Revue de Traduction et Langues Volume 18 Numéro 01/2019, pp. 22-37
Journal of Translation and Languages **مجلة الترجمة واللغات**
ISSN (Print): 1112-3974 **EISSN (Online): 2600-6235**

Blended Learning Impact on EFL Readers' Ability to Summarize and Respond to Narrative Texts

Dr. Bouguebs Radia
École Normal Supérieure Assia Djebbar Constantine 3-Algeria
bouguebs@yahoo.fr
0000- 0002-3548-7416

To cite this paper:
Dr. Boughuebs, R. (2019). Blended Learning Impact on EFL Readers' Ability to Summarize and Respond to Narrative Texts. *Revue Traduction et Langues 18(1),* 22-37.

Received: 23/12/ 2018; **Accepted**: 04/08/2019, **Published:** 31/08/ 2019

Abstract: *Blended learning, an innovative approach to course design, caters consecutively a learning style that is mostly preferred by students, and assists language teachers. This study aims to investigate Blended learning impact in developing students' ability to summarize, and then respond in writing to narrative texts. To reach this objective, Pre-test/Posttest control group design was conducted on second year English students in the Teacher Training School "Assia Djebar" of Constantine. After administering a pretest prior the beginning of the training, fifty participants were assigned either to the experimental condition, or the control condition. During six weeks, the former was subjected to blended learning environment where students could take advantage of both Moodle e-learning platform and in-class reading instruction; whereas the latter received materials, instruction and feedback through traditional Face-to-Face classes. After the experiment, the participants were post-tested, and a t test was used to compare the mean scores. Data analysis confirmed the statistical significance of change in the mean scores between the two groups showing that when using technology to combine in-class and out-of-class learning, EFL learners can reach a better level of expertise in reading comprehension skills.*
Keywords: *Blended learning, face-to-face reading instruction, Moodle e-learning platform, reading response, summarizing.*

الملخص: يسعى هذا البحث إلى دراسة تأثير التعلم المدمج في تطوير قدرة الطلاب بعد قراءة النصوص السردية على التلخيص والتعبير كتابيًا. لتحقيق ذلك استخدم منهجا شبه تجريبيا قبلي/ بعدي مع تصميم للمجموعة الضابطة والتجريبية على طلاب السنة الثانية لقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بالمدرسة العليا للأساتذة بقسنطينة. بعد إجراء اختبار ما قبل بدء التدريب و خلال ستة أسابيع ، التحق خمسون مشاركًا إما إلى المجموعة التجريبية حيث استفاد 25 مشارك من نظام Moodle للتعلم الإلكتروني و إضافة إلى تدريس القراءة داخل القسم، أو إلى المجموعة الضابطة حيث اتبع 25 مشارك التدريس التقليدي للقراءة داخل القسم .بعد الاختبار البعدي وعند مقارنة النتائج أكدت اختبارات **(t-test)** الدلالة الإحصائية لهذا التغيير في درجات التلخيص والتعبير كتابيًا للنصوص السردية بين المجموعة التجريبية و المجموعة الضابطة ومن ثم تم إثبات أنه عند استخدام

Corresponding author : Bouguebs Radia

التكنولوجيا للجمع بين التعلم داخل الصف وخارجها ، يمكن لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أن يصلوا إلى مستوى من الخبرة في مهارات فهم القراءة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم المدمج ، تعليم القراءة وجهًا لوجه منصة التعلم الإلكتروني **Moodle** ، التعبير بعد القراءة، التلخيص.

1. Introduction

Progress in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and its application in education have influenced methods of teaching and means of learning. ICTs instruments such as the computer and the Internet brought to learners' new modes of access to knowledge and information (Ammi & Immoune, 2018). By offering this flexibility in knowledge acquisition, the learner is given the opportunity to opt for the content and the mode of learning that best fit him. Besides, the computer network technology advancement facilitates for the educational system a safe shift from traditional mode of learning to an online one.

