



The Effects of Blended Learning Methods on Second Language Acquisition in Paragraph Writing: A Systematic Review of Literature

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<p>Abstract: Scholars have spent many years doing in-depth study on the link between blended learning and various instructional strategies. However, there are very few relevant journal articles that address how content evaluation affects the blended learning paradigm's integrated impact. Therefore, in order to better understand the advantages and disadvantages of using blended instructional methods for language learning, the goal of this conceptual study is to identify patterns in research on paragraph writing skills in second language acquisition. The aim of this research was to create a synthesis of several previously published works utilizing the literature review technique in order to get knowledge of the notion of mixed learning in connection with the capacity to write paragraphs. The several essential elements are included in each of the two separate parts that make up this study. In order to illustrate the pertinent benefits and constraints of blended learning in relation to the instruction of paragraph writing, an examination of the evaluated studies is conducted in the second phase of the procedure. The results of the present research can potentially be used in the future to further investigate the possibility of a relationship between the Blended Learning method and students' paragraph-writing skills.</p> <p>Keywords: Mixed learning, instructional strategies, higher education, educational atmosphere.</p> <p>Copyright © 2023 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.</p>	<p align="center">Review Paper</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the years, there have been significant advancements and enhancements in the realm of educational technology, particularly those integrated into the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Moreover, the availability of digital resources for students has prompted discussions regarding the concept of a "connected classroom" (Stannard, 2012). Moreover, the Covid-19 epidemic has fully shifted the process of learning into a new phase (Zhu & Liu, 2020). Hence, using just conventional methods and technology for foreign language (FL) instruction proved inadequate in fulfilling the demands of the various stages during and after the epidemic. In light of this, integrating language learning technology has emerged as one of the easiest and most efficient methods to maintain the content and quality of education, such as higher pedagogical education throughout this pandemic era globally. Generally speaking, blended learning refers to an instructional design in which in-person and online (mediated) learning are carefully combined in ways that are educationally significant (Garrison & Vaughan,

2008). To be clear, in both in-person and virtual settings, blended learning designs intentionally and creatively combine asynchronous, introspective, and precise textual communication with synchronous, free-flowing, often spontaneous speech communication (Richey, 2013).

It is generally agreed upon that students have little interest in writing because it takes a long time to develop these kinds of productive skills. Nevertheless, teachers must possess the necessary technical and pedagogical skills to encourage students to develop their writing abilities through the use of appropriate approaches, techniques, and methods in a blended learning environment. It is now understood to be a combination of real world plus in-world" as a consequence (Claypole, 2010). For the reasons outlined above, it is advised that blended learning technologies be modified for the process of creating various written speech genres, particularly paragraph writing, while enhancing students' writing abilities in EFL classes. A blended language learning environment can be designed to foster paragraph writing skills based on the stages of

composing this piece of writing speech, particularly because there are specific types of paragraphs in English writing, such as descriptive, narrative, example, process, and opinion ones. The students success in paragraph writing do not seem to have been polished and even the technique that is now being used is not adequate for teaching paragraph essay writing. From the perspective of the researcher, it is necessary to do research on a certain model in order to find a solution to the issue (Herlina *et al.*, 2021). The instructor has to locate an appropriate model that might potentially boost the pupils' performance. According to the findings of the literature research, blended learning is the most effective method of decision-making for educational institutions (Alqahtani & Rajkhan, 2020). In light of the reasons presented above, the purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the blended learning paradigm in terms of teaching students how to write paragraphs.

METHOD

The research used a literature review methodology, which included locating, selecting, analyzing, expanding upon, and combining previously published articles or data relevant to the subject of blended learning and students' paragraph writing abilities. It is permissible to use research from literature studies to evaluate the capacities of educators, since it allows for accurate and reliable judgments (Gibbs *et al.*, 2017). Within this specific research study, the use of a literature review and the various aspects of blended learning enhanced the students' ability to construct paragraphs. These components, which enhanced teachers' knowledge and professionalism throughout their time at the school, might potentially have positive effects on those who work as teachers in higher education.

