

Integrating Blended Learning in Intensive English Course in Higher Education: A Theoretical and Practical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the implementation of blended learning in the Intensive English Course in Higher Education. The integration of online learning through English Discoveries (ED) with offline classroom sessions aims to improve students' English proficiency by offering flexible, interactive, and learner-centered experiences. The paper is grounded in constructivist and social learning theories, offering both a theoretical foundation and practical analysis of this pedagogical approach. The study employed a qualitative descriptive method to investigate student and lecturer perspectives. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with five English instructors and ten students, classroom observations, and document analysis of course syllabi and student task records. The findings suggest that blended learning fosters greater learner autonomy, digital literacy, and language competence. Students reported increased motivation due to the accessibility and interactivity of ED, while instructors emphasized that face-to-face interaction remained vital for developing speaking skills and addressing comprehension difficulties. However, challenges such as time management difficulties, inconsistent motivation, and technological barriers (particularly unstable internet access) were also identified. The study concludes that successful blended learning implementation requires adequate institutional support, technological infrastructure, and continuous professional development for instructors.

Keywords: Blended Learning; English Discoveries; Intensive English; Constructivism; Digital Literacy.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has fundamentally transformed the landscape of higher education, compelling institutions to rethink traditional pedagogical approaches and embrace innovation in teaching and learning. The rising expectations for innovation and adaptability in education have encouraged higher education institutions to adopt technology-enhanced learning approaches that can better prepare students for the demands of the 21st century (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Among these approaches, blended learning has gained considerable attention because of its ability to combine face-to-face instruction with digital learning environments, creating more flexible, interactive, and student-centered learning experiences that cater to diverse learner needs and preferences (Graham, 2006).

Blended learning, defined as the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004),

represents a paradigm shift in educational delivery that leverages the strengths of both traditional and digital pedagogies. This approach recognizes that effective learning does not occur solely in physical classrooms or exclusively through digital platforms, but rather through a strategic combination that maximizes the benefits of each modality while minimizing their limitations (Horn & Staker, 2015). In the context of language education, blended learning offers particular advantages by providing learners with extended exposure to the target language, opportunities for self-paced practice, and meaningful interaction with both instructors and peers (Neumeier, 2005).

Many higher education institutions have integrated Learning Management Systems (LMS) and digital language learning platforms into Intensive English Courses to enhance students' language proficiency. One widely used platform is English Discoveries (ED), which provides adaptive, self-paced learning modules covering grammar, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills (English Discoveries, 2022). Through the integration of online learning with classroom instruction, students are expected to receive more personalized learning experiences while maintaining meaningful interaction with instructors and peers. The platform's adaptive technology adjusts content difficulty based on individual performance, enabling differentiated instruction that addresses varying proficiency levels within a single class (Chapelle, 2003).

The theoretical foundations of blended learning draw from multiple educational paradigms that collectively support its effectiveness. Constructivist learning theory, as articulated by Piaget (1976) and Vygotsky (1978), posits that learners actively construct knowledge through experiential engagement and social interaction. Blended environments enable this by providing customized online modules for individual exploration and cooperative in-class activities that facilitate collaborative meaning-making. Social learning theory, proposed by Bandura (1977), emphasizes that observational learning, modeling, and feedback are essential for skill acquisition, particularly in language instruction where authentic communication and interaction are paramount. These theoretical perspectives provide a robust framework for understanding how blended learning can enhance language acquisition (Anderson, 2008).

Despite the growing adoption of blended learning in higher education, significant gaps remain in understanding its optimal implementation, particularly in the context of intensive English programs in Indonesian higher education. While numerous studies have examined blended learning in various educational contexts (Means et al., 2013; Bernard et al., 2014), limited research has focused specifically on the integration of platforms like English Discoveries with classroom instruction in Indonesian Islamic higher education institutions. The unique characteristics of these institutions—including diverse student backgrounds, varying levels of digital literacy, and specific linguistic and cultural contexts—necessitate context-specific investigation (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007).