Being able to create pedagogical opportunities that were impractical or even impossible to implement in the traditional educational contexts (Hoadjili& Mehiri, 2015), this web environment facilitates the introduction of innovative approaches to English reading instruction. As todays' EFL learners are more digital oriented (Ouahmiche & Boughouas, 2016), the need for effective teaching approaches able to boost reading skills progress urged researchers to explore the possibility of blended learning as an instructional model for teaching and learning reading skills in EFL contexts (Yang, 2012; Zehedi & Tabatabaei, 2015). The Blended Learning (BL) approach to course design that brings together the best of both Face-to-Face and Online strategies aims to create an innovative and effective learning experience for students.

As developing the readers' ability to understand the facts, grasp a deeper understanding of ideas, evaluate them, and then form intelligent opinions is the result of a reading development course, what effects can BL approach have on EFL students' post reading skills progress? This investigation aims to find out the impact of this teaching/learning approach on EFL learners' post reading skills mainly summarizing and responding to narrative texts. To reach the study objective and supply answers for the two research questions: (a) does the use of Blended learning result in a statistically significant difference in second year EFL learners' summarizing scores? and (b) does the use of Blended learning result in a statistically significant difference in second year EFL learners' ability to discuss story major theme (s)? we adopted a quantitative experimental design involving pre-posttest control group procedure.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. What is Blended Learning?

The interest provided to the concept in recent years made from BL a field of investigation where the attention of scholars and researchers is focused on providing a fitful description to the term. *"However, like many other terms within this field, it remains ill-defined"* postulate Oliver and Trigwell. (2005, p. 17)

In their attempt to define this concept, Rovai and Jordan (2004), provide an extension to Colis and Moonen's definition (2001) where BL was introduced as a flexible

approach in course design. This flexibility is found in "the blending of different times and places for learning, offering some of the conveniences of fully online courses without the complete loss of face-to-face contact", explain Rovai and Jordan (ibid, p.3). However, BL is more than a flexible learning approach, it is all about the learning accommodation brought to the learner's learning environment. According to Rovai and Jordan (ibid), "BL is an important building block of the new schoolhouse that offers students both flexibility and convenience, important characteristics for working adults who decide to pursue postsecondary degrees" (p.3).

Despite the fact that there is no single accepted definition of BL among researchers; however, it can be understood that this approach to course design tends to combine computer-mediated delivery and face-to-face interaction. The below figure **(Figure 1)** best illustrates the main components in a blended learning framework.

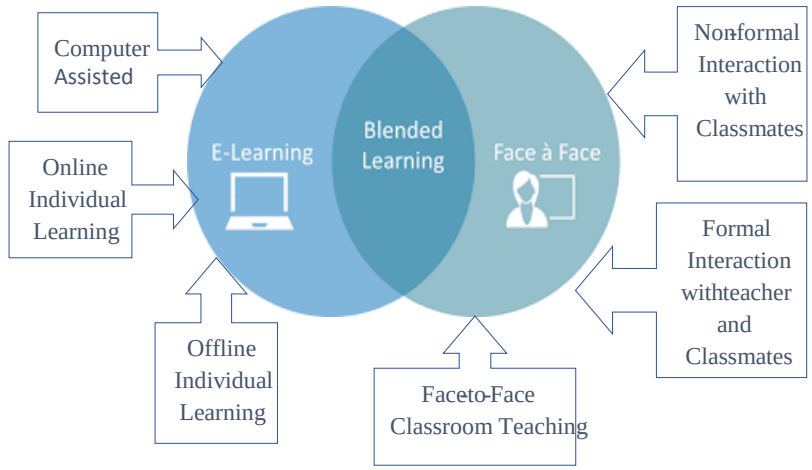


Figure 1. Blended Learning Framework adapted from (Lalima& Dangwal, 2017:130)

2.2.Online Learning vs. Traditional Face-to-Face Learning

The failure of the traditional face-to-face instruction to satisfy individual learner's interests and preferences paved the way for online instruction. According to Dennis and his associates (2006, p. 123), "one drawback of face-to-face learning environments is that the course activities in these environments generally are one size fits all". This means that during the classroom delivery of instruction, all students are exposed to the same teaching instruction. However, the individualization of course activities as a major factor in the effectiveness of the teaching/learning process is best achieved when using online delivery (ibid). Accordingly, this digital learning can accommodate students who have different expertise levels, prefer different learning strategies, or who are self-directed learners.