DISCUSSION

Enhancing Proficiency in Writing Paragraphs

Paragraph writing refers to the process of composing a coherent and organised group of sentences that revolve around a central idea or topic. Proficiency in writing has become a fundamental need in the English language. We have the ability to express, analyse, and depict our ideas, emotions, and encounters via our proficiency in writing (Lestari, 2018; Yamin, 2019). Writing necessitates the writer to convey their thoughts and ideas to the reader. Nevertheless, in order to ensure clarity, it is essential that we possess fundamental writing abilities. Mastering writing abilities begins with the practise of paragraph writing. Wali and Madani (2020) assert that a paragraph is a crucial proficiency in the realm of writing. Prior to attaining proficiency in any kind of writing, it is necessary to first achieve mastery in the art of composing paragraphs. A proficient skill in composing paragraphs is essential as it enables readers to comprehend the calibre of the writing. Nevertheless, instructing individuals in the art of writing is a

challenging endeavour. The issue lies in the development of paragraph writing abilities, which falls under the responsibility of instructors. Rajesh (2017) acknowledges that teaching Paragraph Writing is a formidable obstacle for a teacher who is both a second-language learner and responsible for instructing pupils in the art of writing in a suitable and acceptable manner. Some audacious instructors even disregard it due to the difficulty they have in teaching it.

Elements and Attributes of Paragraph Composition Proficiency

Paragraphs consist of many constituent elements that are integral to their structure. Maharani (2017) identifies three essential elements of a well-constructed paragraph. The text comprises of these sentences, supporting sentences, and ending sentences. These three components make the paragraph comprehensive and facilitate the reader's comprehension. The first phrase serves as the main idea or theme of the text. According to Wali and Madani (2020), subject phrases are organised into two divisions. These are subjects that have a significant impact on concepts and thoughts. A topic refers to a term or phrase that encapsulates the subject matter of an entire essay. On the other hand, controlling the idea indicates the writer's concept or viewpoint on the issue. According to Yamin (2019), Topic Sentences should strike a balance between being too particular and overly generic. Overly precise subject sentences sometimes suffer from a lack of supporting phrases that may effectively explain the main idea. However, if a subject phrase is not finished in one paragraph, it indicates that the notion being discussed is too wide. In such cases, it is necessary to create a new paragraph to further develop the idea. Thus, a well-constructed paragraph should consist of a single main phrase. The second aspect is in the provision of assistance in the form of supporting phrases. The subject phrase is elucidated in the phrases that support it. Wali and Madani (2020) define keeping sentences as the sentences that form the main content of the essay. Zemach and Islam (2006) also observe that supporting sentences provide explicit details and clarifications on the subject matter of the phrases. The text incorporates logical reasoning and evidence to effectively convince the readers or convey our message to those reading it. To clarify, the supplementary words must be relevant to the subject phrase in order to be considered complete. The last sentence serves as the ending statement. As per Maharani (2017), the last phrase specifies two things. The user is requesting to conclude the paragraph and highlight the most significant topic. According to Wali and Madani (2020), there are two final phrases mentioned: the retrial and the summary. The re-statement of the concluding sentence presents the same knowledge as the topic of the sentence, only in a different manner.

Paragraph Writing May be Classified into Many Types

Wali and Madani (2020) identified three kinds of paragraphs: narrative paragraphs, descriptive paragraphs, and exhibition paragraphs. A narrative paragraph is a passage of text that tells a story or recounts a series of events. According to Wali and Madani (2020), a narrative paragraph is a kind of paragraph that usually describes previous occurrences. It is often used to recount narratives, such as fairy tales, folklore, and fables. The paragraph has an identical structure to the other paragraph, consisting of a Topic Sentence, Supporting Sentences, and a Concluding Sentence. The available transitions for sentence endorsement include: firstly, secondly, thirdly, subsequently, thereafter, and ultimately. Sari and Wahyuni (2018) define a descriptive paragraph as a written passage that provides a detailed portrayal of a particular person, thing, location, or object. Additionally, it elucidates the presence of generic structures in this paragraph, namely identification, definition, and conclusion. Identification is the component that informs readers about the content the writer intends to convey. A description is a constituent that provides intricate information about a person, event, location, or item, enabling readers to vividly imagine the thing while reading. The conclusion is the last segment of a paragraph when the precise details of the paragraph are summarised. The often used spatial locations include: above, around, behind, below, between, in, in front of, on, below, and next to. According to Wibowo and Febrinda (2019), an explanatory paragraph is a paragraph that provides the reader with specific information. Providing information involves imparting necessary knowledge to readers. According to Wali and Madani (2020), an expository paragraph is a paragraph that provides a description of something. The change that may be facilitated includes the following: firstly, thirdly, subsequently, and ultimately.