Previous research has demonstrated the potential benefits of blended learning in language education. Studies have shown that blended approaches can increase student engagement, improve learning outcomes, and develop essential digital literacy skills (Stracke, 2007; Grgurović, 2011). However, researchers have also identified challenges

including technological barriers, the need for instructor training, and the importance of maintaining student motivation in online components (Poon, 2013; Boelens et al., 2017). These findings underscore the need for comprehensive investigation that examines both theoretical foundations and practical implementation strategies.

The novelty of this research lies in its examination of the specific integration of English Discoveries with classroom instruction in an Indonesian higher education context, providing both theoretical analysis and practical insights that can inform future implementation. The study addresses the following research questions: (1) How is blended learning implemented in the Intensive English Course through the integration of English Discoveries with classroom instruction? (2) What are the perceptions of students and instructors regarding the effectiveness of this blended approach? (3) What challenges emerge in the implementation, and how can they be addressed? By answering these questions, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on technology-enhanced language learning while providing practical recommendations for educators and institutions.

The significance of this research extends beyond theoretical contribution to encompass practical implications for Indonesian higher education, where the demand for English proficiency continues to grow amid increasing globalization and internationalization of education (Lauder, 2008). As Indonesian universities strive to prepare graduates for global competitiveness, effective English language instruction becomes increasingly critical (Lamb & Coleman, 2008). Blended learning approaches offer a promising pathway to enhance language education, provided they are implemented with attention to local contexts, institutional capacities, and student needs (Warschauer, 2000).

This article is structured as follows: following this introduction, the theoretical framework and literature review are presented, examining constructivist and social learning theories alongside empirical research on blended learning in language education. The methodology section describes the qualitative descriptive approach employed, including data collection and analysis procedures. The results section presents findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis. The discussion section interprets these findings in relation to theoretical frameworks and previous research, while addressing implications and challenges. Finally, the conclusion summarizes key findings and offers recommendations for practice and future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Blended Learning: Definitions and Conceptualizations

Blended learning has been conceptualized in various ways across the educational literature, reflecting its multifaceted nature and diverse applications. Graham (2006) defines blended learning as a continuum in which online and offline components enhance one another, creating a learning environment that is greater than the sum of its parts. This definition emphasizes the integrated nature of blended learning, distinguishing it from merely supplementing traditional instruction with occasional online activities. Garrison & Kanuka (2004) similarly emphasize that blended learning

represents a fundamental redesign of the educational experience, not simply the addition of technology to existing practices.

The concept of blended learning has evolved significantly since its emergence in the early 2000s. Initially understood primarily as the combination of face-to-face and online instruction, contemporary conceptualizations recognize multiple dimensions of blending, including the integration of various pedagogical approaches, learning modalities, and technological tools (Horn & Staker, 2015). Picciano (2009) proposed a multidimensional framework for blended learning that encompasses pedagogical, technological, and organizational dimensions, acknowledging that effective implementation requires attention to each of these interconnected aspects.

In language education, blended learning has been particularly influential due to its capacity to provide extended exposure to the target language beyond classroom hours. Neumeier (2005) identified several models of blended language learning, ranging from technology-enhanced classroom instruction to fully online courses with occasional face-to-face meetings. The Intensive English Course examined in this study adopts a model where online learning through English Discoveries serves as the foundation for skill development, with classroom sessions providing opportunities for practice, interaction, and feedback.

Theoretical Foundations

The implementation of blended learning in language education is grounded in several interrelated theoretical perspectives that collectively explain its effectiveness. Constructivist learning theory, as articulated by Piaget (1976) and Vygotsky (1978), provides the primary theoretical foundation for blended approaches. According to Piaget, learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their environment, building mental models that reflect their experiences. Vygotsky extended this perspective by emphasizing the social nature of learning, arguing that cognitive development occurs through interaction with more knowledgeable others within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Blended environments are particularly conducive to constructivist learning because they provide multiple pathways for knowledge construction. Online components offer opportunities for individual exploration and self-paced learning, enabling students to build foundational knowledge at their own pace. Classroom sessions then facilitate collaborative meaning-making through discussion, problem-solving, and cooperative activities that build upon this foundation (Jonassen, 1999). This combination supports both individual and social aspects of learning, addressing the diverse needs and preferences of learners.

