch the pre-recorded lectures and instructors post online quizzes on the course content to ensure that students reviewed the courses.

1.13 Conclusion

The literature review discussed the theoretical aspects about speaking skill and blended learning, it also showed the role of technology to teach speaking and that instructors have a big role in gaining students' self confidence.

The first chapter of this research paper showed that the combination of e learning with face-to-face learning from 2000 led to the emergence of a new teaching method known as "blended learning". Later in 2006, the term became more concrete with the publication of the first handbook of blended learning by Bonk and Graham. However, it also revealed that the first implementation of this method was in workplace and industry. Furthermore, this chapter shed light on the big role that teachers should play as facilitators and guidors. It showed that blended learning is an effective way to allow learners learn at their own pace and most teachers prefer synchronous over asynchronous learning as it assert direct interaction and immediate feedback.

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2.1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to describe the practical part of the study, which aims at investigating the role of blended learning on enhancing EFL learners speaking ability at university of Abou Bakr Belkaid Tlemcen. It comprises two sections, the first one deals with research design that involve the type of research, research approach, research instrument and sample population. The second section analyses and discusses the results obtained from the questionnaire and interview. At the end, it presents an overall analysis of the results and findings for the aim of answering the research questions and examining the proposed hypotheses.

2.2. Research Design

Also known as, research outline, blue print or plan. It is the plan and strategy of investigation for answering research question. A well-planned study design helps ensure that the methods used by the researcher fit research aims, and that the researcher has used the right type of analysis for data. For this reason, a case study of third year EFL university students is carried out using a questionnaire and interview to oral teachers.

2.2.1. Type and Nature of Research

Research is a systematic work, it allow the researcher to find answers or solve problems. Research types are the different methods used to conduct research. Depending on the research goals, timeline, and purpose, different types of research are better suited to specific research.

The current research is a case study and it addressed the phenomenon in an exploratory way, it explores the perceptions of students and teachers about the use of blended learning. Case studies are designed to analyze a specific issue within a specific context, situation, or organization. While exploratory research aims at study and investigate a question that is not clearly defined. The aim is to understand better the emerging phenomena and/or to propose new theoretical perspectives to generate new ideas and hypotheses. It is used to define questions or test research procedures for further research work

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2.2.2. Research Approach

Research approach is the theoretical framework for a particular study. Some researchers draw it before starting work; any research approach is guided or highly dependent on a particular research approach.

The present study was conducted relying on both aspects of qualitative and quantitative. The integration of these two methods is known as the mixed-methods approach to validate results and avoid the weaknesses of both approaches. Tashakkori and Creswell (2007, p 04). The mixed method was also selected because it fits the nature of this study and the researcher believe that it can provide valid data through the diversity of its data collection methods. This combination has great potential for future research, as it combines benefits of both approaches while eliminating pitfalls and shortcomings inherent to every paradigm.

2.2.3. Sample Population

This investigation required the contribution of two main members in the teaching/ learning process; third year English students at University of TLEMCEN, and their teachers of Oral expression

2.2.3.1. Teachers' Profile

Six teachers, 4 females and two males of oral module from the department of English were involved in the interview and selected purposively. Instructors' feedback was highly recommended in this study to see what they think about blended learning approach, some of these teachers have "Doctorate degree" and others "Magister degree". Additionally, their teaching experience ranges from five to more than fifteen years and it takes place in the second semester of the Academic year of 2021/2022.

2.2.3.2. Students' Profile

The thirty-five participants were Third year EFL students at the department of English from university of TLEMCEN, they were selected randomly (probability

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sampling), which means that each student has equal chance of being chosen, this mainly refer to simple random sampling (SMS). Their age ranges from ninety to twenty-one years old. They have twelve years of schooling in which standard Arabic was the main language of instruction.

2.2.4. Research Tools

Data collection is an important process that should be based on a set of principles that determine the quality of the gathered information. This criterion include validity, reliability and practicality. Data collection involves the use of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are in the form of research instruments such as tests, questionnaires, interviews and observations.

This study relies on two research instruments, which are questionnaire and interview.

2.2.4.1. Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a set of written questions used to collect data. There are two types of questionnaire: Factual questionnaire: is to ask the respondents about facts while an inventory is a questionnaire asking the participants about attitudes and references, however, data about facts and opinions can be gathered within the same questionnaire. A questionnaire may include three types of questions: close-ended questions, open-ended questions and multiple-choice items. Actually, the close-ended and multiple-choice questions provide quantitative data, while open-ended questions supply qualitative information.

The questionnaire is distributed to third year students, in Abou Bakr Belkaid University of TLEMEN, since this is their last year studying oral expression module and they have experienced oral sessions almost three years. The aim of this questionnaire is to address student's difficulties in speaking skill and deduce the main strategies and

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activities that enhance their oral communication skills. Besides that, this questionnaire enables the researcher to recognize EFL student's attitudes towards the use of blended learning, as well as what they think about this recent approach. It contains twenty-nine questions which are divided into four sections. Range of questions, both open ended and close ended questions are used in this questionnaire, also multi choice questions are used which mainly leads to quantitative and qualitative approaches known as a mixed-method approach.

2.2.4.2 Teachers' interview

Interview is a conversation between a researcher and a participant about a certain topic, requiring the interviewer to establish and ask unambiguous questions, to which the interviewee is willing to respond. There are three main types of interview: **Structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview.**

A semi-structured interview was addressed to teachers of oral expression module in the University of TLEMCEN as a selective sampling. The aim of the interview is to ask questions about which difficulties students may encounter in oral sessions and how blending can help instructors in teaching. Also to suggest solutions that help learners improve their oral communication skills. The interview also highlights teacher's perceptions about blended learning use in EFL classes. The interview includes 10 questions about speaking and blended learning.

2.3 Data Analysis

2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained 29 questions, arranged into four sections. The first section dealt with "informant's profile", section two was entitled "background information", section three was devoted to "speaking skill" while the last section was allocated to "blended learning".

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Section One: Informants' Profile

The first section collected general information about students. It wa two questions. The first one aimed at collecting information about students' gender, the second question aimed at gathering information about students' level of English language.

Section Two: Background Information

This section was devoted to students' background. It covered two questions; the first was about asking students whether they have access to internet at home. The aim of this question was to ensure if learners face some challenges while studying online, the third question aimed at finding out what method they prefer for learning.

Section Three: Speaking Skill

This section was designed for the concept of speaking, it was made up of twelve questions; the first question aimed at identifying the skill that learners want to develop. Question 2 was about students' fear of making mistakes when speaking. Question 3 was about time devoted to speaking, whether was sufficient or not. Question 4 aimed at asking students about their level of speaking. Question 5 was about fluency and accuracy. Question 6 aimed at finding responses about difficulties that students may encounter during an oral session. Question 7 was about students' satisfaction about their level in oral communication. Question 8 aimed at exploring students' opinion about having extra hours for practice speaking with the use of technology. In question 9 students were asked where they feel comfortable to speak. Question 10 was about to know the resources that learners prefer most and help them practice speaking, also to point out more if any. Question 11 revealed students' assumption about the techniques used by teachers in oral classes and which of them helps more. While the last question was about asking students about the role of speaking inside the classroom and if it helps them in online sessions.

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Section Four: Blended Learning

The last section explored the use of blended learning to enhance students' speaking skill. It was composed of eleven questions; question 1 aimed at finding out students' perspectives about the integration of technology to the field of education. Question 2 was designed to discover the efficiency of using technological advancements to improve speaking and students were asked to explain how. Question 3 sought to know whether blended learning is an effective way that allow students learn at their own pace. In question four students were asked to say whether blended learning helps them practice speaking inside and outside classroom. Question 5 was a multi-choice question, which shed light on blended learning benefits for students. In Question six students were asked to identify whether they prefer to study oral module face-to-face, online or both. Question seven aimed at examining the connectivity between online sessions and in-class learning according to students. Question 8 was about whether the blending of lectures in classroom and power point on websites is helpful for students, and then students were asked to explain this. Question 9 required learners' opinions about whether online platforms are helpful for teachers to manage their teaching. Question 10 aimed at discovering the degree to which blended learning can be helpful for them. Question 11 aimed at exploring student's attitudes about the use of blended learning in improving speaking.

2.3.1.1 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Informants profile

Q1: How would you describe your gender?

Table 2.1: Students' Gender

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Male	08	22.9%
Female	27	77.1%

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The aim of this question was to determine student's gender; it indicated that the majority of informants were females representing 77.1% of the sample, while males' learners represented 22.9%. This prove that learning EL is a Female-targeted filed.

Q2: How is your level of English?

