

Factors and Challenges in Implementing Blended Learning in English Language Teaching at Tertiary Level

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ABSTRACT

Many universities are implementing blended learning as an effective instructional paradigm integrating the positive features of online learning and face-to-face instruction. In this descriptive case study, the researcher explores the factors and challenges influencing blended learning implementation in English Language Teaching (ELT) in a Malaysian public university. The researcher adopted a mixed-method research design where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected by the following research instruments: survey questionnaire, semi-structured interview guide and document analysis. However, this article will focus mainly on the qualitative findings of the research that were obtained from conducting three audio-taped semi structured interviews and gaining access to the e-learning portals of four instructors for document analysis. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data and showed that all instructors used blended learning in their classes especially as a resource pool. In addition, while the instructors' technological training and their positive attitudes toward using technology tools in their teaching were recognized as factors enhancing blended learning, the poor technological infrastructure and heavy workload were identified as major challenges hindering the optimal utilization of blended learning. The study signals the need to address workload and technology related issues in order to optimize blended learning utilization in ELT at tertiary level.

Keywords

Blended Learning, ELT, Factors and Challenges, Online learning

Introduction

The significant impact of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) on education has resulted in the expansion of the education lexicon to include terms such as online learning, web-based learning and blended learning. Blended or hybrid learning, in which traditional face-to-face instruction is blended with online activities and web-based practices, is implemented in ELT by many language institutions and universities worldwide (Rubio & Thomas, 2014; Reinders, 2012). The blend is meant to provide the learners with an ideal learning paradigm that combines the advantages of both teaching environments while reducing the limitations of each. It provides the learners with all the conveniences of online learning, which includes the ability to access and review course related materials anytime and anywhere, while maintaining the benefits of face-to-face interaction found in the conventional classroom such as direct interaction and classroom discussion (Allen & Seaman, 2014). Moreover, in a blended learning environment, as opposed to traditional face-to-face lectures, students have constant interaction with the course and lengthened exposure to the language since they are required to do assignments or participate in online discussions. Therefore, Blended learning is a better approach as it conceptualizes learning as a constant uninterrupted process rather than single time event. Moreover, it provides all students with an enhanced learning experience that is characterised by being flexible, accessible, interactive, student-centred, self-paced and multifaced (Zhang & Zhu, 2018; Garrison & Vaughan, 2013).

In Malaysia, almost all universities and higher education institutions are adopting blended learning because of its potential in enhancing the teaching and learning (Attaran & Zainuddin, 2018; Mohamad et al., 2015). In those universities and institutions, learners attend conventional face-to-face classes, and they also have access to an online

MOODLE powered platform (the e-learning portal in this research) where they can get notifications, access course content and extra resources, do homework and assignments, take quizzes and tests or have online discussions in a forum. As many universities have implemented blended learning in ELT, it is essential that those universities investigate its utilization and ensure that it is implemented effectively. Even though there is a body of research on blended learning and the use of MOODLE in teaching and learning, that research focuses mainly on the benefits of blended learning; the research on the factors enhancing blended learning and the challenges that hinder its effective implementation is still limited (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019). Therefore, the current study aims at finding out not only how instructors are using blended learning in their English language classes in a Malaysian public university, but also the factors and challenges affecting its effective implementation. The research into what may enhance or impede blended learning along with the instructors' insights and recommendations on how to optimize blended learning in their university will eventually help the university achieve an optimal blended learning environment that maximizes English language teaching and learning. Therefore, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- i. What are the tasks and activities that English language instructors utilize in blended learning?
- ii. What are the factors influencing blended learning implementation in ELT at tertiary level?
- iii. What are the challenges in blended learning implementation in ELT at tertiary level?
- iv. What are the English language instructors' suggestions for an effective blended learning environment in ELT at tertiary level?