Social learning theory, proposed by Bandura (1977), complements constructivist perspectives by emphasizing the role of observational learning and modeling in skill acquisition. According to Bandura, individuals learn by observing others, imitating behaviors, and receiving feedback on their performance. In language education, this principle is operationalized through exposure to authentic language models, practice opportunities, and corrective feedback. Blended learning environments support social

learning by providing multiple sources of modeling and feedback, including peer interaction, instructor guidance, and automated feedback from digital platforms.

The integration of constructivist and social learning theories provides a comprehensive framework for understanding blended language learning. Online platforms like English Discoveries support individual knowledge construction through adaptive, self-paced modules that allow learners to build skills at their own pace. Classroom sessions then facilitate social learning through interaction, collaboration, and authentic communication. This integrated approach addresses both cognitive and social dimensions of language acquisition, recognizing that language development requires both individual practice and meaningful social interaction (Ellis, 2008).

Blended Learning in Language Education

Research on blended learning in language education has examined various aspects of implementation, including effectiveness, student perceptions, and factors influencing success. Studies have generally found blended approaches to be at least as effective as traditional instruction, with some evidence of superior outcomes in specific skill areas (Means et al., 2013; Bernard et al., 2014). Grgurović (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of blended learning in language education, finding moderate positive effects on learning outcomes, particularly in vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Student perceptions of blended learning have been generally positive, with learners appreciating the flexibility, accessibility, and self-paced nature of online components (Stracke, 2007; Poon, 2013). Students report that blended approaches accommodate diverse learning styles, provide opportunities for independent practice, and enable them to take greater responsibility for their learning. However, studies have also identified challenges, including difficulties with time management, the need for self-discipline, and technical problems (Boelens et al., 2017).

The role of instructors in blended learning has received considerable attention in the literature. Research suggests that successful implementation requires instructors to develop new competencies, including the ability to facilitate online learning, integrate online and offline activities effectively, and provide appropriate support for students in both modalities (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Professional development programs that address these competencies are essential for effective blended learning implementation (Poon, 2013).

Digital Language Learning Platforms

Digital language learning platforms have become increasingly sophisticated, incorporating adaptive technologies, gamification, and artificial intelligence to enhance learning outcomes. English Discoveries, the platform examined in this study, provides comprehensive language instruction through interactive modules that address all language skills (English Discoveries, 2022). The platform's adaptive technology adjusts content difficulty based on individual performance, enabling personalized learning paths that address each learner's strengths and weaknesses.

Research on digital language learning platforms has examined their effectiveness, identifying several key features that contribute to learning outcomes. [Chapelle \(2003\)](#) identified criteria for evaluating computer-assisted language learning (CALL) tools, including language learning potential, learner fit, meaning focus, and authenticity. English Discoveries incorporates these features through its adaptive content, authentic materials, and focus on communicative competence.

However, research also emphasizes that digital platforms are most effective when integrated within a broader pedagogical framework that includes instructor guidance and peer interaction. [Levy & Stockwell \(2006\)](#) argue that CALL tools should be understood as resources for learning rather than replacements for instruction, emphasizing the importance of teacher mediation in effective language education. This perspective aligns with the blended learning model examined in this study, where online learning is integrated with classroom instruction to create a comprehensive learning experience.