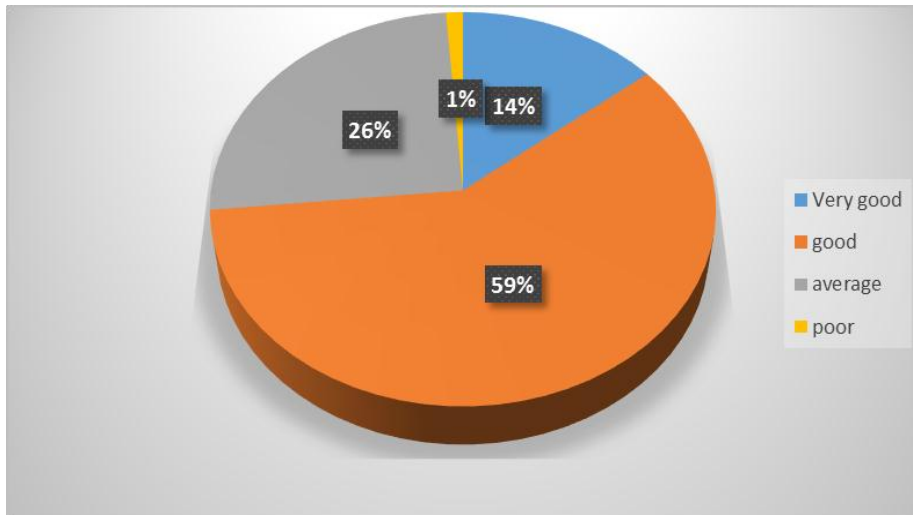


Figure 2.1 : Students' Level of English

The aim of this question was to find out students' level of English in learning at the University of Abou Bakr Belkaid Tlemcen. It revealed that 59% of the students represents have a good level, while 26% reported that their level in English is average, 14 % hold a very good level, the remaining percentage of learners 1% had a poor level of English.

Section Two: Background Information

Q01: Do you have access to internet at home?

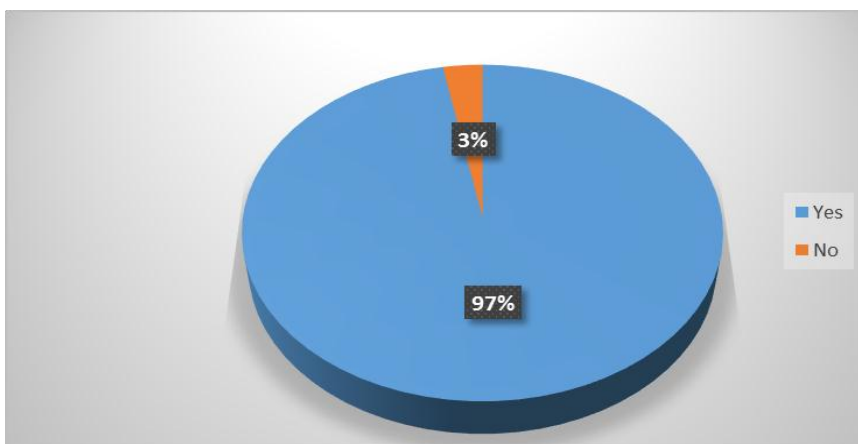


Figure 2.2: Internet Access in Students' Houses

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Learners' answer to this question revealed that the majority of students 34 participants (97%) have access to internet at their houses, while only 3% do not. The main aim of this question was to find out if students can study online and use different applications.

If yes, how do you find its quality?

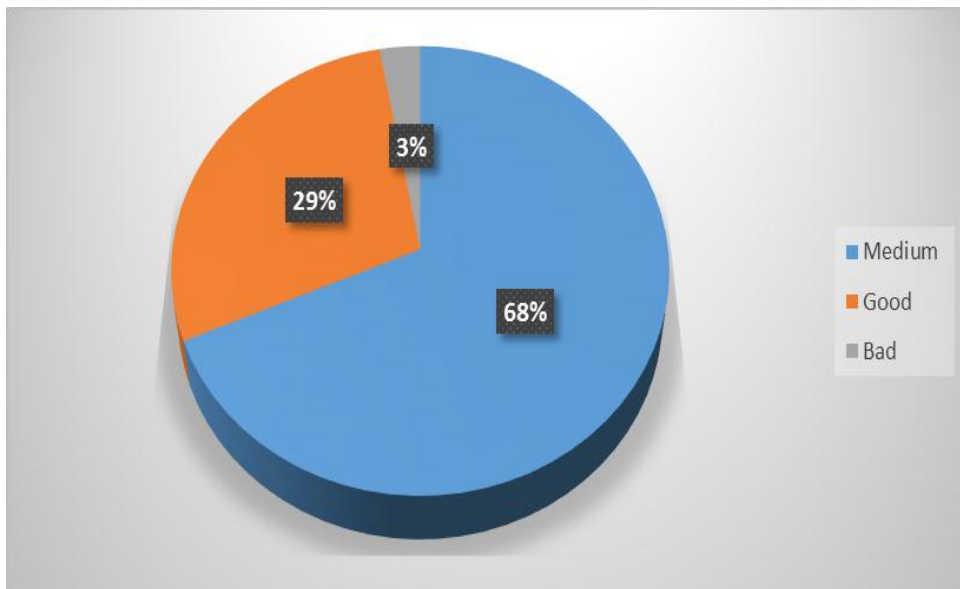


Figure2.3 : Internet Quality

In this sub question, the researcher intended to know about the quality of internet. The majority of students 68% stated that it is medium, while 29% declared that it is good, the residual percentage represented 3% for bad quality. The main aim of the above question was to know whether student find some challenges related to internet while studying online.

Q02: In your opinion, what is the best method for learning?

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Table 2.2 : Learners' Best Method for Learning

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Traditional learning	24	68.6%
E-learning	11	31.4%

The results showed that the majority of respondents 68.6% preferred traditional learning, while 31.4% declared that they prefer e learning. The aim of this question was to explore students' attitudes about the best method for learning.

Section Three: The Speaking Skill

Q01: Which of the following skills do you want to further develop?

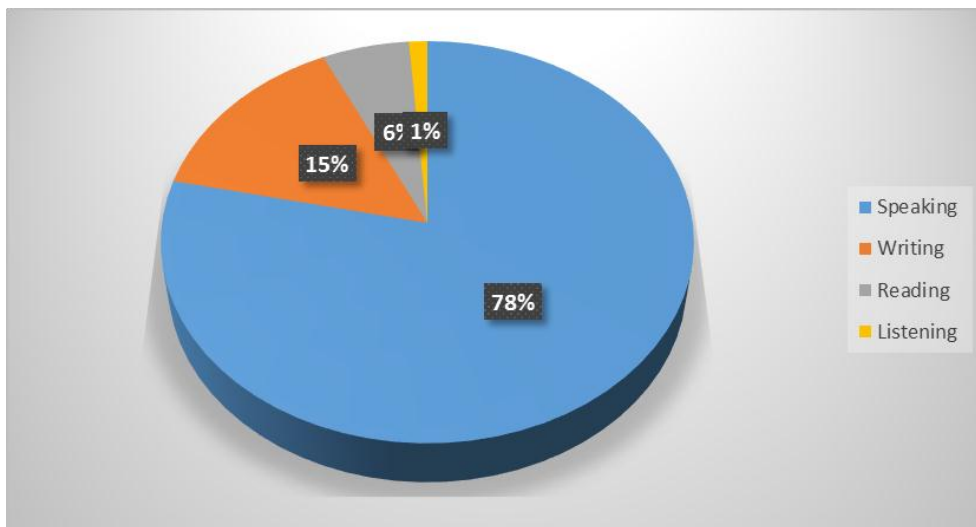


Figure 2.4: Students' Preferred Skill

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The aim of this question was to identify the skill that most of learners want to further enhance and to determine the number of students who want to develop speaking and work on their oral communication skills. One can say that speaking comes in the first place according to learners with 78%, while 15% preferred to develop writing skills, 6% preferred reading and 1% are into listening. In fact, speaking was preferred by an overwhelming majority of learners due to its substantial role in communication, teaching/learning process and perhaps because students like better express their ideas, opinions and share their feelings with others.

Q02 :Do you feel afraid from making mistakes during an oral session?

Table 2.3 : Fear of Speaking English for Students.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	24	68.6%
No	11	31.4%

The table above explained that 68% feel afraid when they speak, while 31.4% (11) do not struggle this. The aim of this question was to shed light on one of the big problems that learners face and to investigate if this aspect affect learners ability to speak.

Q03: Do you think that the hours devoted to practice speaking skill at university are sufficient?

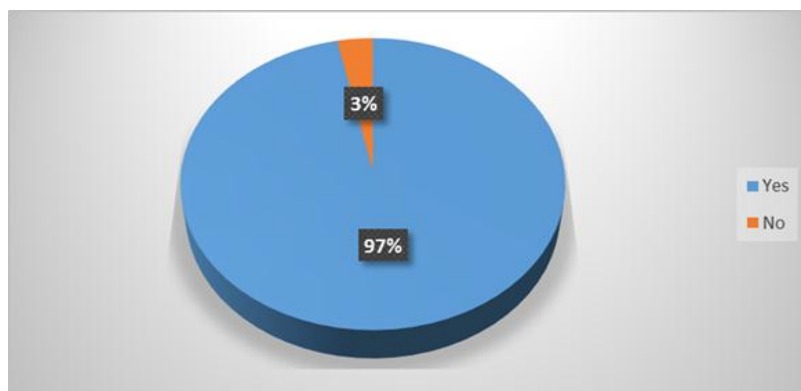


Figure 2.5: Time Devoted to Speaking at University

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This question was addressed to students in an attempt to know their desire to have more sessions to practice speaking at university. The majority of teachers moved to online instruction where they can gain more opportunities to teach speaking. Therefore, an overwhelming majority of learners 97% thought that the time devoted for speaking classes is not sufficient.

Q04: How do you describe your speaking ability?