Literature Review

Concept of Blended Learning

The wide use of ICTs in education along with the prominent presence of online learning over the past few years has given rise to Blended Learning (Norman et al., 2018) which is also known as hybrid learning. Blended Learning refers to the deliberate mixing of face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated online instructional activities, with the goal of stimulating and supporting learning (Boelens, et al., 2017; Mohamad et al., 2015). According to Allen & Seaman (2014) a course is considered blended or hybrid if between 30% and 80% of the course is conducted online. Blended learning is regarded as a design approach in which both face to face and online instruction are made better by the presence of the other (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). In higher education, the term "hybrid learning" was often used prior to the emergence of the term "blended learning" and now both terms are being used interchangeably (Graham, 2009). In the current study, blended learning means that students attend conventional face-to-face classes once or twice a week along with accessing the university e-Learning portal for resources, quizzes, assignments to be completed online as part of the course requirements.

Blended Learning In ELT: Enhanced Learning and Better Teaching

Previous research on blended learning in ELT highlighted its significance in enhancing the English language learning environment (Zhang & Zhu, 2018; Akbarov, Gonen & Aydogan, 2018; Bakar, Latif, & Ya'acob (2017); Ja'ashan, 2015). Students find learning the language more interesting and enjoyable in blended learning than in traditional classes. They also perceive blended learning as more convenient and flexible in the sense that it enables them to learn anywhere, anytime and at their own pace. In addition to the enhanced language learning environment, it was found that blended learning is effective in developing the learners' language skills (Ghazizadeh & Fatemipour, 2017; Tosun, 2015; Hung & Chou, 2015; Ghahari & Ameri-Golestan, 2014; Guangying, 2014). Not only do learners have access to a lot of resources and language learning materials that are uploaded on the online platform by the instructors, but they also have more opportunities for communication and interaction in English with their instructor and other learners. That interaction is possible through the use of the e-learning portal as a communication tool via forums and chat. Students can ask questions, open discussions and converse in English outside the classroom. Online communication tools give the learners the opportunity to interact with their teachers and peers outside the conventional classroom. Finally, blended learning was found to increase learners' engagement and motivation (Banditvilai, 2016; Vaughan et al., 2013; Liu, 2013). Some students may feel frightened to participate in the conventional face-to-face classroom and hence find the online e-learning platform a stress-free outlet for them to engage and converse comfortably.

The benefits of blended learning are not confined to the English language learners; instructors too can find blended learning as an effective paradigm enhancing their performance in their classes. Blended learning helps the instructors to better understand their students' learning and to effectively track and monitor their students' progress by means of the learners' online records and assessment tools (Tomlinson & Whittaker, 2013). That will enable teachers to provide responsive teaching to their students when needed. Furthermore, the online learning tools allow teachers to design lessons and learning activities flexibly and efficiently. Instructors can encourage the learners to familiarize themselves with the content online before their face-to-face class so that more face-to-face class time is assigned to discussions (Joosten et al., 2013), exchanging information and ideas or practicing communicating in English. In short, blended learning assists teachers in carrying out pedagogical practices that facilitate students' active, collaborative and interactive learning of the English language. Therefore, blended learning is beneficial to the English language instructors in terms of helping them gain more understanding about the learning of their students and boosting their performance their teaching quality.

Factors and Challenges of Implementing Blended Learning

The effective utilization of blended learning depends on several factors among which are the quality of the utilized virtual environment (Hubackova & Semradova, 2016), teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards technology and blended learning (Garrison & Vaughan, 2013; Moskal & Cavanagh, 2013), teachers' technological knowledge and skills (Betts, 2014) and teachers' workload (Banditvilai, 2016; Hamdan et al., 2017; Ja'ashan, 2015; Blanchette, 2016). Since the implementation of blended learning depends immensely on the use of computers and web-based technologies, a high-quality technological infrastructure will result in a successful blended learning environment. However, an inadequate technical infrastructure, such as poor internet connectivity or other technical issues, will be a challenge hindering the effective implementation of blended learning (Banditvilai, 2016; Guangying, 2014; Hamdan et al., 2017). Therefore, in order to effectively implement blended learning, it is necessary for institutions to update and maintain the technological infrastructure and make easy, flexible and competent access to required technology by learners and teachers.