Research Gaps

Despite the substantial body of research on blended learning, significant gaps remain in understanding its implementation in specific contexts. Limited research has examined blended learning in Indonesian higher education, particularly in Islamic higher education institutions with their unique characteristics and constraints. The specific integration of English Discoveries with classroom instruction has received limited attention in the research literature. Furthermore, few studies have examined the perspectives of both instructors and students in integrated blended learning programs, limiting understanding of the factors that influence implementation success.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the implementation of blended learning in an Intensive English Course at an Indonesian Islamic higher education institution. By investigating student and instructor perceptions and identifying challenges and success factors, the research provides insights that can inform both theory and practice in blended language learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research employed a qualitative descriptive methodology, which is particularly suited for exploring complex phenomena in their natural contexts and understanding participant perspectives and experiences ([Creswell & Poth, 2018](#)). The qualitative approach enables in-depth investigation of how blended learning is implemented, how participants experience this approach, and what factors influence its effectiveness. This methodology aligns with the research objectives of examining both theoretical foundations and practical implementation of blended learning in the Intensive English Course.

The qualitative descriptive approach, as defined by [Sandelowski \(2000\)](#), provides a comprehensive summary of events, experiences, and phenomena in everyday terms. This approach is appropriate for research questions that seek to describe and

understand experiences without requiring the development of theory or hypothesis testing. The descriptive nature of this approach enables the research to capture the richness and complexity of blended learning implementation while remaining grounded in participant experiences.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at an Islamic higher education institution in Surabaya, Indonesia, offering an Intensive English Course through a blended learning model. The course integrates online learning through English Discoveries (ED) with weekly classroom sessions. The research setting was selected because of its established blended learning program and the availability of both instructors and students to participate in the research.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling, a technique that involves deliberate selection based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2015). The sample comprised: (a) five English instructors with at least one year of experience teaching the blended Intensive English Course, and (b) ten students who had completed at least one semester of the course. Instructors were selected to provide perspectives on implementation, challenges, and pedagogical strategies, while students were selected to share their learning experiences and perceptions of the blended approach.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through three primary methods: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. This triangulation of methods enables comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon while enhancing the credibility of findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Semi-Structured Interviews: Executed with five English instructors and ten students participating in the program. The semi-structured format allowed for flexible exploration of participant perspectives while maintaining focus on research questions. Interview protocols covered topics including: perceptions of blended learning effectiveness, experiences with English Discoveries, challenges encountered, recommendations for improvement, and the role of face-to-face instruction.

Observations: The utilization of the classroom and educational platform was examined to discern student behavior and instructional methodologies. Observations were conducted during classroom sessions, focusing on instructor-student interaction, student engagement, and the integration of online and offline activities. The researcher also observed students' use of the English Discoveries platform, noting patterns of engagement and areas of difficulty.

Document Analysis: Course syllabi, learning objectives, and student task records on ED were examined. Document analysis provided information about program structure, learning outcomes, assessment approaches, and student performance patterns. This data complemented interview and observation findings, providing a more comprehensive picture of program implementation.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns, repeating themes, and instructional implications (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis involves six phases: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. This systematic approach enables rigorous identification of patterns across data sources, ensuring that findings are grounded in the data.

Data analysis began with transcription of interviews and organization of observation notes and documents. Initial coding identified significant statements, actions, and events relevant to the research questions. Codes were then organized into potential themes, which were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the data. Final themes were defined and named, providing a framework for presenting findings.

To ensure trustworthiness, the research employed multiple strategies including: triangulation (using multiple data sources and methods), member checking (sharing findings with participants to confirm accuracy), and thick description (providing rich detail about the context, participants, and findings to enable transferability) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings reveal that blended learning in the Intensive English Course is implemented through a systematic integration of online learning via English Discoveries (ED) and offline classroom sessions. The online component provides students with adaptive, level-specific learning modules encompassing grammar, vocabulary, listening, and reading skills. Students can access content at their convenience, facilitating flexibility and self-directed learning. The offline component consists of weekly classroom sessions where instructors facilitate discussion of online content, conduct speaking and writing activities, and promote student-teacher interaction.

The program structure follows a regular weekly pattern: students complete prescribed ED modules independently throughout the week, then attend classroom sessions to practice speaking and writing skills, receive feedback, and clarify questions about online content. This structure enables students to build foundational knowledge through online practice, then apply and consolidate this knowledge through interactive classroom activities.