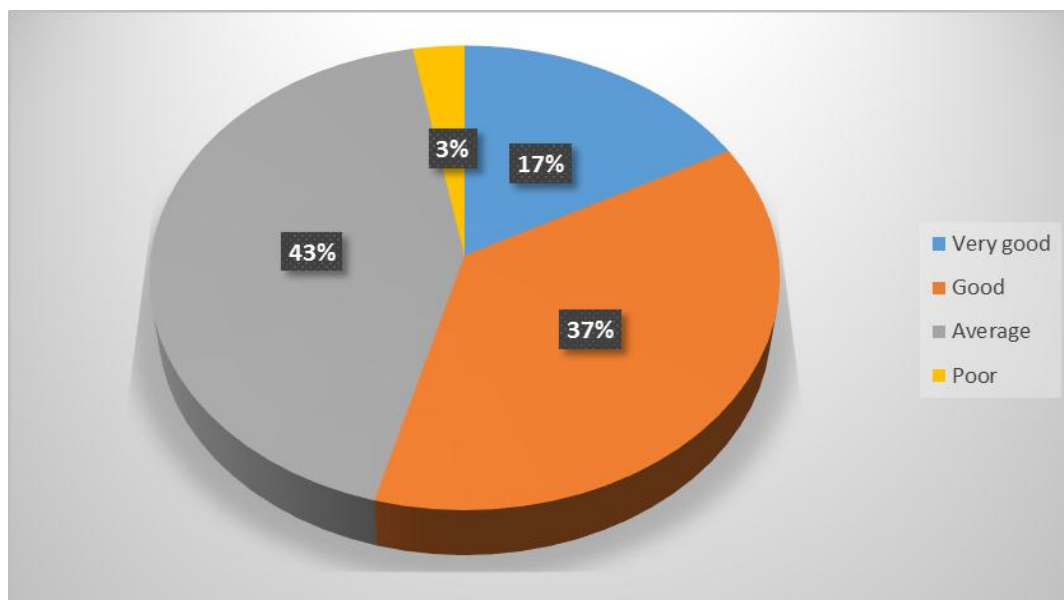


Figure 2.6: Students' Level of Speaking

This question sought to find out students' level of speaking. 43% of respondents declared that their level is average, while 37% indicated that their speaking level is good, 17% said that it is very good, the remaining percentage 3% had a poor level. The aim of this question was to indicate students' oral competence.

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Q05: To learn a language, you have to learn first how to speak that language:

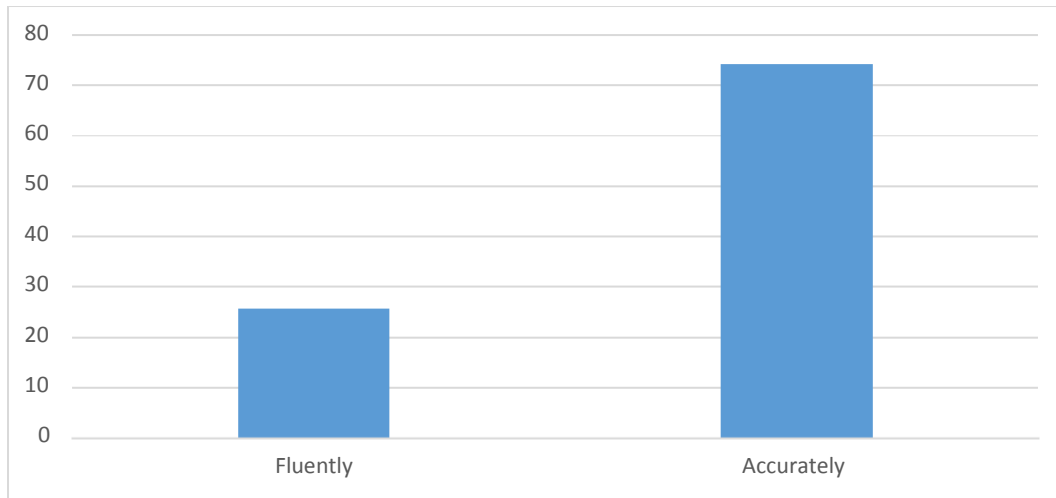


Figure 2.7: Accuracy and Fluency

From the graph above, one can notice that the majority of students 74.3% preferred pronouncing words accurately, which allowed them to use grammar, vocabulary and punctuation correctly. This help learner in writing essays and assignments at universities, 25.7% preferred to speak fluently, in a non-stop way, few grammar mistakes may seem here, it is an aspect that should be developed while presenting an oral project.

Q06: Which difficulties do you encounter when speaking? (You can tick more than one option)

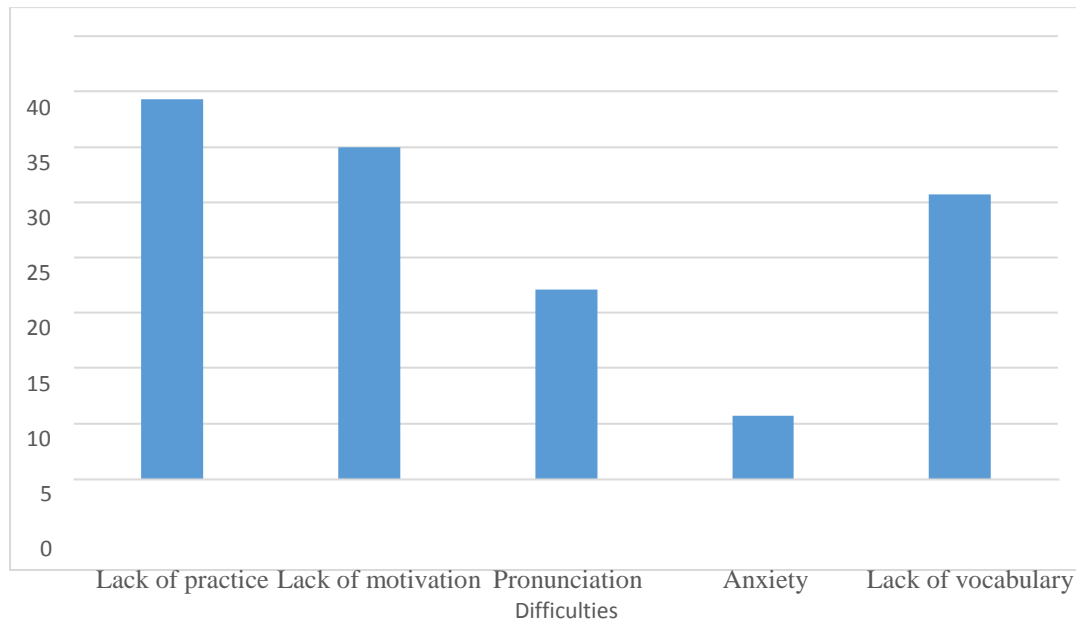


Figure 2.8: Speaking Difficulties

This question sought to explore students' perception about difficulties they face when practicing speaking. The findings revealed that 34,3% considered lack of practice as one of the most difficulties in speaking, while 17.1% said that pronunciation difficulties was the second problem they face when speaking, 30% reported that they face many difficulties due lack of motivation and 25.7% of respondents had a lack of vocabulary. Meanwhile, 5.7% of students also selected problems related to anxiety. The aim of this question was to identify students weaknesses.. For the sub question, students were asked to mention more if any, so they claimed that lack of confidence, fear of judgment and fear of making mistakes were- also other difficulties that they struggle.

Q07: Are you satisfied with your current level of oral communication?

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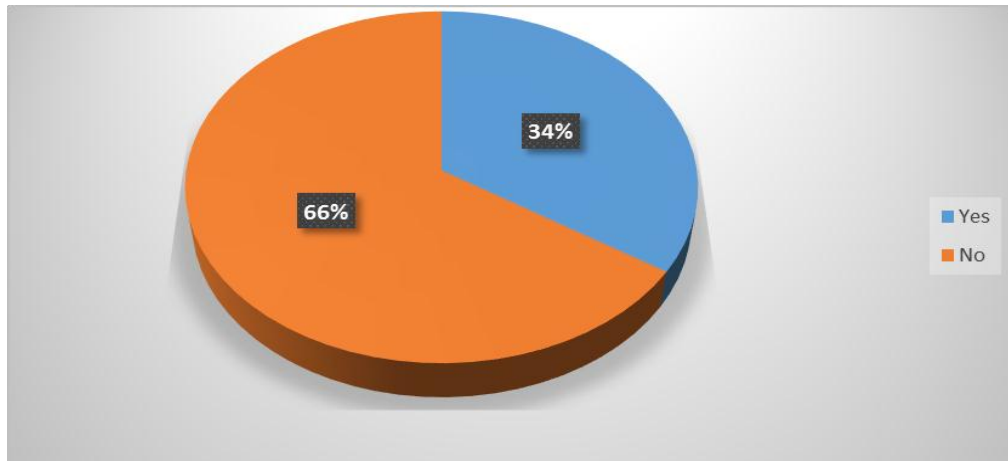


Figure 2.9: Oral Communication Satisfaction

The aim of this question was to show students' satisfaction about their level in speaking and to shed light on its importance. Twenty-three participants (66%) reported that they were not satisfied about their level, while 34% of respondents stated that they are satisfied. To this end, one can say that the majority of students need more opportunities to practice and teachers are required to use innovative teaching methods and new techniques to help their learners improve their oral communication skills.

Q08: Would you like to have extra hours for practice speaking with the use of technology during the learning process?