Methods

This research is a descriptive case study using a mixed mode methodology approach in investigating the factors and challenges in implementing blended learning in ELT at tertiary level in a Malaysian public university. According to Creswell (2014), a mixed mode design is collecting, combining and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data with the aim of providing the researcher with robust data from multiple resources and hence gaining in-depth and better understanding of the research problem. This article presents the qualitative segment of the research; therefore, the researcher focuses on the face-to-face semi-structured interviews and the document analysis of the instructors' rubrics of tasks and activities exemplifying their implementation of blended learning in their classes. Since The objective of this research is to investigate the factors and challenges in implementing blended learning in ELT at tertiary level; purposive sampling of English language instructors who are using blended learning in their English language classes at the university is the most convenient form of sampling for the interviews and document analysis. Besides, the sample is heterogeneous in terms of sampling both male and female respondents from different ages, educational degrees and experience levels. Hence, the study is not exclusive to a certain group of younger instructors who may be regarded as technology savvy. Therefore, the respondents of the study provided the researcher with a holistic wide range of perspectives relating to the topic of the study.

The researcher prepared the interview guide containing all the questions that need to be covered in the interview. The interview questions were validated by two senior TESL instructors at the university. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted until saturation point of qualitative data was reached after three interviews with English language instructors teaching English academic courses. All interviews were audio taped for the purpose of analysis. For document analysis, four instructors have given the researcher full access to their e-Learning portal where the researcher collected samples of rubrics uploaded by the English instructors. The rubrics exemplified the tasks, activities or assignments that the instructors utilize in blended learning. Moreover, these samples provided evidence to the researcher that the instructors are actually implementing blended learning in their classes. They also provided insights into how the respondents were implementing blended learning and what kinds of tasks or activities they were usually

using in blended learning. Therefore, those samples served as an insightful tool into the quality of blended learning implemented in ELT at the university. The research qualitative data derived from the interviews and document analysis were analyzed in narrative manner by using thematic analysis.

Results & Discussion

In this section, the researcher provides an overall summary of the research findings in Table 1 followed by a detailed narrative thematic analysis and a discussion of the qualitative data collected on the factors and challenges of implementing blended learning in ELT. The findings and discussion are presented according to the topic of each research question.

Table 1. Summary of Findings

Research Questions	Findings
<i>What are the tasks and activities that English language instructors utilize in blended learning?</i>	Resources Pool Activities platform Discussion forums
<i>What are the factors influencing the implementation of blended learning in ELT at tertiary level?</i>	Experience with technology Positive attitudes
<i>What are the challenges in the implementation of blended learning in ELT at tertiary level?</i>	<p>Workload</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Busy work schedule ▪ Crowded classes <p>Technological infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lacking updated computers and software in many classes ▪ Lacking a reliable internet connection
<i>What are the English instructors' suggestions for the implementation of blended learning in ELT at tertiary level?</i>	<p>Technology related</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equip all college classes with updated computers and software ▪ Provide instructors and students with a high-speed reliable internet connection on campus. <p>Workload related</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better work schedule ▪ Classes with no more than 20 students

Tasks and Activities English Language Instructors Utilize in Blended Learning

All three interviewed respondents have implemented blended learning in their English language classes. The 3rd interviewee stated, "I feel like I am always in touch with my students." The second respondent mentioned that Blended Learning is very important especially in the language classroom because the amount of exposure to the language is lengthened in Blended Learning. She stated, "Students practice the language outside the classroom. A two-hour classroom doesn't provide sufficient practice." All three interviewees agreed on resources pool and activities platform as the main uses of blended learning in their classes. The first most important use of blended learning was the implementation of the e-Learning portal as a "resources pool" where the instructors park all sorts of materials and resources, pertaining to the course they are teaching, for reference to the students to be accessed anytime during the semester. These resources could be books, articles, audio or video files or even external links to other websites. "I

usually share PowerPoint presentations of notes, and sometimes I share links to other websites like Kahoot or MyLine where students can have extra practice”, said the first interviewee.