Issues pertaining to the Development of Paragraph Writing Proficiency

Writing is among the four abilities that provide a challenge in terms of acquisition. As to Melati (2020), mastering writing is the most intricate and demanding ability for those who speak their mother language. EFL students often make errors in writing, especially during their first stages of learning, such as while composing paragraphs. Students seem to encounter challenges when it comes to composing paragraphs. The most formidable challenge is in the absence of practise in paragraph composition. Novariana *et al.*, (2018) argue that in order to be productive, students need engage in regular writing activities. Consequently, the practise was crucial for pupils to enhance their skills in writing paragraphs. It is important for pupils to possess relevant knowledge while making decisions about the topic phrases. The subsequent concern is to the corroborating statements. According to Yamin (2019), students often create supporting sentences that do not align with the topic of the main phrases or construct supporting sentences that

are unrelated to the issue. To address these challenges, it is important to ensure that the paragraph exhibits cohesion and unity. Students should ensure that phrases are properly linked together while constructing paragraphs. Additionally, there might be a problem pertaining to the absence of motivation in composing paragraphs. Students should continue writing if they have a genuine interest in the act of writing.

According to Handrianto *et al.*, (2021) and Ramadhani *et al.*, (2021), students are more inclined to engage in writing when they feel driven by the work and actively participate in the process. The last concern is to the teacher's comments or feedback about the composition of the instructional paragraph. Teachers sometimes lack sufficient time to provide pupils with feedback. Teachers often provide writing scores without any accompanying feedback or remarks. It fails to provide pupils with guidance on effective strategies and techniques to simplify the writing process.

Instruction in the Development of Paragraph Ability in Writing

To enhance students' writing abilities in the paragraph, the teacher should take into account the aspects that influence their writing success. Alsmari (2019) supports this viewpoint by asserting that instructors play a crucial role in endeavouring to enhance student accomplishment. Teachers must possess an understanding of the factors that might impact the development of paragraph writing abilities in the context of teaching and learning. The primary issue that has a substantial influence on paragraph writing abilities in teaching and learning is a deficiency in reading skills. Proficient reading abilities enhance individuals' awareness and comprehension of the subject matter, while also emphasizing the beneficial nature of paragraph writing. Students with poor reading proficiency will need an extended period of time for instruction, resulting in a lack of success in both teaching and learning. Put simply, in order to excel in paragraph writing, pupils must first possess proficient reading abilities.

Blended Learning

Blended Learning refers to a method of education that combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning activities. The blended learning model is a pedagogical approach that combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning activities. According to Stein and Graham (2014), blended learning is the integration of in-person and online learning methods to provide adaptable, effective, and streamlined education. According to Jayanthi (2019), Sir Isaac Pitman was the pioneer of blended learning. Pitman sent postcards with shorthand texts to his students, instructing them to return them for evaluation and correction. To clarify, distant learning serves as the initial foundation for blended learning.