The need for a teaching/learning instruction that combines the traditional role of the teacher and the benefits of technology is quite important. Martin and Madigan (2006) state that *"it is, by now, inevitable that methods of teaching and learning should include e-learning components that are based on the computer environment and include proper preparation for the 21st century"* (p. 201). Within the same line of thought, Behjat and his associates (2012) state the following:

> The traditional face-to-face learning system has been around for centuries, and pure e-learning might not meet the needs of all language learners in different communities because the Web cannot replace a human instructor; yet, by mixing these two, we come up with an approach which both fits the individuals' needs and makes use of new technology in teaching (Behjat et al., 2012, p. 97).

Hence, by merging the best features of face-to-face interaction with the online delivery of information where the latter becomes a natural extension of classroom instruction, a new mode of teaching/learning is created fitting by then the wants and needs of both teachers and learners. Through its reliance on multiple methods of instruction delivery, BL approach enables the teacher to devote more time on important tasks such as selecting appropriate materials that satisfy the learning needs of wide audience and allows students to take full responsibility for their own learning thanks to the easy access to information and to the learning flexibility.

2.3. Blended Learning Characteristics and Benefits

Numerous features characterize blended learning. Huang et al., (2008, p.67) consider that flexibility, diversity, and advancement in students' online learning experience are the major characteristics of BL.

First, BL offers flexibility in providing learning resources. Being supported by two distinct learning environments (live classroom and virtual classroom), BL certifies the creation of a safe learning environment. According to Woodall (2010), BL main objective is "to leverage the specific positive attributes of each environment to ensure the optimum use of resources to attain the instructional goal and learning objectives" (cited in Kaur, 2013, p.614). Adding to the benefits learners gain through face-to-face interaction, computer-based learning facilitates the online delivery of instruction and content, and promotes a safe basis for teacher/learners' online interaction. In that students and teachers could interact, share, collaborate and ask questions either in real-time via synchronous modality; or allowing more time for student reflection via asynchronous communication tools like online chat, e-mails, discussion forums, and file exchange (Bonk & Zhang, 2006).

Besides, this approach to course design supports learners' learning diversity. "As learners are diverse in terms of learning styles, learning proficiency, as well as learning ability, BL can come to the rescue by making it possible for individualized learning and self-regulated learning to happen", postulate Huang et al., (2008, p.67). In that different from face-to-face instruction delivery where all students are exposed to the same learning experience, the digital learning comes to accommodate students who have different expertise levels, prefer different learning strategies, or who are self-directed learners. Consequently, BL promotes an enrichment of e-learning experience.

Additionally, online-mediated learning offers engaging and highly motivating activities that positively affect students' performance and promote their progress because they can work not only with course materials but also access any web resource (Krasnova & Ananjev, 2015). Instead of one size fit all activities which is a major characteristic in a traditional face-to-face design, the online delivery upholds the individualization of course

activities, which is achieved through the flexibility in course activities to fit individual needs. Hence, computer or internet mediated platforms enhances the quality of instructions and enriches critical thinking skills of the learners (Caner, 2012). And from the faculty's perspective, postulate Huang et al., (ibid), BL ameliorates their existing teaching practices.

When breaking the walls of the traditional teaching/learning environment and incorporating the ICT's tools to complement face-to-face sessions, both teachers and learners could benefit from the characteristics of this new environment. Consequently, a teaching/learning environment that meets the requirements of the new generation of learners is provided via a BL. For Dziuban and his associates (2006, p. 204), this new methodology in teaching and learning responds to what Obliger (2003) and Wendover (2002) define as the new generation learners (millennials). "These students who are born after 1980 have grown up with what other generations view as new technologies. This new generation that is proficient in the use of the new communicative technology often transpires in college classrooms as slow moving and uninteresting," explained Dziuban et al., (2006, p. 204).

The BL approach to course design that brings together the best of both Face-to-Face and Online strategies creates an innovative and effective learning experience for students. In a study conducted at the University of South Australia by Zhu (2013), results showed that despite the fact that online learning facilitates for the participants flexibility in the access to course components and facilitated their learning to a great extent; however, they disliked the feeling of isolation during online learning. Additionally, they insisted on the need of face-to-face interactions with teachers and other students during this online learning. In other words, all what these EFL students were calling for is a combination between online and face-to-face learning environment: "Blended learning".