Activities, such as the chat system for students and instructors to communicate or the forum where the instructor or a student opens a discussion and the instructor or other class members would reply and comment, were amongst the priorities of English language instructors when using blended learning. The first interviewee stated, “Forums are the best! In discussion forums students can reflect on what they have learnt or brainstorm ideas on a topic and get ready for discussion in the upcoming class.” “Speaking and discussion in class can be intimidating for some students and I think the forums give the students the chance to voice their ideas in a more relaxed way. Besides, it helps them to improve their writing”, said the third interviewee. All three interviewees did not use the e-learning website for notifications such as class cancellations or any course updates. Instead, they have relied on WhatsApp groups for that matter. As for assignments and quizzes, all three respondents were not very enthusiastic about students doing assignments or quizzes online. “Activities and discussion are perfectly fine in blended learning. But not quizzes or graded assignments. I want to make sure that the students are genuinely attempting the quizzes themselves, so I’d rather ask them to do any quizzes face to face in the classroom,” explained the first interviewee.

Document analysis of the e-Learning portal from four instructors exemplifying the tasks and activities they have mostly utilized have shown matching results with the interviews: resources pool and activities platform are the two main tasks utilized by the English language instructors in their classes. Figure 1 is a sample representing an instructor’s use of blended learning as a resources pool. The instructor had uploaded PowerPoint presentations of notes related to the weeks’ topic as a reference to the students that they can access them anytime.

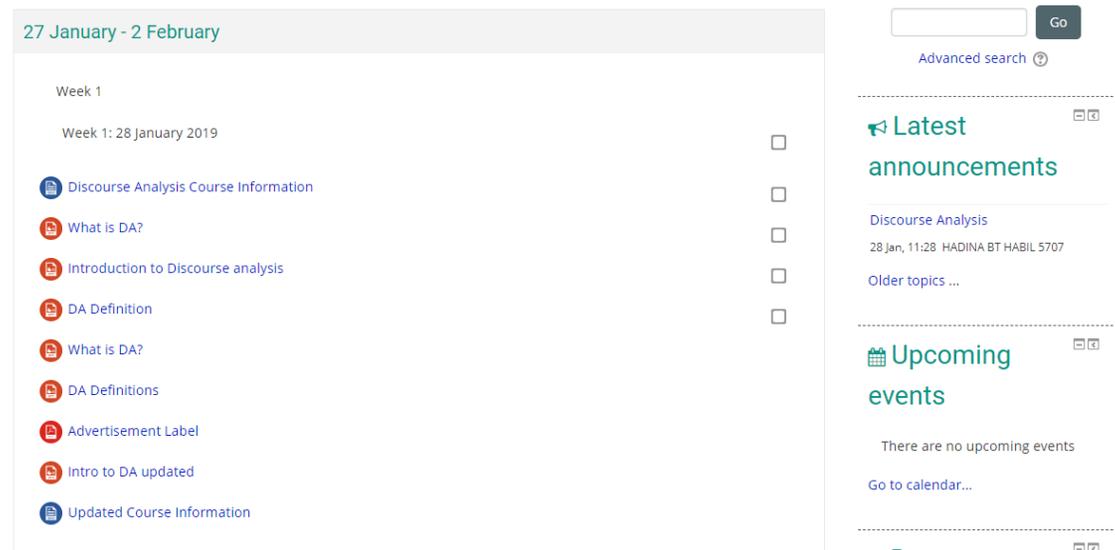


Figure 1. Sample of Blended Learning as Resources Pool

Figure 2 is another example of how the instructor has implemented blended learning as a resource pool and an activities platform simultaneously. The instructor notified the students of what they will be doing in Week 3 class and posted an external link to YouTube where the students are supposed to watch a video related to the lesson’s topic. Upon watching the video that the instructor has uploaded as a resource, students are assigned to work on a brainstorming activity.