The attributes of the Mixed-Learning Approach

Huang, *et al.*, (2006) identify three distinct characteristics of blended learning. One key aspect is the ability to provide learning materials in a flexible manner. The blended learning paradigm incorporates several strategies to enhance students' learning, allowing them to acquire knowledge from both the instructor and the computer, whether it is accessed online or offline. The second objective is to foster the advancement of diversity in the realm of education. Every kid has distinct learning modalities, including auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Each individual has a distinct learning style that optimally facilitates the absorption, organization, and processing of information. Blended learning enhances students' comprehension. The third aspect pertains to the enhancement of the online learning paradigm. Online learning activities, such as assignments and debates, are recognized as effective means through which students acquire more information. Therefore, the students' experience may be enhanced by their online learning experience (Tiara *et al.*, 2021). According to the above description, the authors deduce that a blended learning model encompasses diverse learning options, allowing students to acquire knowledge both online and offline via the teacher's instruction and computer use. Additionally, two educational options also assist kids in their varied learning styles. By recognizing their preferred learning style, students may enhance their understanding of the content they are studying.

The Pros and Cons of Utilizing the Mixed Learning Method to Enhance Paragraph Writing skills

Blended learning provides distinct advantages to both students and instructors. One primary benefit of blended learning is enhanced accessibility and user-friendliness. It provides students and instructors with additional possibilities, such as access to the Internet. According to Stein and Graham (2014), blended learning may enhance flexibility and convenience for both students and instructors in their learning activities. Put simply, both educators and learners will facilitate the process of acquiring knowledge and imparting it. Furthermore, pupils acquire knowledge with greater efficiency. Stein and Graham (2014) argue that blended learning improves learning outcomes by facilitating access to learning activities and fostering engagement via social contact and dedicated work time (Rahman & Ja'afar, 2018; Mufidah *et al.*, 2019). Despite the increased difficulty it presents for learning and teaching, this will ultimately result in time savings for learners as well as educators. Learning and teaching techniques may be enhanced. Another benefit is the decreased expense. Stein and Graham (2014) suggest that reducing commute time may be advantageous for both instructors and students, resulting in savings on transport expenses and perhaps eliminating parking fees, if applicable. It enhances the efficiency of both instructors and students' expenditures. Put simply, this would provide additional advantages to both students and instructors. Jayanthi (2019) highlights a drawback of blended learning. It is

becoming more common for students to inappropriately use the internet for non-academic purposes. Teachers should consistently evaluate the manner in which their pupils use technology and diligently monitor student behaviors in order to improve their teaching approach. Hence, it is imperative that we do not underestimate the advantages of blended learning in the context of education.

The Philosophical Framework of Research

The conceptual foundation that guides the study and provides a framework for understanding and interpreting the data collected. It encompasses the theories, concepts, and principles that inform the research design and analysis. Social Constructivism is an educational method that advocates for the engagement of learners in active and participatory learning experiences. Din (2017) highlights that Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, and places significant emphasis on the concept of social constructivism. He posits that learners construct their comprehension by active involvement with the external environment, educators, peers, and relatives. Put simply, this concept focuses on engaging activities that assist students in cultivating their abilities in teaching and learning. With blended learning, students may search up answers or information online to fix their mistakes. One advantage of blended learning is its flexibility in the teaching and learning process. Flexibility guarantees that the content's original source is needed for both instructors and students throughout the teaching and learning process. To put it another way, the book is not the only resource used in the teaching and learning process; other resources are also searched online for the appropriate answer.

Huda (2020) investigated the influence of a blended learning approach on students' writing proficiency. It illuminates the potential of using integrated learning via telegram to enhance writing proficiency. Based on this research, there was a clear indication that blended learning was very effective, as seen by noticeable disparities in the outcomes of student writing assessments before and after the learning experience. The data clearly indicated that the implementation of blended learning had a positive impact on the writing abilities of the participants in the experimental group. Furthermore, the experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test assessment. Blended learning was also said to have facilitated the development of metacognitive awareness in pupils about their English writing process. Hence, the results of her research demonstrated that the use of blended learning via the platform of Telegram may serve as an effective instructional approach for enhancing writing proficiency outside the confines of the traditional classroom setting. The researchers report suggests the following recommendations: (1) Facilitating students' use of English in realistic contexts such as emails, discussions, forums, text messages, and blogs; (2) Employing contemporary methods that enhance student

engagement and interaction; and (3) Conducting further research to explore the effects of blended learning on other skills using alternative techniques.

