Full Length Research Paper

The effectiveness of using blended learning for teaching English language vocabulary for 1st grade students at Al Tafila Directorate of Education

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The purpose of this study was to identify the effect of using blended education strategy in teaching English language vocabulary among first-grade students in public schools at Al-Tafila Directorate of Education. The researcher used quasi-experimental approach in conducting this study, as the experimental group, which consisted of (46) students, were taught by the blended learning method, and the control group, which consisted of (46) students, were taught by the traditional method. The researcher also applied a pre and post achievement test, and the results of the study revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups in the pretest, whereas, statistically significant differences were found at the level of (0.01) in favor of the experimental group in the post-test. The study recommended the importance of using blended learning in teaching English vocabulary at the elementary level.

INTRODUCTION

Technical progress is the distinguishing feature between the current era and past eras, as technology has become the most important variable affecting individuals and institutions in all areas of life. There are many forms of technology and its uses vary according to the field and need. In the educational field, we find that the computer and the Internet have brought about a quantum leap in interaction and communication, the role of the teacher and in the method of obtaining information and building self-experiences and opening the way for students to self-learning and active, which in turn led to the emergence of the concept of e-learning (Al-Sweilem, 2016).

The digital technology represented by the Internet and the international information network has contributed to changing the features of the educational system with its various elements. For example, it contributed to changing the teacher's role from a mere conveyor of information to a teacher capable of playing the role of facilitator, clarifier, rectifier, mentor, trainer and constructive leader, and it also contributed to changing the role of the learner from a mere recipient of knowledge to the role of investigator, researcher and discoverer. These indicators

confirm that the age of digital information has led to a change in educational practices that prevailed in the recent past (Abdulaziz, 2008).

With this development in the field of communication and information, the need for e-learning has become urgent, the emergence of which has brought about many developments and contributed to human development and the development of the education process, e-learning and training projects began to appear, and a number of virtual universities were established, and modern technologies from communication networks and computers were used in education (Salama, 2005).The expansion of the use of e-learning in educational institutions has increased and its adoption as an educational approach that supports the potentials provided by e-learning that meet the needs of learners and teachers and remove the barriers caused by traditional education.

E-learning is very important in the field of education, and many educational institutions have applied it and held lectures and seminars to introduce it. In the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the National Plan for Information Technology was developed, whose objectives included focusing on the importance of optimal

employment of information technology in education and training in all its stages.

The application of e-learning in public education will bring about a decisive change in the reality of the educational system and its future and will change the concept about the book, the school and education in general, and perhaps this is the main feature of the features of future education, through which teachers and students will be able to benefit from information technology in every aspect or component. One of the elements of the educational process, whether at home, in the classroom, or in their practical and professional life beyond the school Arab Bureau of Education (2003).

With the expansion of the application of e-learning, some obstacles began to appear in its widespread use, especially in public education. This is because it lacks face-to-face human interaction between the teacher and the learner, and its application requires an expensive infrastructure (Abdulaziz, 2008), as it focuses on the cognitive aspect and neglects the emotional and skillful side. In addition, the transition to fully e-learning requires an incremental process and prepares institutions and individuals to use it.

From here, the concept of Blended Learning appeared to overcome the obstacles of e-learning. This type of education combines e-learning with regular traditional education, it is an education that does not eliminate e-learning or regular education, but rather blends the two together, as it combines e-learning activities with face-to-face traditional education activities.

Blended learning came to combine the advantages of electronic learning with the advantages of traditional education.

Taker pointed out that blended learning provides flexibility for teachers and students, as teachers can design a lesson that integrate the best of traditional education with the features available in electronic materials to reach the desired educational outcomes. The blended education frees the teacher from classroom restrictions and limits the provision of scientific material to the class, as he can take advantage of electronic materials to give part of the lesson inside the traditional classroom and complete the lesson electronically at home or vice versa(Tucker, 2012).

There is increasing global emphasis on the use of technology in education; Because of its positive effects, especially in the teaching of foreign languages, McDougald (2005) stated that the use of modern technology is not the only source for language teaching, but if it is used in the correct way it will have a great impact in English as a foreign language classes.