Figure 2. Sample of Blended Learning as Resources Pool and Activities Platform

As it has been pointed out during the interviews, the discussion forums are the most usually used activity that the researcher found instructors use while analysing the online rubrics on the e-Learning website. Figure 3 shows a sample of a forum discussion task that the instructor has assigned to the learners. The rubric of the forum discussion stated that any student can start the discussion and that there will not be a moderator. The lecturer advised her students to respond to the assigned articles and to the comments intellectually. She has also requested that the students provide a justification for their stance in case they agree or disagree with the content of the articles or to some of the comments.

Figure 3. Sample of a Forum Rubric

Results from the semi-structured interviews and the document analysis in relation to the first research question have shown that all respondents have implemented blended learning in their classes for a variety of reasons especially the constant immediate interaction with the learners and the learners' amount of exposure to the language. Of the many tasks and activities blended learning is used for, all respondents have used blended learning as a resource pool and an activities platform. The English language instructors have shared various types of materials and resources for the

students in order to enhance their learning of the English language subject that they are teaching. Those materials included PDF files, audio materials, videos and PowerPoint presentations relating to the topics that need to be covered.

Discussion forums, being a significant outlet for students and instructors to discuss, brainstorm or debate ideas, were amongst the main activities implemented by the research respondents when they used the e-Learning portal as an activity platform. In their case study on discussion forums being an important blended learning tool, Miniaoui & Kaur (2014) concluded that discussion forums are an essential learning tool in blended learning. Moreover, they help learners who feel shy and are unwilling to participate in classroom discussions and allow them to express their views on the topics posted on discussion forums. Smith & Hardaker (2000) stated in the same context that the main benefit of a discussion forum lies in its asynchronous nature, allowing for wider student involvement and giving students enough time to process their thoughts. Therefore, discussion forum activities are essential blended learning activities that the instructors utilized in order to engage all the learners and promote their English language learning.

Factors Influencing the Implementation of Blended Learning

The researcher has derived two main themes related to the factors influencing the implementation of blended learning from the interviews: positive attitudes and technological training. The first interviewee stated, "If instructors don't feel positive about blended learning, they won't use it even if the university asks them to!" The third interviewee explained that she is positive about blended learning because she always feels that she is in touch with the students even outside the classroom. The second interviewee capitalized on the benefits of blended learning for the English language learners as the main reason of her positive attitude towards blended learning. She focused especially on the length of practice and exposure to the language as the main benefit of blended learning to the English language learners.

The first interviewee attributed the positive attitudes towards blended learning partially to the technological training sessions organized by the university during which instructors are familiarized with the significance and benefits of blended learning to both the learners and the instructors. Technological training has been identified by the researcher as a theme contributing, as a factor, to the successful implementation of blended learning. The second respondent said, "The University provides training sessions on e-learning, Moodle, Kahoot and creating websites. Training isn't a problem." The third interviewee similarly stated, "The university quite regularly arranges e-learning training sessions and many instructors sign up." Those regular training sessions provided by the university enhance instructors' experience with educational technology and, in turn, shape their attitudes towards technology and blended learning in their classroom.

Semi-structured interview results showed that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the technological training offered by the university. The university offers training sessions on blended learning, LMS and other applications. Experience with technology resulting from technological training is an important factor leading to the effective implementing of blended learning. This is in line with Betts' study (2014) that concluded that the utilization of unfamiliar technologies necessary for the delivery of blended learning courses is one of the primary reasons why many teachers refrain from using blended learning. As for the instructors' attitudes, all respondents have expressed positive attitudes towards blended learning highlighting the benefits it offers them and their students in a blended learning environment. Those findings are consistent with the findings of Oh and Park (2009) who concluded that higher education instructors usually have positive attitudes towards blended learning and that they believe that blended learning enhances their instruction. The researcher finds that having positive attitudes towards technology and blended learning is a key factor that could enhance or impede the implementation of blended learning. Teachers who have negative attitudes towards technology and its implementation in teaching will resist the implementation of blended learning (Moskal and Cavanagh, 2013). Hence, instructors' attitudes play a major role in the effective implementation of blended learning.