For this question, the whole sample, 35 participants reported that they like to have extra hours for practice speaking. This was mainly due to the problem of lack of practice inside the classroom; this is why online sessions are a good way to practice more speaking.

Q09: Where do you find yourself more comfortable to speak?

Table 2.4: Students' Favorite Location to Speak

Options	Number of students	Percentage (%)
In class	13	37.1%
In an online session	22	62.9%

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This table showed students' favorite place to speak and express themselves. Twenty-two participants (62.9%) claimed that they find themselves more comfortable when they speak in an online session, while 37.1% stated that classroom is their favorite place to express their ideas. The aim of this question was to highlight students' interest.

Q10: During class, what are the best resources that helps you practice speaking?

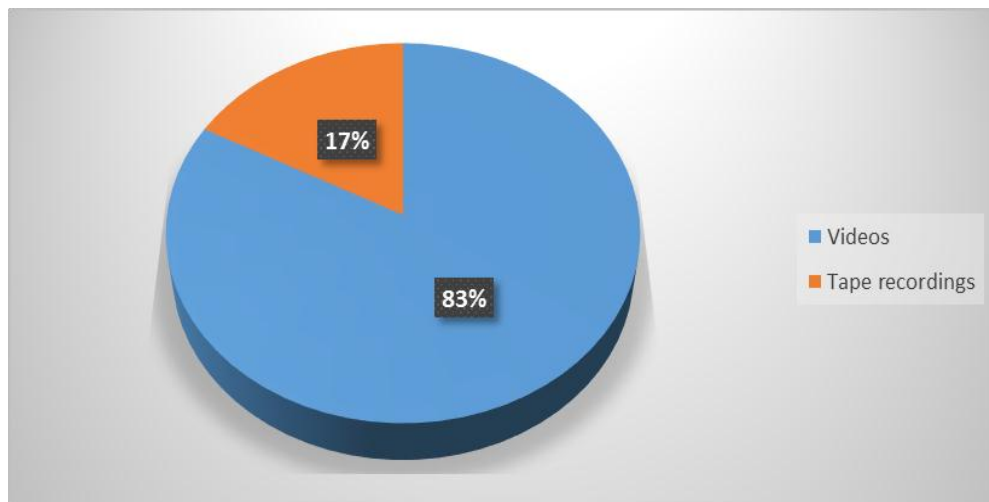


Figure 2.10: Students' Preferable Sources to Practice Speaking

This question aimed at examining students' perception about the best materials to practice speaking. Twenty-nine participants (83%) stated that they prefer videos, while 17% said that tape recordings helps them more in practice speaking. For the sub question, students were asked to state more, so they suggested pictures in which they can comment, also presentations and guessing the meaning of idioms through conversations, movies and cartoons were suggested.

Q11: Which of these techniques does your teacher use in oral expression classes?
(You can tick more than one option)

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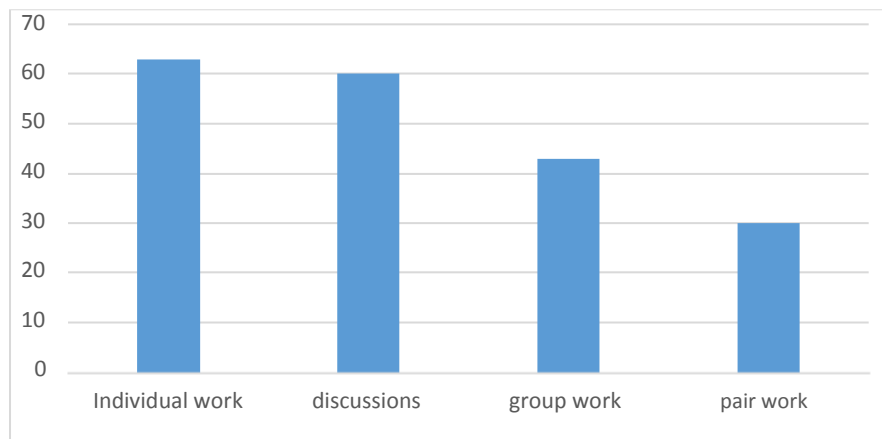


Figure 2.11: Techniques Used by Teachers

This question aims to discover the most used techniques by teachers in oral classes. Individual work is the most used technique according to 22 participants (62.9), then 21 participants (60%) reported that discussions are most used in oral sessions, while 48.6% selected pair work, 42.9% choose group work, dialogues are picked by 30% of respondents.

Q12: Does practice speaking inside the classroom helps you speak freely in an online session?

Table 2.5: The Importance of Practice Speaking inside the Classroom

Options	Number of students	Percentage (%)
Yes	32	91.4%
No	3	8.6%

The majority of students 91.4% reported that practice speaking inside the classroom helps them speak freely in online sessions, while only 8.6 % claim that it did not help them. This question seek to show the relation between traditional and online learning, the findings reveal that they affect each other.

Section Four: Blended Learning

Q02: How do you find the integration of technology in the field of education?

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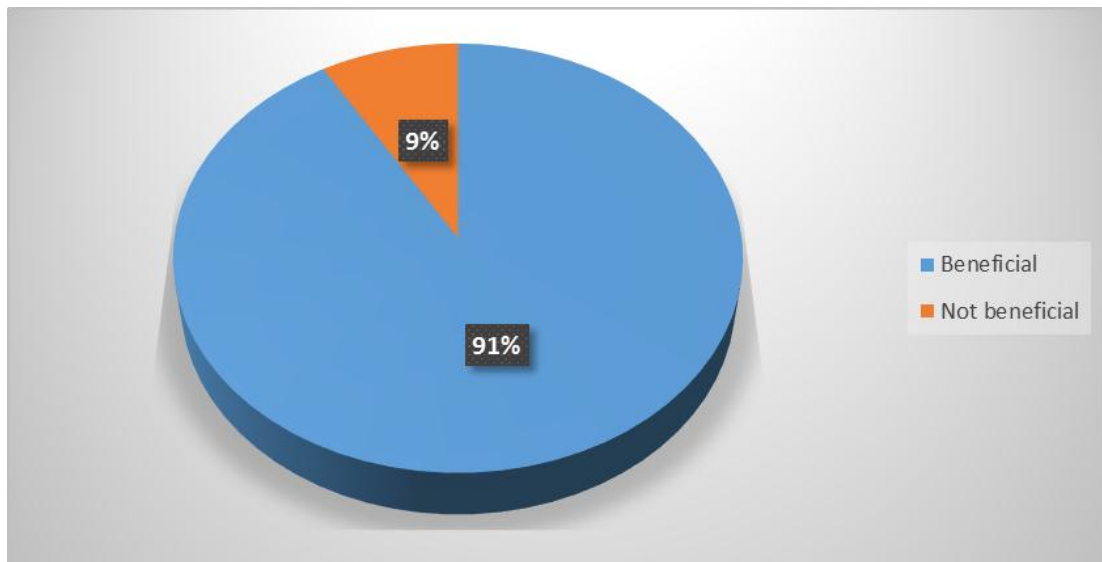


Figure 2.12: Students' Perception about the Integration of Technology in the Field of Education

An overwhelming majority of learners 91% (32) consider the integration of technology in education as a positive and beneficial change, while only 9% claim that it is not beneficial. The main aim of this question is to clear up the role of technology in the educational field and to shed light on its use in educational field.

Q02: Do you think that the use of technological advancements such as E-learning, videos, tape recordings inside the classroom help to improve your speaking ability?

Table 2.6: Students' Opinions about the Use of Technological Advancements inside the Classroom

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	33	94.3%
No	02	5.7%

This question seek to focus on the role of technological advancements inside the classroom and its role in improving speaking. Thirty- three participants 94.3% taught that the use of technology inside the classroom helps promote speaking, while the remaining percentage 5.7% do not see it interesting. Sub question after is about to explain this, students' answers was as follow : "Sometimes teachers show us a video and after that we repeat, so it is very helpful to learn how to communicate", "Students grasp better meaning", "Videos helps a lot in learning new words and when/how to use the new

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words and when/ how to use them”. Another student said claimed that using such tools inside the class improves not just the speaking but also the listening ability. In addition, when learners hear an audio with a native accent, their ears can be adapted to that accent and finally enriches your vocabulary for the sake of speaking more fluently.

Q03: Blended learning is an effective way to allow students to learn at their own pace

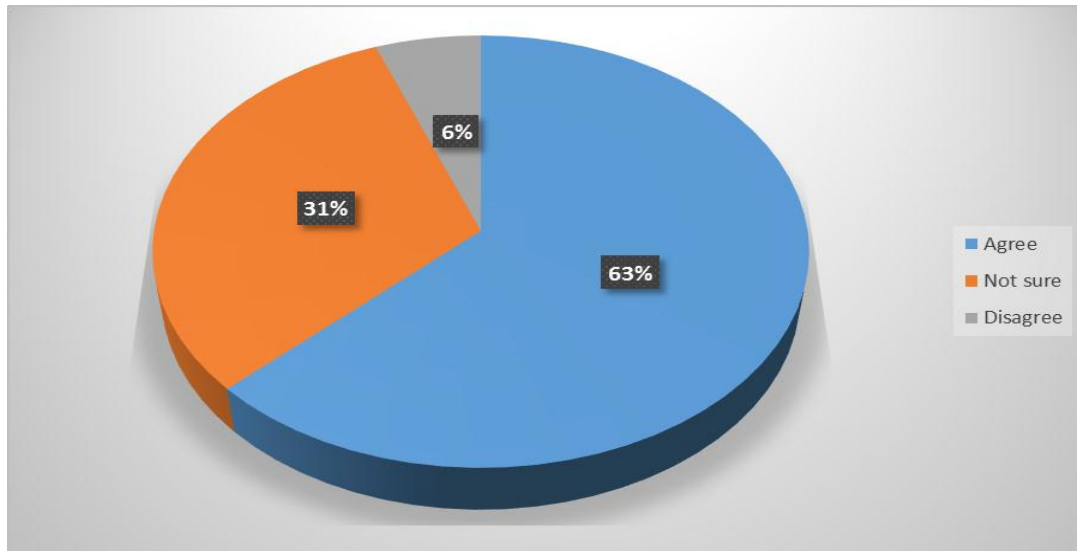


Figure 2.13: Student’s Views about the Efficiency of Blended Learning

The majority of participants 63% reported that blended learning is an effective way to allow students to learn independently, 31% of them were not sure from this statement, while 6% did not support this idea. The aim of this question was to examine student’s perspectives about the relation between learning independently and blended learning.