The use of technology in popularizing language is not a modern thing. Technology has been used for more than 45 years through CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) programs as a computer aid in language learning. Kessler and Plakans, 2001 stated that the use of CALL programs aims to activate realistic and cooperative activities. Which guides learners to be self-

learners, as it gives learners the opportunity to contribute to the design of the instructional material, which enhances the motivation to learn. With the development in the use of computers, the computer connected to the Internet is considered a tool and a source of information, and thus it contributes to the development of higher thinking skills, creativity and scientific research skills, and thus the development of social communication and learning skills.

The Problem of the Study

The vocabulary is the basic element and the first step in learning languages in general and learning the English language in particular. Therefore, it was necessary for the English language learner to develop their stock of vocabulary in order to be able to master the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Illham, 2009).There are a number of methods practiced in teaching English vocabulary, and one of those methods is that based on blended learning, where technology works to invest children's activity in the learning process, it focuses on their motivation, as it achieves pleasure, happiness and the acquisition of many concepts.

Questions of the Study

This study seeks to answer the following question:
1. Are there differences between the two study groups in the acquisition of the English language vocabulary in the post test?
2. Are there differences between the two study groups in the achievement of English language vocabulary in the post test?

The Importance of the Study

The significance of the study emerges from:
- This research deals with vital variables, as it is expected that English language teachers will benefit from its results in creating an effective learning environment within the classroom at the primary level.
- The results of the current study can contribute to conceptualizing training programs based on the style of blended learning in teaching for primary school students.
- The study is expected to open a way to start new research and studies related to the current variables and the extent of their impact on the psychological, educational and educational variables.
- It may benefit English language curriculum designers at the elementary level by employing blended learning in building English language lessons.

The Objectives of the Study

- To show if there is a difference between the two groups in the pretest.

- To show if there is a difference between the two groups in the posttest

Definition of Study Terms

Blended Learning: Blended learning refers to the process of mixing both types of education together, technological and traditional, either inside or outside the class.
English vocabulary: A group of English words, and it is defined in this study as the English words contained in the study units ((My Family, Colors, My Room, Animals) in the first basic grade.

Previous Studies

As for the study of Wu, et al. (2013), it aimed to find out the extent of satisfaction of students studying English as a foreign language with the use of blended learning and to identify the factors affecting this satisfaction. The researcher prepared a questionnaire for the purpose of the study and was applied to 360 first-year students and graduates from Dalian University of Technology (DUT). The results of the study indicated that students showed positive trends towards the blended learning model in teaching English as a foreign language. Where they expressed their full satisfaction with the model, and the classroom environment and their willingness to study this model again. Graduate students were more satisfied than freshmen. The existence of a correlation between the educational atmosphere, pleasure, ease of use, social communication, content characteristics, performance expectations, operating system, and student satisfaction with the blended learning model.

Al-Shehri (2013) study aimed at identifying the effect of using blended learning using the black board system on learning some English grammar for students of the English language department at King Khalid University at levels: remembering, comprehension and application, individually and collectively. The study also aimed to identify students' attitudes towards using blended learning in English grammar. The results of the study showed that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post-achievement test for English language grammar at levels of: remembering, comprehension, and application individually and collectively in favor of the experimental group. The results also showed that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post measurement of the tendency towards the use of blended learning in learning English grammar.

The study of So (2013) aimed at knowing the perception of English language students as a second language of a generalization model for writing in the second language, using the combined instruction and the effect of this model on writing skills in university education. To obtain the information and data, the researcher used a questionnaire, traditional and electronic class notes, electronic student writings, post interviews for students, a pre-test, mid-term test, and a post test. The results of the study showed students' acceptance of the model. They found it useful and helped develop their writing skills. The template was also effective in developing writing skills. The model also reduced the burden of final reviewing the written texts, as this process was a participatory process between the students themselves, the students and the teacher.

As for the study Thang, et al, (2012), it aimed to investigate students 'perceptions of the use of blended teaching in academic English language teaching. The researcher used group interviews of 34 students to collect data and information about the redesigned English language course for social sciences, using blended learning (ESS), the extent to which it met their linguistic needs and its suitability for the students' different language levels and their different interests, and the problems they encountered when studying this course. The results showed that students accepted the new course and that it fulfilled their language needs in a satisfactory manner, although students with a high level of language did not find it enjoyable. The students also showed their acceptance of electronic content, but there are two main problems: poor Internet connection, and high electronic costs.