Challenges in the Implementation of Blended Learning in ELT

Semi-structured interviews with the research respondents have revealed two major themes in relation to the challenges encountered by the English language instructors when implementing Blended Learning in their classes. The first theme is the heavy workload. All three interviewees expressed dissatisfaction with the workload element of blended learning considering it the major hindrance to the implementation of blended learning in their classes. The first interviewee said that both time and classroom density are troublesome for her. She stated, "I teach five classes of more than 30 students each! How am I supposed to implement blended learning?" She added, "I love blended learning, but I won't be able

to be a very effective teacher in the sense that I won't be able to follow and respond to each one of my students promptly!" The third interviewee's statement was in the same context, "Even after class hours I need to get online to respond to my students or monitor their discussions. How am I going to do that with the amount of work I am already doing in the many classes I am already teaching?" The second interviewee's dissatisfaction had another side, "Many teachers don't mind the workload and they actually do it. However, the problem is teachers' extra work isn't recognized or rewarded by the university!"

The technological infrastructure was the second theme derived by the researcher from the interviews on the challenges of implementing blended learning. The challenge of technological infrastructure manifested itself in terms of computers and reliable high-speed internet connection. The first interviewee stated, "Even though the system is user friendly and there is technical support, the infrastructure is a challenge!" Similarly, the second interviewee said, "In many colleges where teachers teach English classes there are no computers in the classrooms. Even in my office, I had to buy my own computer!" The third interviewee mentioned that the desktops that the university installed in some colleges are outdated in terms of hardware and software. Moreover, the university provides its students and staff with a free Wi-Fi; however, the connection is unreliable and usually the connection is very slow. She concluded her dissatisfaction with technology in the university by saying, "If the technological infrastructure isn't good or supportive, you can throw blended learning out of the window!" That reflects how the technological infrastructure is an indispensable element in the implementation of blended learning.

Therefore, all interview respondents have expressed that the workload that blended learning entails when they are already working on busy schedules in classes comprising sometimes more than 30 students is one of the two main challenges in effectively implementing blended learning. Betts (2014) found that amongst the main reasons for the teachers' resistance to the implementation of blended learning are the additional workload and the insufficient time. Consequently, putting extra pressure on the instructors in terms of the size of the classes they are teaching, or their busy schedules will impact their implementation of blended learning and may even lead them to refrain from utilizing it. In addition, the poor technological infrastructure, represented in the lack of a stable high-speed internet connection and the lack of updated computers and software in many classrooms in the colleges where they deliver their courses is an issue hindering their effective implementation of blended learning in the university. This issue related to the technology infrastructure, especially the speed of the internet connection, is one theme commonly reported as a challenge in the implementation of online learning (Thang et al., 2013; Wright, 2017; Sari & Wahyudin, 2019).

Suggestions for an Effective Blended Learning Environment in ELT

At the end of the semi-structured interviews the researcher asked the participants about their suggestions and recommendations for the optimal implementation of Blended Learning in their university. The instructors' responses provided the researcher with answers to the last research question, and those responses came in light of the factors and challenges of implementing blended learning that the participants have responded to and discussed with the researcher. The researcher has categorized the instructors' suggestions during the interviews into two main themes: technology related, and work schedule related.

The technology related suggestions included the need for an uninterrupted reliable high-speed internet connection in the university campus along with the need to equip all classes and instructors' offices with up to date computers. "I bought my own computer for my office, and many of the colleges where we teach classes don't have computers," stated the first interviewee. The second interviewee added, "Blended learning is based on technology, so if that technology isn't available then what is the point?" The third interviewee suggested that the university should provide access to a reliable uninterrupted internet connection. She explained, "I know I have got my own personal internet bundle and can do blended learning related work from home, but I like to do my work at the work place and it is the university's responsibility to provide us with the necessary gadgets that help us to work effectively!" Therefore, effective implementation of blended learning requires providing the instructors with updated computers, updated software and a high-speed reliable internet connection.