Q04: Do you think that blended learning will offer you more opportunities to practice speaking inside and outside classroom?

Table 2.7: Students’ Perceptions about BL in Creating more Opportunities to Speak inside and outside the Classroom

Options	Number of students	Percentage (%)
Yes	32	91.4%
No	3	8.6%

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With regard to this question, it mainly seeks to investigate student's perceptions about whether blended learning creates opportunities inside and outside the classroom or not. Results in table 07 indicated that the overwhelming majority of participants 32 (91.4%) claimed that it offers more opportunities to students both inside and outside the classroom, while 3 participants (8.6%) said that it did not.

Q05: Face-to-face learning along with online learning is beneficial because it will:
(You can tick more than one option)

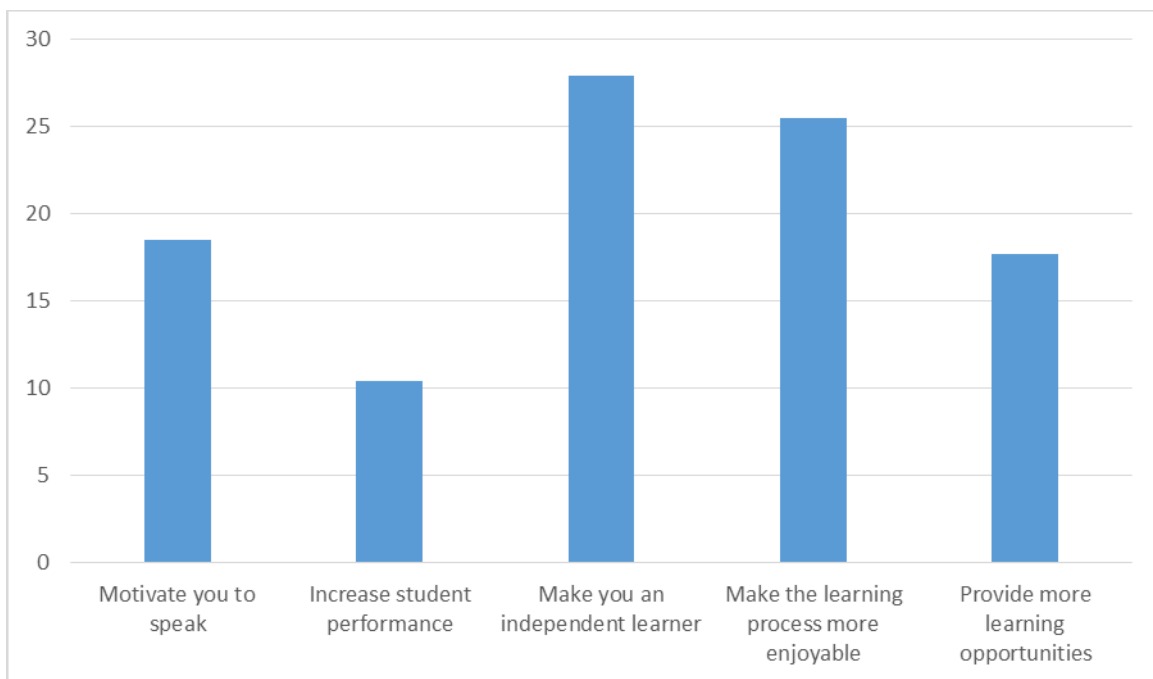


Figure 2.14: Benefits of Blended Learning According to Students

This question examined the benefits of blended learning. Students can select more than one option since it is a multi-choice question. 27,9% of students believed that blended learning make them independent, while 25,5% claimed that it makes the learning process more enjoyable, 18,5% of students reported that motivates them to speak, whereas 17,7% said that it provides more learning opportunities and 10,4% of students thought that it increase student performance. The aim of this multi-choice question was to make students more aware of the benefits of blended learning.

Q06: How do you prefer to study the oral expression module?

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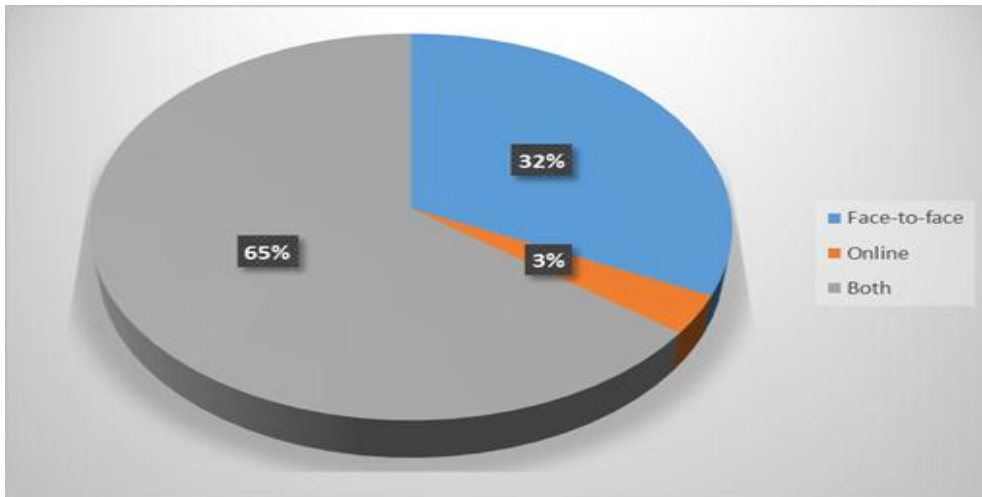


Figure 2.15: Students' Preferable Method of Learning

Regarding this question, students were asked to indicate the method they prefer to study the oral expression module. This question split participants into different categories. More than half of the participants 65% preferred both face-to-face and online methods, 32% of students prioritize only face-to-face teaching method, while 5.7% liked online instruction. This means that students prefer to have more chances to practice speaking inside and outside the classroom.

Q07: How do you describe the connectivity between online sessions and in-class Learning?

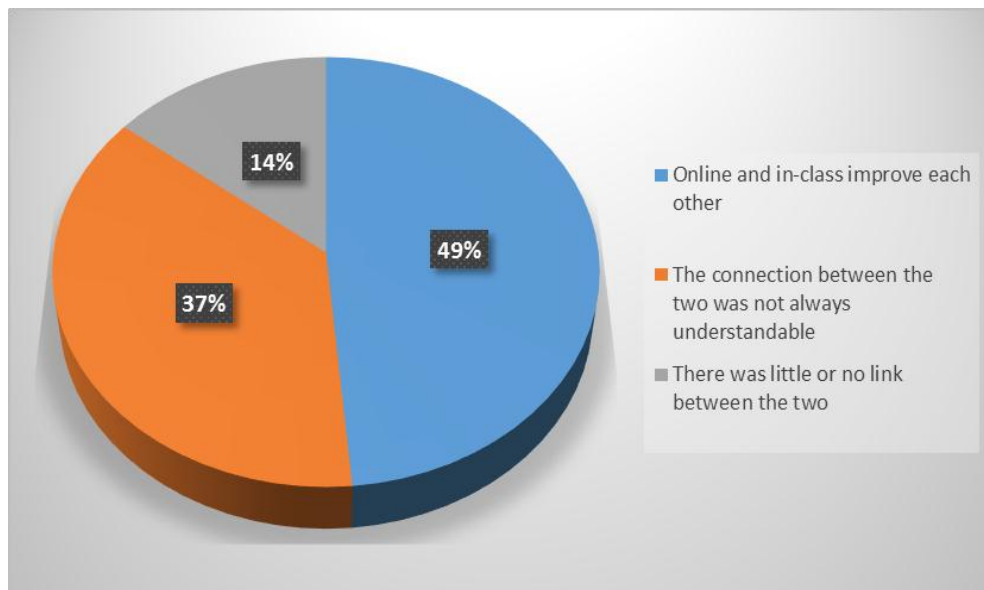


Figure 2.16: The Connection between in-Class and Online Sessions

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This question sought to explore students' perspectives about the relation between online and in-class, 49% of respondents declared that online and in-class learning improve each other, while 37.% reported that the connection between them was not always understandable, 14% mentioned that there was little or no link between them. The aim of this question was to shed light on blended learning through describing the relation between its components; traditional and online instruction.

Q08: Does the blending of lectures in classroom and power points on websites may help learners in understanding the terms in a better way?