Participants reported increased motivation due to the accessibility and interactivity of ED. Students consistently mentioned that the platform's gamified and modular structure enabled them to stay engaged and feel a sense of progress. The adaptive nature of ED, which adjusts content difficulty based on individual performance, was particularly valued because it provided appropriate challenge levels without causing frustration.

One student stated: "The platform makes learning English more fun because it feels like a game. I can see my progress, and it encourages me to do more." Another student shared: *"I like that I can study whenever I want. It gives me flexibility because I'm busy with other subjects."* These comments reflect the motivational benefits of the online component's interactive and flexible nature.

Instructors also observed increased student engagement compared to traditional courses. One instructor noted: *"Students arrive to class with more confidence because they have already practiced online. This makes classroom sessions more productive."* This observation suggests that online learning provides a foundation for more meaningful face-to-face interaction, enhancing overall learning effectiveness.

The online component empowered students to take responsibility for their own learning. Many developed stronger digital literacy skills, an essential competency in the 21st century. Students reported learning to manage their time, set learning goals, and monitor their progress independently. These self-regulation skills are transferable to other academic contexts and lifelong learning.

One student explained: *"Before this course, I relied on my teacher for everything. Now I can learn on my own, and I feel more confident."* Another student reflected: *"Learning with the platform has taught me to manage my time better and take responsibility for my own learning."* These statements indicate that blended learning fosters autonomy, preparing students for independent learning beyond formal education.

Instructors observed that students who were initially dependent on teacher guidance gradually developed greater independence as they became familiar with the platform and its features. One instructor commented: *"By the end of the semester, many students no longer wait for me to tell them what to do. They know their learning needs and how to address them."* This development suggests that blended learning can foster autonomous learning skills that are essential for lifelong language development.

Lecturers highlighted that face-to-face interaction remained vital for developing speaking skills and addressing comprehension difficulties. Students appreciated immediate feedback and social learning opportunities during classroom sessions. Despite the strengths of online learning, participants consistently emphasized that classroom interaction was essential for developing communicative competence and maintaining motivation.

One student explained: *"The online platform helps with reading, listening, grammar, and vocabulary, but I need the classroom to practice speaking."* Another student stated: *"When I have questions, my instructor can explain things better in person. I can ask questions directly and get immediate feedback."* These comments reflect the complementary roles of online and offline components in the blended learning model.

Instructors similarly emphasized the unique value of face-to-face interaction. One instructor noted: *"The classroom is where students can practice conversation and receive immediate feedback. This is something that online platforms cannot fully replicate."* Another instructor shared: *"I can see when a student is confused and address the problem directly. This ensures that all students understand the material."*

Several challenges emerged from the data, reflecting both individual and institutional factors affecting blended learning implementation. Some students encountered difficulties with time management and required consistent motivation to complete online modules independently. The flexibility of online learning, while valued, also required self-discipline that some students found challenging.

One student stated: *"Sometimes I don't feel motivated to study online because there's no one pushing me. It's easier to put off tasks when no one is watching."* Another student shared: *"Managing my time is difficult. I often leave the online tasks until the last minute, which is not effective."* These comments highlight the challenges of maintaining consistent motivation in self-directed online learning.

Technological barriers, such as unstable internet access, were also cited, particularly by students from rural areas. One student explained: *"In my dormitory, the internet is sometimes slow. This makes it difficult to access the platform and complete tasks on time."* Another student noted: *"I sometimes have to go to campus just to use the internet, which is inconvenient."* These barriers reflect broader issues of digital infrastructure in Indonesia.

The findings suggest that the blended model corresponds with extensive educational reforms that emphasize autonomous learning and digital integration. English Discoveries enabled quantifiable enhancements in skills and engagement. However, educator preparedness and institutional backing are essential for guaranteeing sustainability and scalability.