Graham (2006) defined blended learning systems as the combination of face-to-face training with computer-mediated instruction (p. 5). Blended learning is a growing practice that combines conventional classrooms with computer-assisted language learning (CALL) to provide a dynamic and effective integration of different disciplines and institutional objectives (Ożadowicz, 2020; Mohammadi *et al.*, 2021). According to Wright (2017), blended learning courses have significantly grown in popularity and have become a crucial component of college education. These courses include a wide variety of disciplines, from those that include online assignments to those that fully integrate computer-assisted language learning or mobile-assisted language learning with various online activities and information and communication technology to support face-to-face teaching. Blended approaches combine the benefits of synchronous and asynchronous learning processes, enabling students to attain notable academic success (Alsahhi *et al.*, 2019). The cognitive load hypothesis may be used to inform the blended learning technique in situations where novices may experience an excessive burden of novel ideas and terminology (Darabi & Jin, 2013; Kalyuga, 2009).

Blended learning is a cutting-edge educational setting that combines traditional teaching methods with the use of technology that includes media-rich resources. In addition to conventional classroom teaching, learners have the option to use supplemental educational resources, tutorials, or hands-on sessions. Integrating e-learning materials into traditional lectures is a contemporary method of university instruction, as it offers educational benefits derived from auditory, visual, and interactive stimuli produced by online and multimedia resources (Nguyen, 2017). Simultaneously, the ability to regulate oneself and engage with instructors is crucial for kids in order to attain superior academic success, both inside and beyond the classroom. Hence, this study examined the influence of blended and online learning on the acquisition of grammatical knowledge and skills in elementary students. The research question addressed is: "Are there notable disparities in the grammar scores of Saudi EFL learners between blended learning and online learning?" The research suggested that there would be no major differences between blended learning and online learning in terms of Saudi EFL learners' development of grammatical knowledge and skills.

Both conventional and non-formal learning methods have become integral components of modern education. The current investigation examined online and blended learning through the lens of constructivism, a theory that posits that learning is an active process rather than a passive one, where cognitive processing

remains adaptable throughout the ongoing learning journey (Wheatley, 1991). As people consistently acquire information and understanding via their experiences, this notion is particularly relevant to the field of education. Constructivism is often used in scientific and mathematics education, as well as in humanities such as linguistics and literature (Fensham *et al.*, 1994). Constructivist techniques use instructional processes to modify learners' assumptions and misunderstandings in order to facilitate certain learning objectives. Student development is a deliberate reevaluation of existing ideas that challenges cognitive dissonance and encourages the adoption of new concepts via the creation of ideas, while correcting any misconceptions that may have been caused. This stage often happens after the learner has confirmed the genuineness of the notion (Skoda & Doulik, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Proficiency in writing is crucial for the future of learners from high school students to universities. It is very effective in conveying emotions and ideas. The primary challenge encountered by senior high school pupils is their deficiency in accurate written expression. Even fundamental aspects of writing, such as the construction of paragraphs, continue to provide challenges for children. The research seeks to examine the efficacy of blended learning in the context of Paragraph Writing. Research has widely used the blended learning paradigm to enhance writing abilities, specifically in the area of paragraph writing. Consequently, the researcher anticipates determining the efficacy of blended learning for students specifically in the area of paragraph writing. In addition, school instructors will get advantages from the blended learning approach upon discovering this research about its benefits and drawbacks. This methodology may be used by educators to enhance students' proficiency in Paragraph writing abilities. However, both blended and online learning had certain restrictions that hindered learners' language development, therefore necessitating the implementation of efficient learning management. Online learning systems in certain educational contexts failed to adequately provide learners with comprehensive and reliable information and resources. Online learning has been shown to be unable to effectively and automatically diagnose and address individual educational issues. Furthermore, several instructors were unable to proficiently execute online learning as a result of insufficient instruction in technology inside traditional academic practices. The primary challenge encountered by learners is their lack of proficiency in written expression. Even fundamental aspects of writing, such as Paragraph Writing, continue to provide challenges for pupils. Hence, using Blended Learning as the instructional approach is the most effective method to enhance students' proficiency in paragraph writing.

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