Table 2.8: Students' Perceptions about the Blending of Lectures in Helping them Understand the Terms in a Better Way

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	28	80%
No	07	20%

This table explained students' assumptions about whether the blending of lectures in classroom and PowerPoint on websites may improve their understanding of the terms. An overwhelming majority of learners 80% claimed that this idea is true, while 20% thought that the blending of lectures in classroom and power points might not help learners in understanding the terms in a better way.

A sub question was addressed to teachers in an attempt to explain how can blending of lectures in classroom and PowerPoints help learners to understand the terms better. Students said, "Learners sometimes had difficulties in understanding some terms and encountering those terms again in websites may motivate them into finding their meaning, whereas in the classroom, students might not bother to ask about the meaning of some words if they miss them. Combining these two modes of learning was beneficial according to him" another response: "when students dealt with a subject which seems to be weird for them, by the use of powerpoints which include pictures or

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graphs it will provide a better understanding”. Another student said that: “PowerPoint improves and adds extra points that was not mentioned before onsite”, “Pictures, images and videos are easy to be recognized and memorized by the human brain».

Q09: In your opinion, are online learning platforms helpful for teachers to manage and organize their teaching?

Table 2.9: The Importance of Online Platforms for Teachers

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	24	68.6
No	11	31.4

This table revealed the significance of online platforms to organize and manage teacher’s instruction. From the table above 24 participants 68.6% claimed that online platforms helps teachers organize their teaching, while 11 participants 31.4% reported that this is not true. The main of this question

Q10: To what extent do you think blended learning will help you to improve your speaking skill?

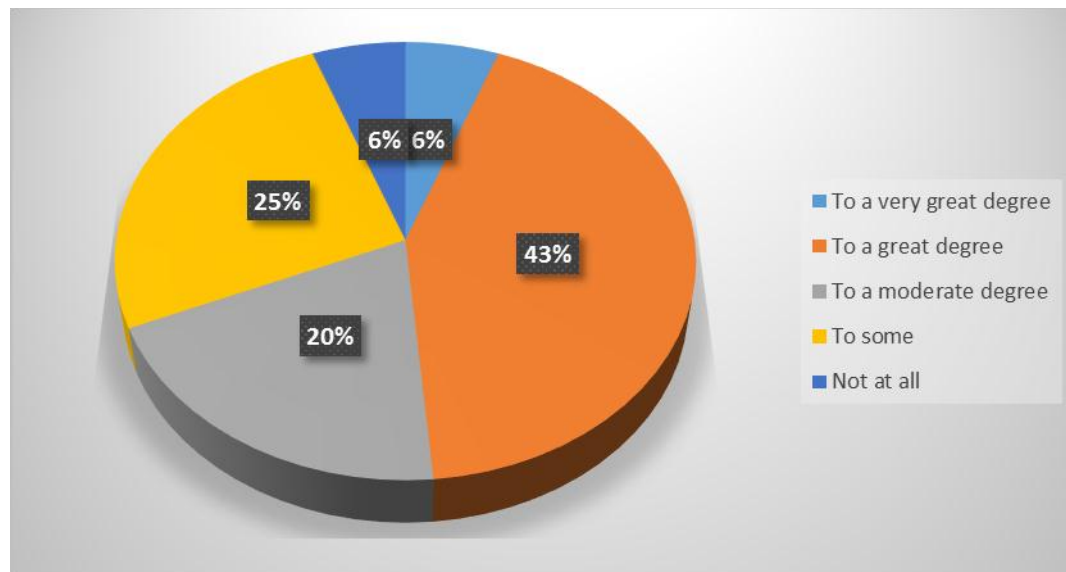


Figure 2.17: Degree to which Blended Learning is Beneficial

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This question sought to explore students' perspectives about whether blended learning enhances their speaking ability. 43% of respondents reported that BL would be beneficial to a great degree, while 25% of them thought that BL will be beneficial to some degree. 20% assumed that it would be beneficial to a moderate degree, 6% of respondents believed that blended learning will be beneficial to a very great degree, the remaining percentage 6% said that it will not be beneficial at all.

Q11: What is your attitudes towards the use of blended learning in enhancing students' speaking skill?

Most participants hold positive attitude towards the use of blended learning to improve their speaking skills. They believed that blended learning help them improve their language skills, especially developing pronunciation by using various online tools such as online discussions and others; combined with face-to-face courses. This provide them more opportunities to practice speaking inside and outside the classroom. From another side, one said that he can't really give his opinion about blended learning because they didn't experienced it at university ; they did not have online courses. He added that he learn online by himself using websites and YouTube videos. He said that he find it very beneficial especially for kinesthetic learners. Another student stated that if blended learning is implemented right, it can achieve good results and he wanted to have blended learning in the oral module.

2.3.1.2 Interpretation and Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire Results

This discussion deals with the main results collected from the questionnaire. The aim of the study was to investigate the attitudes of Third-year students of English at the University of Tlemcen, about the effect of blended learning on enhancing speaking skill. From the preceding mentioned results, one can draw out several conclusions that were established on making a connection between informants' answers in the four sections of the questionnaire. Regarding the first section of the questionnaire, it aimed at having a clear idea about the general information of the learners, their gender and their level in English language. Results revealed that more than half of the students 77, 1% were females' learners, more than half of the students 59% described their level in in English as good.

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The second section of the questionnaire gave an overview about students' background information. An overwhelming majority of learners 97% have internet at home, and more than half of the students 68% have a medium internet. The same section holds a question about the best method for learning, 68% of students preferred traditional learning.

The third section was devoted to speaking; results showed that more than half of the students 78% wanted to enhance their speaking which means that they need more opportunities to practice it. In addition, 68, 6% feel afraid of making mistakes and an overwhelming majority 97% thought that the hours allocated to practice speaking at university are not sufficient. Moreover, 43% represented an average level in speaking due to the fact that they still encounter some difficulties while speaking, such as pronunciation difficulties in the rate of 17.1%, lack of motivation 30%, anxiety 5.7%, and 25.7 of students said lack of vocabulary. To end up, 34.3% of students claimed that lack of practice is the major problem, this makes one come back to the previously mentioned results the hours devoted to speaking at university, which are not enough. In this case, the researcher can say that learners need more methods that allow them to practice speaking inside and outside the classroom and this was illustrated, 66% of participants were not satisfied about their current level of oral communication. The researcher noticed that although students in general prefer traditional learning, but when it comes to speaking more than half of students 65% prefer to study it in both face-to-face and online. This mainly means that they support technological advancements as the whole sample agreed on having more hours with the use of technology during the learning process. 83% claimed that they prefer videos in practicing speaking besides, tape recordings and others like pictures, songs. From the student's answers 62,9% reported that individual work is the major technique that teachers uses in oral expressions, however, students prefer discussions and find it more helpful because it allow interaction between student-student and teacher-student.

The following section covers students' attitudes towards the role of blended learning in enhancing speaking skill. According to the attained results, an overwhelming majority of learners 91% found that the integration of technology in the field of education is beneficial. Besides that, more than half of the students 63% agreed that

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blended learning is an effective way to allow students to learn at their own pace. 49% of students said that online and in-class improve each other. While, 43% claimed that blended learning is helpful to a great degree.

From the mentioned results, one can conclude that learners have an average level in speaking which means that they want to develop more their oral skills using technology. Besides that, learners thought that blended learning model makes them learn independently and they believed that it will help them to a great degree.

2.3.2 Teachers' Interview

2.3.2.1. Interview Results

Initially, teachers were asked about their experience in TEFL, 40% of teachers reported that their teaching experience is less than 5 years, while 20% of them claimed that it is more than 15 years, and 40% said that it ranges from five to 10 years. In the next question, teachers were asked about their student's level in speaking and why. The first teacher said that their learners' level is intermediate and they need to develop more their speaking skill. The second teacher claimed that they are good; most of them give a priority to speaking skill.

The following question was addressed in an attempt to describe the relation between in-class and online learning. More than half of teachers 60% believed that face-to-face instruction and online enhanced each other, while 20% asserted that they are relevant to each other, also 20% stated that there is no connection between the two.

Concerning the question whether they teach using technology tools, more than half of the teachers 60% affirmed that they use technology. A sub question was addressed to them about which tools they use. Teachers mentioned that they use YouTube videos, blog posts for reading, the second teacher claimed that zoom, Google meet, and teams are the main sources, while the third teacher added that she used Ptt, videos-listening. Besides, activities using computers. Another teacher stated language lab, audio-visual materials and online applications. The following question was concerned with whether the use of technological advancements inside the classroom

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may help EFL learners improve their speaking ability; a large extent of teachers 80% believed that technological advancements are helpful.

In response to the question of what is the biggest challenge that both students and teachers may encounter during an oral expression module. The first teacher said that selecting activities and materials that might help students to develop their speaking skill is a main problem. The second teacher reported that among the challenges is when there is a miscommunication between students and the teacher, but a good teacher is the one who engages students in learning and in speaking. The third challenge was the usage of different accents might affect comprehension. The third teacher claimed that one of the problems is to motivate students to speak. The fourth teacher stated the following challenges: to push learners to speak, to select activities and materials that may help students to develop their speaking skill, and to create a good atmosphere in the classroom. The fifth teacher declared that linguistic impediments because of limited language repertoire, while another teacher thought that lack of interaction lack of communication, and not being able to manage technology are also among the challenges. Another teacher claimed that creating a learning environment and good atmosphere in the classroom can also be considered as a challenge.