As for Wang's study (2011), it aimed to know the effectiveness of using multimedia in an integrated learning environment, where students participate in multiple presentations and group discussions in the "Reading in English" course. And in order to reach the results, the researcher used a proposal evaluation form prepared by Levy and Kimber and a questionnaire for the effectiveness of this experiment in developing the English language. One of the most important results of the study is that group discussions enabled students to learn from each other, understand different points of view, and practice the language in writing.

In the same context, the study of Al-Qadi (2011) aimed to know the effect of teaching Arabic using the blended learning strategy on developing verbal communication skills among seventh-grade students in Jordan. In order to achieve the study goal, the researcher prepared an open-ended achievement test, in which the development of verbal communication skills was taken into account: (listening, speaking, and reading). The study found the superiority of the experimental group that was studied using the blended learning strategy in developing verbal communication skills. On the control group that studied in the traditional way in the post application of the achievement test, the study also indicated that there are statistically significant differences due to the gender of students in favor of females.

Qutoos (2010) study aimed to investigate the effect of using blended education on the achievement of fourth-grade female students in the Arabic language subject, and to identify the impact of computer experience on

achievement and to achieve the goal of the study, the study tools represented in an educational program prepared in a way that mixes e-learning with the regular method, in addition to the achievement test prepared to measure the achievement of female students. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences at the level (α = 0.05) between the mean scores of the experimental group students and the mean scores of the control group students and in favor of the experimental group. The results also indicated that there were statistically significant differences between female students with moderate computer experience and female students with average computer experience in favor of average computer experience, while there were no statistically significant differences between female students with average computer experience and students with great computer experience.

As for the Shih (2010) study, it aimed to build a blended learning model that combines face-to-face teaching and online learning using the instructional notation for one of the directed English language courses "Public Speaking in English". And to collect information and data, the researcher used student blogs, videos, student self-assessment, and a questionnaire on learning satisfaction using the BLSS and interviews with students. The study yielded the following results: The blended learning model using video-based blogging could be an effective way to learn public speaking in English as a second language, as students showed enjoyment and satisfaction with the blended learning model under study. Blogging helped 82% of students develop their English-speaking skills. Students learn how to use multimedia and blogging software through collaborative learning. By watching their videos, students were able to identify their mistakes and weaknesses and then correct them, and this could not be provided in face-to-face learning.

Saffkova's study (2010) aimed to find out how effective the blended learning model was in improving the basic skills of reading in English for first-level students studying English as a foreign language in the undergraduate program at the Technical University of Liberec. Czech Republic. And to achieve the aim of the study, the researcher used a placement test at the beginning of the study, the results of the achievement test at the end of the course, and a questionnaire to determine the students' attitudes towards this course. The results of the achievement test showed improvement in students 'level of reading skills, especially the ability to construct meaning and interpret events and distinguish between important and non-important events.

The study of Al-Bashir et al. (2009) aimed to measure the effect of blended education in improving the performance of students of the lower basic stage of the skill of listening in the Arabic language. To achieve this goal, the researchers intentionally selected two private schools, one for males and the other for females, and choosing two divisions of fourth grade from each school, one of which represented the control sample, and the

other represents the experimental sample. The researchers used the Gold Wave program with the experimental sample. While only traditional education was used with the control sample. And the impact of blended learning on students' performance was measured through an achievement test specifically designed to measure students 'achievement in the main auditory comprehension skills: (Auditory recollection, auditory discrimination, audio loading and criticism). The results indicated that there were statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the post-test results for the benefit of the experimental group that studied using blended learning.

Chen (2006) study aimed to know the effectiveness of a blended learning model, which integrates e-learning in traditional education classes to teach the general English language course for the first grade at the Technical College in Taiwan. And the effect of this model on students' learning processes, especially its effect on the ability to self-organized learning. The researcher used the semi-experimental approach consisting of two groups: a control group studied using the traditional method, and an experimental group studied using the blended learning model, with traditional education. The statistical results indicated that there were no differences in the learning outcomes or the susceptibility to self-organized learning between the results of the experimental and control groups, which indicates that the blended education has no effect in teaching the general English language course for the first grade at the Technical College in Taiwan. But the results showed a correlation between higher learning outcomes and susceptibility to self-organized learning.