2.4. The Moodle Platform

Moodle, Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment, is a free and open-source e-learning platform developed by Martin Dougiamas in 2004. Like any LMS (Learning Management System), its main target is "to host learning content and facilitate the implementation of the teaching strategies", explains Seddiki (2016, p. 460). Moodle represents the second generation online systems whose main objective is not only oriented towards the assurance of content delivery from teacher-to-student; they can go beyond student-to-student communication to teacher-to-teacher as well as student- and teacher-to-the-future avenues as well, explain Rafaeli et al. (2004, p. 274). As a web-based learning software, Moodle facilitates the creation of a web learning content where the learner utilizes the Internet features during his interaction with this content. Moreover, "Moodle allows teachers to provide and share documents, graded assignments, quizzes, etc. with students in an easy-to-learn way and to create quality on-line courses" argue Ajlan and Zedan (2008, p. 58).

With a regard to these characteristics, Moodle can be an appropriate choice in a BL environment. Nozawa (2011, p. 294-295) considers that an efficient blended learning style is promoted via Moodle because this latter provides a common e-learning or communication platform in a multipoint environment (synchronous and asynchronous communication); allows only students who enroll for a particular course and motivates

them to present and share their ideas without any hesitation; and provides downloadable e-documents to students without necessitating printing and shipping them out in advance. Taking the advantages of Moodle into account while implementing blended learning programs in higher education would result in an efficient learning environment where all the factors that may hinder the teaching/learning process such as students' motivation, diversity in learning style, ease of access to documentation and many others learning promoting factors are regarded.

2.5. Moodle- based Blended Learning Design

As Moodle-based learning represents an appropriate e-learning tool for BL environment, important is the presentation of the main stages of this ICT mode. A good example of Moodle based BL mode is the one suggested by Haunt Wang and Bingbing Chen in 2010 (Tang, 2013). According to Wang and Chen's mode, five stages are crucial in BL class via Moodle.

2.5.1. Preview

During the first phase, explains Tang (ibid, p. 31), learners can login to the Moodle platform and preview the learning materials: glossary, background, the text…etc. To facilitate this task for learners, the teacher needs to upload relative documents to the platform ahead of time for the learners to refer to.

2.5.2. Class Activities

Since a BL approach is not complete without a traditional Face-to-Face instruction, "reading and speaking activities in the class can be designed to help learners develop their language skills" argues Tang (ibid).

2.5.3. Online Learning

During this phase, clarifies Tang (ibid, p. 32), "learners can login to the chatting room of the platform and conduct group learning". Through the Forum of the Moodle platform, learners are provided with opportunities to share their learning experiences.

2.5.4. Class Learning and Feedback

Classroom feedback is an essential component in a BL setting. At this level, "after the class teaching and online learning, teachers should organize students in class and instruct them to deal with the problems they encounter in the previous stage" postulates Tang (ibid). In this step of the process, students come to deal with the encountered learning obstacles where both teacher-to-students and student-to-student feedback contributes not only in solving learning problems but also allows students to share with each other their achievement (ibid).

2.5.5. **Assignments and Evaluation**

Like in any teaching/learning process, evaluating students' learning represents the last stage in a Moodle-based BL mode. Online assignments and offline homework help EFL/ESL learners to strengthen their achievement Tang (2013). According to this scholar, online learning provides teachers with a more objective way in evaluating their learners'

learning progress rather than the traditional methods where the results of achievements, scores, represent the basis in any evaluation. Moodle web-based evaluation permits for teachers diagnosing how well students' language learning process is doing.

3. The Study

Starting from the assumption that a BL approach to course design aims to create innovative learning experiences that involve students in learning situations which compel them to read, write, listen, speak, and think; this investigation aimed to examine whether BL is an effective approach in enhancing students' post reading skills mainly summarizing and responding via discussing favorite parts or elements of a story. To achieve the study objectives, two main questions are posited:

- Does the use of blended learning result in a statistically significant difference in second year EFL learners' summarizing scores?
- Does the use of blended learning result in a statistically significant difference in second year EFL learners' ability to discuss story major theme(s)?