The next question concerning the suggestions recommended by teachers to overcome EFL learners' difficulties in speaking. The first teacher believed that they should practice more speaking. The second teacher claimed that they might build their self-confidence, while the third teacher said that the integration of technology tools in the classroom could help them improve their oral competence. The fourth teacher suggested that reading by visualizing language forms and sometimes even urging them to come up with rote learning. The fifth teacher stated that in order to develop speaking, one should be a good listener. Therefore, he believed that students should listen to native speakers and imitate them.

After that, the researcher asked teachers whether they use blended learning in EFL classes. More than half of teachers 60% said that they use BL, while 40% claimed that they did not use it.

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A sub question was addressed to teachers about giving their opinions about the use of BL. All teachers involved in the interview believed that it is beneficial.

Later, teachers answered the following question “how can blending help teachers”. The first teacher believed that It could help them best their learners’ oral expression capabilities and enhance the techniques of a good comprehensible language”. The second teacher claimed that “sharing online resources on screen, checking on students' works, giving feedback, listening to students and acknowledging their needs and issues in learning, is a way to getting to know students” , while the third teacher mentioned that “it helps teachers finish the educational program on time”. The fourth teacher listed the following: “Teachers will become more engaged with students, then, it improves the efficiency of the learning process, also, it facilitates the preparation of the lesson, it increases students’ motivation, it helps students to develop their communication abilities and students will develop their technological skills.” Then, a teacher said ; ‘to continue things that we are not able to do inside the classroom ; doing a lot of projects’.

A sub question was addressed to teachers about giving their opinions about the use of BL. All teachers involved in the interview believed that it is beneficial.

The last questions requires teachers to give their attitudes towards the use of blended learning. The first teacher said that he finds it useful but ‘secondary’ it must not successfully be used all the time”. The second teacher declared that she wants the educational system to keep blended learning as it is a good approach to keep on track with students from home. There is a way of accessibility from both sides (teachers reach them, they reach us out) this is no more a traditional relationship between a learner and instructor, a teacher is a learner, as a learner is”. The third teacher claimed that he prefer face-to-face learning, where he can face students, assess them and detect their weakness in order to make remedial sessions”. The fourth teacher replied that he is with the use of blended learning rather than traditional teaching method, because it offers students the accessibility to the pedagogical materials”. The fifth teacher added that he finds it great, but only if the required conditions are there!”. Another teacher stated that it is positive ; they are complementary. One just need to know how blended learning is beneficial to improve students’ capacities.

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2.4 Interpretation and Discussion of the Main Findings

The main aim of this study was to investigate the effect of blended learning in EFL classes to enhance their speaking ability. Accordingly, this study suggests BL method as a suitable one to be tested. The findings which were obtained from the analysis and interpretation of two data collection methods, were positive to a definite point in different aspects.

The results obtained from questions number 7 from students' questionnaire and 3 from teachers' interview prove that learners need more opportunities to practice speaking. Teachers confirmed that by saying their learners' level is intermediate, and students' response that they were not satisfied about their current level of oral communication. Actually, 68.6% of respondents reported that they feel afraid when speaking EL. Furthermore, based on both teachers and students' answers, the teaching/learning process, particularly speaking skill need more integration of technology inside and outside the classroom as they both agreed that technology is beneficial. To take into consideration an answer of a teacher, he pointed out that one of his suggestions to help his learners overcome such difficulties related to speaking is to integrate technology tools in the classroom.

.One of the results, students prefer face-to-face instruction, but in speaking, they preferred to study it both online and face-to-face. In addition, most students stated that they find themselves more comfortable to speak in online sessions. This is strongly linked to "the relationship between speaking and technology" Regarding the use of ICTs, results demonstrated that all students want the integration of technology to the field of education to learn EL and particularly speaking. Among the resources that help them improve their learners speaking are videos, tape recordings. they liked also commenting on pictures and guessing the meaning of idioms through conversations. Results showed that the majority of learners prefer discussions in the classroom; they consider it as more effective because it helps the individuals to gain self-confidence and also it increases the spirit of communication.

The results attained from data collection tools covered blended learning use and its big role in EFL classes. The question 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10 from students' questionnaire and

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number 9, 10, and 11 from teachers' interview revealed that although few learners and teachers were dissatisfied about BL, however, most of them hold positive attitudes towards it; they thought that this teaching method could help learners enhance their speaking. Therefore, the growth of blended learning is often at the discretion of teachers as they expand the use of digital tools in teaching and learning. Now, learning to teach with digital tools seems to be more important than exploring how to motivate students to learn more deeply. Learning how to teach through blended learning makes a lot of sense when teachers are learners and trying to expand their toolbox of teaching practice. However, there are ways to further change practice by putting learning in the hands of students. Results indicate that teachers consider BL as a method that helps them finish the educational program on time, improves the efficiency of the learning process, facilitates the preparation of the lesson, increase the educational system and enhance students' performance. This chapter confirm the resarch hypotheses, which state that BL enhance learners' speaking ability, and offer them more opportunities to practice speaking inside and outside the classroom.

To sum up, the findings revealed that data attained from students' questionnaire and teachers' interview represented positive attitudes towards BL to teach speaking skill.

2.5 Limitations of the Study

No research is perfect and meant to be out of criticism. Based on this assumption, the researcher confess that this work confronted some hindrances and difficulties that inhibit its successful implementation and led to certain limitations.

- One weakness is that the questionnaire was only distributed online in Google form; therefore, participants may have some troubles in understanding and fill in the questionnaire compare to physical form, due to the issue of not receiving face-to-face explanation and fast response.

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- The second limitation was the struggling to access to the selected teachers to be interviewed.

2.6 Recommendations for Further Research

Depending on the findings and limitations of the current research work, it is worthy to mention some suggestions and additional avenues for further research.

- First, for future researchers it is better to use an experimental method for data gathering or make the sample larger.

- The researcher may conduct other studies about blended learning not only in speaking but also in other language skills such as reading, writing and listening.

- Motivation and students' interaction can also be a good experimental research related to the use of blended learning in EFL classes.

- It is suggested that future researchers conduct more studies about the implementation of technology in the educational field and how to teach the four language skills using technological advancements.

- Interview technical trainers in the public or private school system to find out perspectives on teachers' implementation of blended learning.

- Case studies focused on perceptions of digital and foreign teachers working with digital trainers using blended learning or classroom technology.

- Conduct longitudinal studies to improve teacher-student relationships of using blended learning models can be better understood.

- Interview administrators to determine their views on using blended Learning models on their campus.

- Conduct an analysis of the types of technology available on campus.

2.7 Conclusion

The practical part attempts to identify the methodology utilized in conducting this study. For the aim of gathering data a questionnaire and interview were directed to

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Third year students of the Department of English and their teachers. The instruments used in this study allow the researcher to gather the necessary data and determine the effect of blended learning.

The findings in chapter two showed that EFL learners need more hours at university to practice speaking using technology, both teachers and students faced challenges during oral sessions. This was followed by some solutions suggested by oral module teachers. The results showed that most EFL learners at the University of Tlemcen hold positive attitudes toward blended learning. Meanwhile, the investigation of teachers' interview revealed that the majority of oral teachers' module prefer integrating technology tools in the classroom and they want to teach speaking using blended learning approach. However, some teachers claimed that blended learning is effective only if the required conditions are available. Therefore, one can say that institutions should provide teachers the facilities and materials that they need in order to teach EL effectively.

General Conclusion

It is worth noting that investigating new technologies in foreign language teaching and learning has become a necessary fact that no one can deny its benefits for educators and students. Therefore, teachers are in a quest for effective methods and strategies that integrate those technologies to teach speaking skill. Researchers conducted many studies that seek to investigate new techniques that could provide more opportunities for students to practice speaking. The present work is an attempt to explore students and teachers' perception about the effect of using blended learning on enhancing EFL learners' oral competence at the level of third year at University of Tlemcen.

The overall research work comprises two chapters: the first one was devoted to the literature review and the second chapter covers the practical part. As far as the literature review is concerned, it was divided into two sections. The first section shed light on speaking importance, difficulties that students encounter when they speak and it discussed the characteristics of a good speaker. Besides that, it dealt with the role of technology and some modern technologies that help learners boost their speaking ability. While the second one was concerned with blended learning, its definition, components, examples, history and background, prerequisite, advantages and disadvantages. In addition to synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Correspondingly, the second chapter was allocated to practical part entitled "research methodology"; it outlined the research design of the current study including type, nature of research, sample population and research instruments to gather data, then an analysis of data and the results obtained from it. Accordingly, to test the research hypotheses, and answer the research questions. The researcher carried out different data collection methods, namely, Students' questionnaire and teachers' interview. The above-mentioned data collection methods were analyzed, interpreted and discussed. A questionnaire was administered to thirty-five third year English students, while the interview was intended to six teachers of oral expression module. They were selected for the sake of eliciting further information about the use of blended learning and investigating students and teachers' attitude.