METHODOLOGY

Study Approach

The researcher used the semi-experimental approach because it suits the study nature and variables.

The Sample of the Study

The sample comprised of (92) 1st grade students in 2019/2020, where they were divided into two groups: (46) control and (46) experimental group, and they were chosen by the random method.

The Study Tool

The tool of the study was "English vocabulary test", as the researcher prepared a test for the targeted vocabulary in units that were taught by the blended learning method.

The Validity and Reliability of the Tool

The researcher applied the test on (15) students outside the sample to ensure its clarity and difficulty. The questions

are clear and appropriate to the students' level of knowledge. As for the level of difficulty and distinction of the test items, they were acceptable, as shown in Table 1. Table 1 shows that the difficulty coefficients' valueswere from (0.452) to (0.679) and are considered acceptable coefficients due to their proximity to (0.05), and the discrimination coefficients ranged between (0.436 and 0.726), which are acceptable values according to Abel's criterion for the values of the discrimination coefficient.

Also, the stability was calculated by using the Goddard Richard coefficient, and it reached (0.762), which is a high coefficient for this type of tests.

THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The result of the first question: "Are there differences in acquiring English language vocabulary between the experimental group and the control group in the pretest?" Mann–Whitney test was used for the two independent samples to reveal the significance of the differences between the mean scores of the two groups in the pretest. Table . 2 illustrates   this.

Table 1: Measuring levels of difficulty and discrimination for the English language vocabulary test

Question number	Difficulty Coefficient	Discrimination coefficient
1	0.679	0.726
2	0.452	0.682
3	0.546	0.436

Table 2: Results of the Mann Whitney test for the experimental group and the control group in the English language pre-vocabulary test

Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	"T" value	Sig
Experimental	46	2.59	1.27	3.28	0.21
Control	46	2.73	1.38		

Table 2 showed a statistically significant differences between the scores of the two groups in the pre-test as there is a convergence in the arithmetic means of the two groups, and the level of significance is greater than (0.05). This indicates that the two groups are equal.

The results of the second question: "Are there differences in English language acquisition between the experimental group and the control group in the pretest? Mann-Whitney test was used for the two independent samples to answer the question, and Table 3 illustrates this.

Table 3: Results of the Mann Whitney test for the experimental group and the control group in the English language vocabulary post test

Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	"T" value	Sig
Experimental	46	2.79	1.34	5.28	0.01
Control	46	5.82	2.68		

Through the previous table, we find that there are differences in the English language vocabulary tests between the scores of the control group and the experimental group, in the post test, where the value of

(t) reached (5.28), which is a statistically function at the level of (0.01) for the benefit of the experimental group. This means that students who studied the blended

learning method got higher grades than students who studied the traditional method.

The researcher interprets this by clarifying how using a mixture of technology and traditional learning work to attract the interest of the learners, and renews the learners 'activity because of the fun and pleasure it contains.

CONCLUSION

Blended learning contributes to significantly reducing learning costs compared to applying e-learning alone. In addition to providing direct contact between the trained teacher, it increases human interdependence and strengthens social relations between students among them and between teachers and their students alike, as it contributes to the enrichment of raising the quality of educational curricula and increases their efficiency and the efficiency of the teachers who are based on them. Blended education employs all the characteristics of technology in the design, implementation and use of school curricula, and achieves the flexibility required to meet the many needs of teachers of different educational levels, ages and schedules. It provides civilizational communication between many cultures and creates a strong link between them to exchange benefits in all scientific and practical fields. It also achieves integration in the formative and final evaluation systems for learners and teachers, enriches student experiences, enhances educational opportunities for them, and provides a transition from group education to student-centered education, which necessarily leads to increased interaction. Since it is difficult to indoctrinate some materials electronically, the blended education system was a suitable solution to all these obstacles, with its flexibility in implementing educational programs and methods of teaching them and increasing the opportunity for their generalization and internationalization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher proposed the following:
1. The use of blended learning to gain vocabulary of the English language.
2. The use of the English language in acquiring vocabulary from outside the textbook, for example, the members of the experimental group acquired a number of words that were not included in the textbook, such as through the use of the Internetز
3. Creating courses for teachers to explain how to use blended learning to teach students vocabulary of the English language.

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