The other theme in relation to the instructors' suggestions was related to workload and a better work schedule where instructors have the time to effectively implement blended learning in their classes. The first interviewee said, "Blended learning requires a lot of time spent on the internet to follow the students' work online and provide prompt feedback when necessary, so I suggest that the university lessens the current workload!" She complained that currently she is

teaching five academic writing classes and each class has more than 30 students. That workload will not give her the chance to effectively implement blended learning and follow up her students' writing work and tasks online. The third interviewee proposed that the university may need to hire more teachers to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of students being admitted to the university. "With the current workload, I will apply blended learning but not efficiently of course," she added. Therefore, the university needs to consider recruiting more teachers to keep up with the increasing number of students. Adequate staffing would result in reasonable workloads for all teachers allowing them to effectively implement blended learning.

Therefore, from the instructors' perspectives, the effective implementation of blended learning requires providing the instructors and the students with the technological infrastructure necessary for a blended learning environment. In addition, instructors' work schedules need to be modified in a way that allows the instructors to have more time, deducted from face-to-face teaching time, to be dedicated to the online segment of blended learning where they have to follow students' work on the e-Learning website. Furthermore, the university needs to consider the issue of classroom density: a crowded classroom will definitely be a hindrance to the implementation of blended learning where instructors will not be able to cater for all their students' individual language learning needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study has investigated blended learning in terms of the factors and challenges in implementing it in ELT at university level. An optimal blended learning environment is achievable by maintaining instructors' technology experience and boosting their positive attitudes towards technology in general and blended learning in particular. The university administrators can make sure that they are providing the instructors with more training sessions and workshops in order to maintain and boost the instructors' technology experience and to raise their awareness of the significance of blended learning and how it can impact their instruction and the learning of their students. Positive attitudes towards blended learning can be reinforced by offering incentives to the instructors and recognizing their effort in blended learning. Furthermore, overcoming the barriers of implementing blended learning would be an important step that the university administration should take in order to effectively utilize blended learning as a promising avenue to promote ELT at tertiary level. The administration should provide the technological infrastructure necessary for the optimal implementation of blended learning by equipping all classes with updated computers and software as well as providing instructors and students with a high-speed reliable internet connection. Moreover, administrators should lessen the workload of the instructors since blended learning requires the instructors' efforts and presence in both the conventional classroom as well as the e-Learning website. The number of the students in the English language classrooms should also be kept in consideration when enrolling students into classes; classes of no more than 20 students are optimal, from the perspective the instructors, for an effective blended learning implementation. The university should also consider hiring more teachers so that the workload is flexible enough to allow teachers to comfortably and effectively implement blended learning.

Limitations & Future Research

There are some limitations in the current study that should be taken into account. First, the study was limited to only one public university in Malaysia. Therefore, the study findings might not be applicable to other universities. However, the findings might be applicable to other universities that have similar context and characteristics of the university in the current study. Second, the study was limited to the number of the English language instructors who were willing to participate in the study by responding to the survey questionnaire, agreeing to be interviewed or sharing their online rubrics on their e-Learning for document analysis. Therefore, the research respondents might not be representative of the population of English language instructors teaching at tertiary level. Finally, the study investigated the factors and challenges in implementing blended learning in ELT at tertiary level from the perspective of only the English language instructors; Students' or administrators' perspectives were not within the scope of the study.

As for the recommendations for future researcher, first, it is recommended that the study should be conducted in other universities in Malaysia to investigate the factors and challenges of implementing blended learning in ELT. Those future studies may widen the scope of the current study to include examining the relationship between these factors and challenges and the demographic data of the participants. Second, the researcher recommends that the study should

be conducted at other educational levels and in multiple disciplines. Third, it is recommended that this study should be conducted to include other parties in the educational institutions, for example students or administrators. The current study has investigated the factors and challenges in implementing blended learning in ELT at tertiary level from the instructors' point of view. Therefore, students' or administrators' perspectives on blended learning and its effectiveness should be researched in order to gain deeper and more comprehensive understanding of blended learning from a wider range of participants. Finally, this study was a descriptive case study limited to the Moodle platform which the instructors are using in their blended learning classes at the university. Other future studies are recommended to compare Moodle to other LMS such as Blackboard in order to gauge which LMS is the most efficient in implementing blended learning.

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