Through designing and conducting an exploratory case study, and after the analysis of data gathered from different sources using a set of research tools (a questionnaire for learners, an interview for teachers), the two hypotheses put forward were confirmed. The results revealed that the majority of respondents want to develop their speaking skill out of the four skills, also most of them feel afraid when speaking and they claimed that the hours devoted to practice speaking at university were not sufficient. Furthermore, they agreed on the fact that BL may offer them more opportunities to practice speaking inside and outside the classroom (the first hypothesis was confirmed), Moreover, they thought that the use of technological advancements such as videos and tape recordings inside the classroom help them improve their oral communication skills. Additionally, they believed that BL could help them improve their speaking ability largely.

In their turn EFL teachers were aware of blended learning and its use, most of them do not think that their learners follow some strategies in order to improve their oral communication abilities, and they claimed that motivate students to speak, select activities and materials that may help them to develop their speaking skill and not being able to manage technology are the main challenges that teachers encounter during an oral session module. Teachers suggested that integrating technology in the classroom and reading by visualizing language forms, developing self awareness and being autonomous learners may help students overcome such difficulties. From another side, teachers wanted from the educational system to implement blended learning as it is a good approach to keep on track with students from home, they also believed through this approach teachers will become more engaged with students. The findings of the teachers' interview revealed their positive attitudes towards the use of BL. As a result, both teachers and students agreed that the use of blended learning in EFL classroom improve speaking skill (the second hypothesis was confirmed)

This research seems to endorse the use of blended learning approach in the teaching speaking skill in particular and the educational system in general.

The argument in this study is that using blended approach along with relying on technology tools inside and outside the classroom would motivate students to

actively study and participate. On the other side, it would provide teachers new and innovative teaching methods to get autonomous learners and boost their performance. In fact, implementing blended learning is not an easy task, it requires some conditions and the availability of some materials inside the classroom to teach speaking. So the educational Algerian system should work on this in the future as this research paper revealed that the use of technology is beneficial to both students and teachers.

This research which was a humble trial to investigate the effect of blended learning remains insufficient as the questionnaire was distributed online in Google forms because of the pandemic. Therefore, the students may face problems due to the issue of not receiving face-to-face explanation and fast response. Case study research is criticised by the fact that generalization are not easily concluded especially when the sample population is approximately small.

The current study is an exploratory case study research, the questionnaire and interview were used as research instruments. Additional studies are needed, for further research it is better to use experimental method for data gathering or make the sample larger. The researcher may also conduct other studies about blended learning not only in speaking but also in other language skills such as reading, writing and listening and Interview administrators to determine their views on using blended Learning models on their campus. Moreover, it is suggested that future researchers make more studies about the implementation of technology and how to teach the four language skills using technological advancements. Further research in this area will help target deeper research.

To conclude, the researcher investigated the effectiveness of BL method as a recent instructional approach and exploited its benefits to enhance the learning process particularly speaking. Overall and based on these findings, the usefulness of merging traditional method of learning with online learning is confirmed to be helpful for improving EFL learners' speaking ability. To this end, blended learning can be the best of both worlds, and though a significant undertaking, once implemented successfully, it will achieve great results.

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Appendices

Appendix ‘A’ : Students’ Questionnaire

Dear students,

Your answers would be of great contribution to this research, which aims to investigate the effect of blended learning in enhancing EFL learners speaking ability. Since the traditional methods used in EFL classes may not fulfill student's needs and interests. Blended learning is a new approach in the teaching learning process

(PS: Blended learning refers to a method, which combines face-to-face and online learning activities)

You are kindly requested to fill in this form. Your participation is very important and greatly appreciated.

Section One: Informant’s Profile

Q1. Describe your Gender:

Male

Female

Q2. How is your level of English language?

Very good

Good

Average

Poor

Section Two: Background Information

Q1. Do you have access to internet at home?

Yes

No

If yes, how do you find its quality?

Good

Medium

Bad

Q2. In your opinion, what is the best method for learning?

Traditional learning

E learning

Section Three: Speaking Skill

Q1. Which of the following skills do you want to further develop?

Reading

Speaking

Writing

Listening

Q2. Do you feel afraid of making mistakes during an oral session?

Yes

No

Q3. Do you think that the hours devoted to practice speaking skill at university are sufficient?

Yes

No

Q4. How do you describe your speaking ability?

Very good

Good

Average

Poor

Q5. To learn a language, you have to learn first how to speak that language:

Accurately

Fluently

Q6. Which difficulties do you encounter when speaking? (You can tick more than one)

Lack of motivation

Lack of vocabulary

Lack of practice

Pronunciation difficulties

Anxiety

Teacher's method

If there are some others, mention them

Q7. Are you satisfied with your current level of oral communication?

Yes

No

Q8. Would you like to have extra hours for practice speaking with the use of technology during the learning process?

Yes

No

Q9. Where do you find yourself more comfortable to speak?

In-class

In an online session

Q.10 During class, what are the best resources that helps you practice speaking?

Videos

Tape recordings

If there are others, mention them:

.....

Q.11 Which of these techniques does your teacher use in oral expression classes?

Classroom interaction

Discussion

Group work

Pair work

Individual work

✓ According to you, which of these techniques is more helpful? Explain why.....
.....

Q12. Does practice speaking inside the classroom helps you speak freely in an online session?

Yes

No

Section Four: Exploring Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Blended Learning

Q1. How do you find the integration of technology in the educational field

Beneficial

Not beneficial

Q2. Do you think that the use of technological advancements such as E-learning, videos, tape recordings inside the classroom help to improve your speaking ability?

Yes

No

How they can help learners improve their oral competence?

Q3. Blended learning is an effective way to allow students to learn at their own pace

Agree

Not sure

Disagree

Q4. Do you think that blended learning will offer you more opportunities to practice speaking inside and outside classroom?

Yes

No

Q5. Face-to-face learning along with online learning is beneficial because it will:

Increase students engagement

Provide more learning opportunities

Motivate you speak

Boost your performance

Make you an independent learner

Others, if any?.....

Q06. How do you prefer to study the oral expression module?

Face-to-face

Online

Both

Q07. How do you describe the connectivity between online sessions and in-class learning?

Online and in-class improve each other

The connection between two was not always understandable

There was little or no link between them

Q08. Does the blending of lectures in classroom and power points on websites may help learners in understanding the terms in a better way?

Yes

No

Explain how.....

Q09: In your opinion, are online learning platforms helpful for teachers to manage and organize their teaching?

Yes

No

Q10. To what degree do you think blended learning will help you to improve your speaking skill?

-Not at all

-To some degree

-To a moderate degree

-To a great degree

-To a very great degree

Q11. What is your attitudes towards the use of blended learning in enhancing your speaking ability?

.....

.....

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.....

Appendix 'B': Teachers' Interview

Q.01 How many years did you teach English as a foreign language?

-Less than 5 years

-5-10 years

-10-15 years

-More than 15 years

Q02. Do you think your students follow any strategies in order to improve their oral communication abilities? What are these strategies?

Q03. How do you find your learners level in speaking skill? Why?

Q04. How would you describe the relationship between online and in class learning ?

Q05. Have you ever used technology tools while presenting a lesson?

If yes, which tools?

Q06. Do you think using technological advancements inside the classroom may help EFL learners improve their speaking ability ?

Q07. In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge that both students and teachers may encounter during an oral session module ?

Q08. What do you suggest to help your learners overcome such difficulties?

Q09. Do you use blended learning in EFL classes?

If yes, how do you find its use?

Q10. How can blending help teachers?

Summary

This study seeks to investigate the effect of blended learning on enhancing EFL learners' speaking ability. For the sake of gathering data, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used, a questionnaire was administered to 35 students of third year in the Department of English at University of TLEMEN, while six teachers of oral expression were selected to be interviewed. The findings revealed that most teachers believed that blended learning help learners enhance their oral communication skills, and students claimed that blended learning offers them a number of exciting benefits.

Key words: Blended learning, Speaking ability, EFL learners, Third year students and teachers; Department of English, University of Tlemcen

Résumé

Cette étude vise à étudier l'effet de l'apprentissage mixte sur l'amélioration de la capacité d'expression oral des apprenants de l'anglais comme langue étrangère. Pour cela, Des méthodes qualitatives et quantitatives ont été utilisées, un questionnaire a été envoyé à 35 étudiants de troisième année du département d'anglais de l'université de Tlemcen, tandis que cinq enseignants ont été sélectionnés pour les interroger. Les résultats ont révélé que la plupart des enseignants pensaient que l'apprentissage mixte aide les étudiants à améliorer leurs compétences en communication oral, et les étudiants ont affirmé que l'apprentissage mixte leur offrait un certain nombre d'avantages intéressants.

Mots clés : L'apprentissage mixte, La capacité d'expression orale, étudiants et enseignants de Troisième Année ; Département D'anglais, Université de Tlemcen

ملخص

تسعى هذه الدراسة الى التحقيق في التعليم المدمج على تعزيز قدرة الطلاب على التحدث باللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية. من اجل جمع البيانات ، تم استخدام كل من الأساليب النوعية والكمية، تم ارسال استبيان الى 35 طالبا من السنة الثالثة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة تلمسان ، في حين تم اختيار خمس أساتذة لمقابلتهم. كشفت النتائج ان معظم الأساتذة يعتقدون ان التعليم المدمج يساعد المتعلمين على تعزيز مهارات الاتصال الشفوي لديهم ، وادعى الطلاب ان التعليم المدمج يوفر لهم عددا من الفوائد المثيرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعليم المدمج ،مهارات الاتصال الشفوي ،طلاب الصف الثالث والاساتذة. قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة تلمسان.