The research questions may be answered if the study examines the effects of Blended learning instructional approach on reading comprehension skills development mainly summarizing and discussing story major theme(s). Therefore, two hypotheses are formulated below:

- When blended learning instruction is applied, it would enhance second year EFL learners' summarizing skills.
- When blended learning Instruction is applied, it would enhance second year EFL learners' discussion to the story major theme(s).

3.1.Participants

As this research work took place in pre-existing educational settings, where individual students were assigned to the control or experimental condition, an experimental study was carried out on a sample of the population selected from second year university students at the Teacher Training School of Constantine. The rationale behind selecting second year students was that all the participants have experienced during first year in the Reading Techniques (RT) subject, reading short texts and manipulating comprehension strategies mainly scanning, skimming for the main idea, and summarizing. As the main objective of this subject (RT) in the second year is to develop students' post reading skills; second year students are convenient and appropriate to attain the objectives of this study.

3.2. Procedures

Fifty (50) participants in a pre-existing class joined either the experimental condition (n=25), or the control condition (n=25). Prior to the beginning of the experiment, the participants were pretested. During the six weeks of the training, the experimental group was subjected to a blended learning environment where participants could take advantage of both a Moodle e-learning platform and in-class reading instruction. The control group, however, received the reading materials, instruction and feedback through traditional in-class instruction only. After the experiment, the participants of both groups were post-tested. To insure the test validity, the pre and the posttest share the same characteristics as

far as the nature of the text and the type of questions. Both tests used narrative conversational texts of about the same length "The *Chaser*"[1], and "*After Twenty Years*"[2]**.** As far as the reading instruction provided, the same category of questions was asked. During the pretest and the posttest, the participants were asked to read the text carefully, summarize it using their own words, and then write a response where they discuss one of the story major themes (see **Appendices 1 & 2**).

3.2.1. Generating Pre/Posttest Scores

To generate the summary scores along with the students' responses scores to the open ended questions, we relied on two scoring rubrics. In evaluating students' summaries, we utilized a summarization rubric adapted from ReadWriteThink.org, an affiliate of International Reading Association and National Council for Teachers of English. Students' summaries were evaluated according to the clear statement of the plot, the selection of the essential events, the demonstration of an overall understanding to the story, and the inclusion of the story elements where a score ranging from 4 to 0 is provided according to the summary characteristics (see **Appendix 3**). The four aspects in an exemplary summary are scored as follows:

- If the student has clearly stated the overall plot of the story, a score of 3 to 4 is given.
- If the student included only the essential events in the summary, then, a score of 3 to 4 is provided.
- In case an overall understanding of the story is displayed in the summary, a score of 3 to 4 is given.
- If the student has included the story elements using his own words, a score of 3 to 4 is given.

Concerning the scoring of the participants' responses to the open ended questions, we utilized the rubric provided in the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (2011, p. 84). This Scoring Rubric facilitates a better understanding of the characteristics of strong and weak responses (see **Appendix 4**). Students' responses were evaluated by checking if the purpose of the assignment is achieved, if there is an accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge, if the supporting details are relevant to the topic of the assignment, and if students' degree of understanding of the subject matter is manifested via their arguments. A score of 4 to 0 is provided according to the students' manipulation of the previously mentioned aspects in their responses.

3.2.2. Reading Instruction

During the instruction, which lasted for five weeks, all learners in the control and experimental groups took reading lessons in the classroom in the form of traditional face-to-face instruction. The difference, however, was in their out-of-class activities. While the participants in the control group (CG) were assigned printed texts to study, and then write a summary and a response to the story of the week, the participants in the blended learning

[1]A short story written in 1940 by the British Novelist and Scenarist "John Henry Noyes Collier".
[2]A short story written by O. Henry that was first published in 1906 in anthology "the Four Million".

group (BL-G) were involved in e-learning activities via Moodle platform blog (http://www.elearning.ensc.dz/course/view). They were asked to visit the weblog after class to do their homework. During e-learning instruction, the users of the blog benefitted from two modes of communication: live via synchronous technologies, and delayed via asynchronous technologies. The weekly reading assignments were assumed to be posted by the participants on the blog. As far as the teacher's feedback is concerned, the participants in the control group received it in the classroom; yet, the participants in the BL condition received it online.