Students reported improvements in language skills, particularly in areas addressed by the online platform. One student noted: *"My vocabulary has improved a lot because I practice every day on ED."* Another student shared: *"I understand grammar better because the platform gives many examples and exercises."* These improvements reflect the value of extended exposure to language learning content through online practice.

However, variability in student engagement and achievement suggests that additional support may be needed for some students. Instructors observed that students who were less digitally literate or lacked study skills struggled more with the online component. This finding highlights the importance of providing orientation and ongoing support for all students.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with constructivist and social learning theories that provide the theoretical framework for blended learning. Consistent with [Piaget's \(1976\)](#) constructivist perspective, the online platform enables students to actively construct knowledge through individual engagement with learning materials. The platform's adaptive nature allows students to progress at their own pace, building knowledge through experiential engagement with content ([Jonassen, 1999](#)). This individual construction of knowledge is complemented by the social learning opportunities provided by classroom sessions.

The findings also support [Vygotsky's \(1978\)](#) emphasis on social interaction in learning. Classroom sessions provide opportunities for collaborative learning, modeling,

and feedback that enable students to move beyond their current level of competence. The interaction with instructors and peers during classroom sessions supports development within the Zone of Proximal Development, enabling students to achieve more than they could independently (Vygotsky, 1978). This finding underscores the continuing importance of social interaction in blended learning environments.

Bandura's (1977) social learning theory is also supported by the findings. Students reported learning from observing instructors and peers during classroom sessions, as well as receiving feedback that reinforced correct language use. The combination of online practice and classroom interaction provides multiple opportunities for observational learning, modeling, and feedback, which are essential for language acquisition. This integrated approach addresses both cognitive and social dimensions of learning, supporting comprehensive language development (Ellis, 2008).

The findings also contribute to understanding of learner autonomy in language education. Consistent with research emphasizing the importance of autonomy in second language acquisition (Benson, 2011), the blended learning model enabled students to develop self-direction and responsibility for their learning. Students reported learning to manage their time, set learning goals, and monitor their progress, skills that are essential for lifelong language learning (Little, 2009). This suggests that blended learning can foster autonomy beyond what traditional classroom instruction typically achieves.

The findings have several practical implications for blended learning implementation in higher education. First, the importance of balancing online and offline components must be recognized. While online learning provides flexibility and accessible practice opportunities, classroom sessions remain essential for developing speaking skills, addressing comprehension difficulties, and providing immediate feedback. Effective blended learning requires careful integration of both modalities, with clear articulation of their complementary roles (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008).

Second, institutional support is critical for successful implementation. The technological barriers identified in this study reflect broader challenges facing Indonesian higher education institutions (Lamb & Coleman, 2008). Institutions must invest in adequate technological infrastructure, including reliable internet access and appropriate devices, to ensure that all students can access online learning components. Additionally, institutions should provide orientation and ongoing support to help students develop the digital literacy and self-regulation skills needed for online learning (Warschauer, 2000).

Third, professional development for instructors is essential. The findings suggest that effective blended learning requires instructors to develop new competencies beyond traditional teaching skills (Poon, 2013). Instructors must be able to facilitate online learning, integrate online and offline activities effectively, and support students' development of self-regulation skills. Professional development programs should address these competencies, including the use of digital platforms, online facilitation, and blended learning design (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008).

Fourth, student support mechanisms should be developed to address challenges identified in this study. The difficulties with time management and motivation reported by some students suggest that additional guidance may be needed to help students succeed in online learning. Institutions might consider providing structured orientation programs, regular check-ins with instructors, and peer support mechanisms to maintain engagement and motivation. These support systems can help students develop the self-regulation skills essential for online learning (Boelens et al., 2017).

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on blended learning in language education. Like earlier studies (Stracke, 2007; Grgurović, 2011), this research found that blended approaches can enhance student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. The integration of online and offline components provides multiple pathways for learning, accommodating diverse student needs and preferences (Means et al., 2013).