4. Results and Discussion

The collected data of both pre and post tests are analyzed in this section. After describing statistically, the collected data from the pre-test and the posttest of the two dependent variables: summarizing, and writing a response, we compare means. As long as a hypothesis cannot be confirmed just by comparing means, mainly if the difference is not large, a quantitative analysis is followed. Hence, a *t*-test analysis is employed to give more validity to the findings and to reinforce the drawn conclusions.

*4.1.1. **Research Question 1:** Does the use of blended learning result in a statistically significant difference in second year EFL learners' summarizing scores?*

From the results presented in **Table 1**, we notice that the mean scores of the CG, 6.68 and BL-G, 6.88 in writing summary pretest, are quite similar with an inconsiderable difference. The similar remark can be said for SD, Median, and MIN and MAX scores. However, comparing the means of both groups in writing summary posttest shows that the mean score of the BL-G 10.06 is higher than the CG, 9, with a noticeable difference. Slight differences are also spotted for the remaining values: SD, Median, and MIN and MAX scores. This reveals that the BL-Group divulges an improvement in summary scores which is not the case of the CG whose scores have slightly increased since the pre-test. To evidence the significance of this comparison a statistical testing is needed.

Descriptive Statistics	**BL-G**		**CG**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
N	25	25	25	25
Mean	6.88	10.06	6.82	9
SD	.196	.275	.193	.239
Median	7	10	7	9
MIN	5	8	5	6
MAX	9	12.50	9	12

Table1. Pre / Posttest Summary Data

Since our work is based on one tailed test, to confirm or refute the stated hypothesis, the calculated *t* at 95% (0.05) level of significance must equal or exceed the half of the critical *t*. The results from Independent Samples t-test Procedure reveal that the calculated *t* with 48 degrees of freedom at 95% (0.05) level of significance equals 2.90 (**See table 2**).

	CR Mean Difference					
	N	**Mean/ Difference**	**Std.error**	**Student-t**	DF	Sig. (p-value
Posttest	50	**1.06**	.365	**2.90**	48	**.144**

Table 2. Summary Mean Difference between BL-G and C-G in Posttest

Because the value of the calculated *t* exceeds the value of the critical *t*(48) 2.90> 1.004, this affirms that the results obtained from this study are confirmed to be statistically different. Consequently, a statistically significant difference exists between the two groups in terms of summary scores. Such conclusion reflects the positive effect of the BL procedure to which the experimental group has been exposed. The research hypothesis asserting that when blended learning is applied, 2nd year EFL learners' summary scores increase is thus upheld.

4.1.2. Research Question 2: *Does the use of blended learning result in a statistically significant difference in second year EFL learners' ability to discuss story major theme(s)?*

From the results presented in **Table 3**, we notice that the mean scores of the CG, 1.44 and BL-G, 1.36 in writing a response to the story pretest, are quite similar with an inconsiderable difference. The similar remark can be said for SD, Median, and MIN and MAX scores. However, comparing the posttest means of both groups in writing a response to the story shows that the mean score of the BL-G 2.32 is higher than the CG, 1.48 one, with a noticeable difference. An apparent deviation is also spotted for the remaining values. This reveals that the BL-G divulges an improvement in story response scores which is not the case of the CG whose scores have slightly increased since the pre-test. To evidence the significance of this comparison, statistical testing is needed.

Descriptive Statistics	**BL- G**		**C-G**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
N	25	25	25	25
Mean	1.36	2.32	1.44	1.48
SD	.110	.125	.116	.148
Median	1.00	2.50	1.50	1.50
MIN	0.50	1.50	0.50	0.50
MAX	2.50	3.50	3.00	3.00

Table 3: Pre / Posttest Response Data

The results of the Independent Samples t-test Procedure reveal that the calculated *t* with 48 degrees of freedom at 95% (0.05) level of significance equals 4.320 (**see Table 4**).

	CR Mean Difference					
	N	**Mean/ Difference**	**Std. error**	**Student-t**	DF	Sig. (p-value
Posttest	50	**.84**	.194	**4.320**	48	**.336**

Table 4. Response Mean Difference between BL-G and C-G in Posttest

As the value of the calculated *t* exceeds the value of the critical *t*(48) 4.320 > 1.004, a statistically significant difference exists between the control and the experimental groups in terms of writing response scores. Such conclusion reflects the positive effect of the BL procedure to which the experimental group has been exposed. The research hypothesis asserting that blended learning enhances 2nd year EFL learners' ability to write a story response enhances is thus confirmed.