The challenges identified in this study also reflect those reported in previous research. Time management difficulties, lack of motivation, and technological barriers are common challenges in blended learning implementation (Poon, 2013; Boelens et al., 2017). These findings suggest that while blended learning offers significant benefits, its successful implementation requires careful attention to student support, institutional infrastructure, and instructor development (Horn & Staker, 2015).

The study extends previous research by examining the specific integration of English Discoveries with classroom instruction, providing insights into the use of adaptive digital platforms in language education. The findings suggest that such platforms can effectively support language learning when integrated within a broader pedagogical framework. This aligns with research emphasizing that digital tools are most effective when used as resources for learning rather than replacements for instruction (Levy & Stockwell, 2006).

Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted at a single institution, limiting the generalizability of findings to other contexts. The experiences of students and instructors in this setting may not represent those in other institutions with different student populations, resources, or educational cultures. Future research should examine blended learning implementation across multiple institutions and contexts to identify patterns and variations.

Second, the study relied primarily on self-report data from participants, which may be subject to social desirability bias or selective recall. While data triangulation through observations and document analysis enhances credibility, the research would benefit from additional objective measures such as learning outcomes data or platform analytics. Future research should incorporate quantitative measures to complement qualitative findings.

Third, the study examined implementation at a single point in time, providing a snapshot rather than capturing longitudinal development. Understanding how blended learning impacts language development over time would require longitudinal research designs. Future studies should examine the long-term effects of blended learning on language proficiency, learner autonomy, and digital literacy.

Fourth, the study did not include a comparison group, limiting the ability to attribute outcomes specifically to the blended learning approach. Future research should consider experimental or quasi-experimental designs that compare blended learning with other instructional approaches to assess its relative effectiveness.

Based on the findings, several recommendations are offered for blended learning implementation in Intensive English Courses. First, institutions should invest in technological infrastructure and support to ensure reliable access to online learning platforms. This investment should include providing devices and internet access for students who lack them, as well as technical support for troubleshooting. Second, orientation and ongoing support should be provided to help students develop the digital literacy and self-regulation skills needed for online learning. This could include workshops on time management, study skills, and platform use, as well as regular check-ins with instructors to monitor progress and address challenges.

Third, professional development programs for instructors should address blended learning competencies, including online facilitation, platform use, and integration of online and offline activities. These programs should be ongoing and practical, providing instructors with opportunities to develop and share effective strategies. Fourth, careful attention should be given to the balance between online and offline components, ensuring that both modalities are integrated effectively. Classroom sessions should build upon online learning, providing opportunities for practice, interaction, and feedback that complement individual learning activities.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of blended learning in Intensive English Courses demonstrates how digital learning technologies can be effectively integrated with conventional classroom instruction to improve English language education in higher education. Grounded in constructivist and social learning theories, this instructional approach promotes learner autonomy, student engagement, digital literacy, and communicative competence. The integration of platforms such as English Discoveries provides opportunities for personalized and flexible learning while maintaining the essential role of instructors in facilitating interaction, providing feedback, and supporting language development.

The findings of this study indicate that blended learning fosters greater learner autonomy as students develop self-regulation skills and take responsibility for their own learning. Students reported increased motivation and engagement due to the interactive and accessible nature of the online platform, while also valuing face-to-face interaction for developing speaking skills and receiving immediate feedback. The complementary roles of online and offline components create a comprehensive learning experience that addresses both individual and social dimensions of language acquisition.

However, successful implementation requires adequate institutional support, technological infrastructure, and continuous professional development for instructors. Challenges such as time management difficulties, inconsistent motivation, and technological barriers must be addressed to ensure that all students can benefit from

blended learning. Institutions should invest in infrastructure, provide orientation and support for students, and develop instructors' competencies in blended learning design and facilitation.

Future research should investigate the long-term impact of blended learning models, compare different digital learning platforms, and examine the role of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence in enhancing language learning outcomes. As higher education continues to evolve, blended learning offers a promising pathway for improving English language education, preparing students with the language skills and digital competencies essential for the 21st century.

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