4.2 Discussion of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of a blended learning instruction on EFL learners post reading skills: summarizing and responding to narrative material. To reach this target, the experimental group received all the instruction via a combination of two effective modes: face-to-face and online. During the pre-test, both the BL-G and the CG performed roughly in the same way. Yet, negligible differences were noticed at the level of the summary and "discuss story major theme(s)" scores. However, in the posttest, differences were diagnosed in the two dependent variables. The differences in the summary and the response's mean scores between the BL-G and the CG were statistically confirmed. Henceforth, it can be concluded that those who practiced reading comprehension via a blended learning environment can enhance their post reading comprehension skills mainly summarizing and discussing one of story major theme(s) in a written form better than those who receive instruction via the traditional face-to-face method only. Such findings go in parallel with previous research claiming that that Blended Learning instruction boosts EFL readers' comprehension skills (Behjat et al., 2012; Ghazizadeh & Fetemipour, 2017).

In a study where Behjat and his associates (2012) sought to discover whether blended learning environments can enhance the reading comprehension skills for EFL learners, 107 students at the University of Iran were invited to participate in this investigation. The findings suggested that the combination between the traditional classroom instruction and the technology one can help learners perform better in their reading comprehension. These investigators claimed that "online reading encourages learner's autonomy to read more materials independent of what is presented in the classroom" (Behjat et al., ibid, p. 112). Similar conclusions were generated through Yang's study (2012). In an experimental design conducted on 108 Taiwanese students,

the results revealed that Blended Learning was effective in enhancing students' reading proficiency.

In another study where 60 intermediate Iranian students participated, Ghazizadeh and Fetemipour (2017) attempted to find out if blended learning has a statistically significant effect on EFL learners' reading proficiency. The results confirmed that the participants who were under blended learning condition performed better than the participants who were exposed only to a traditional method of teaching reading. Hence, it was certified that blended learning has a statistically significant positive effect on the reading proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. Additionally, as "learners can benefit from the advantages of blended learning as an accelerator of learning to read in second or foreign language in and outside the classroom" (ibid, p. 612), the researchers recommended the adoption of blended learning in the English language classes. This is mainly due; conclude Krasnova and Vanushin (2016, p. 56), to the fact that BL offers EFL teachers an opportunity to integrate innovative and technological advances of online learning with interaction and participation of the best traditional practices.

Hence, the implementation of a BL course design is welcomed in the EFL classroom because the net technology that creates pedagogical opportunities (Hoadjili & Mehiri, 2015) brings to the learner new modes of access to knowledge and information (Ammi & Immoune, 2018), things that were impractical or even impossible in the traditional classroom (Hoadjili & Mehiri, 2015). Due to the fact that nowadays EFL students are perfect manipulators of the internet (Ouahmiche & Boughouas, 2016), they can benefit a lot from this digital learning that fits their learning styles variation, offers them learning flexibility, and enables them to get access to an unlimited number of English reading materials. Yet without a complete loss of face-to-face contact, BL approach creates an innovative and effective learning experience for EFL students. Accordingly, we recommend BL reading course because it boosts EFL readers' comprehension and critical reading skills, it works as an accelerator of learning to read in second or foreign language in and outside the classroom, and it encourages learner's autonomy to read more materials independent of what is presented in the classroom.

5. Conclusion

This paper describes a five-week experimental blended learning study carried out on second year EFL students at the Teacher Training School of Constantine. The findings revealed that BL was efficient in increasing post-reading skills particularly: summarizing and writing a response to the story's main theme(s). In the light of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of instructional practices where the traditional face-to-face classroom instruction is combined with virtual learning instruction "online" can help in enhancing post reading comprehension skills because students are provided with more opportunities to discuss their reading difficulties during group discussions and obtain individual feedback from their teacher and peers in multiple learning setting (in-class and at home) and via diverse modes of instruction delivery (face-to-face and online). EFL learners can reach a better level of expertise in reading comprehension skills if the blended learning is adopted in English language classes.

References

[1] Al-Ajlan, A., &Zedan, H. (2008). "Why moodle". 12th IEEE International workshop on future trends of distributed computing systems, 58-64.

[2] Ammi, A., & Immoune, Y. (2018). "Information and communications technologies between representations and reality". Revue de Traduction et Langues 17(2), 140-155.

[3] Behjat, F., Yamini, M., &SadeghBaghri, M. (2012). "Blended learning: a ubiquitous learning environment for reading comprehension". Distance Education27 (2), 249-264.

[4] Bonk, C.J., & Zhang, K. (2006). "Introducing the R2D2 model online learning for the diverse learners of the world". Handbook of blended learning: Global Perspectives, local designs, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 550-568.

[5] Caner, M. (2012). The Definition of blended learning in higher education. In Panagiotes, A. (ed). Blended learning environments for adults: Evaluation and frameworks, IGI Global, pp. 19-34.

[6] Dennis, A. Bichelmeyer, B., Henry, D., Kakir, H., Korkmaz, A., Watson, C., &Bunnage, J. (2006). The Cisco networking academy: A model for study of students' success in blended learning environment. In Bonk, C. J. & Graham, C. R. (Eds.), Handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, pp. 120-135.

[7] Dziuban, C., Hartman, J., Juge, F., Moskal, P., &Sorg, S. (2006). Blended learning enters the mainstream. In Bonk, C. J. & Graham, C. R. (Eds.), Handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, pp. 195-205.

[8] Ghazizadeh, T., &Fetemipour, H. (2017). "The effect of blended learning on EFL learners' reading proficiency". Journal of Language Teaching and Research 8(3), 606-614.

[9] Hoadjili, A.C, &Mehiri, R. (2015). "The integration of e-learning in Algerian tertiary level: The case of Biskra University". Revue de Traduction et Langue, 14(1), 77-91.

[10] Huang, R., Ma, D., & Zhang, H. (2008). "Towards a design theory of blended learning curriculum". International Conference on Hybrid Learning and Education, 66-78.

[11] Kanuka, H., &Rourke, L. (2013). "Using blended learning strategies to address teaching development needs: how does Canada compare". Canadian Journal of Higher Education 43(3), 19-35.

[12] Kaur, M. (2013). "Blended learning: its challenges and future", Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences Vol 93, 612-617.

[13] Krasnova, T.I., &Vanushin, I.S. (2016). "Blended learning perception among undergraduate engineering students". IJET 11(1), 54-56.

[14] Krasnova, T.I., &Ananjev, A. (2015). "Students' perception of learning in the online discussion environment", Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6(6), 202-207.

[15] Lalima., & Dangwal, K.L. (2017). "Blended learning: an innovative approach". Universal Journal of Education Research 5(1), 129-136.Martin. A & Madigan.D (2006). Digital literacies for learning. London: Facet Publishing.

[16] Martin. A & Madigan.D (2006). Digital literacies for learning. London: Facet Publishing.

[17] Nozawa, K. (2011). "To moodle or not to moodle: can it be an ideal e-Learning environment?". Political Sciences 18(3), 289-312.

[18] Oliver, M., &Trigwell, K. (2005). Can 'blended learning' be redeemed? E-Learning, 2(1), 17-26.

[19] Open response item evaluation information. (2011). The Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®) Middle School Mathematics. Pearson Education, Inc, 82-84

[20] http://www.mtel.necinc.com/content/Docs/MA-FL-D047-

[21] PRACTICE-TEST.pdf (retrieved on 17 June, 2018).

[22] Ouahmiche, G., & Boughouas, L. (2016). "Concordancing technology: a high-tech philosophy towards boosting students' writing ability". Revue du Progrès, Revue de Recherches Humaines et Scientifiques LMD des Langues Étrangère Appliquées, Sciences Technologie et Développement, 1(4), 143-157.

[23] Rafaeli, S., Brak, M., Dan-Gur, Y. &Toch, E. (2004). "QASIA- a web-based environment for learning, assessing and knowledge sharing in communities". Computer and Education Vol 43, 273-289.

[24] Rovai, A.P., & Jordan, H.P. (2004). "Blended learning and sense of community: a comparative analysis with traditional and fully online graduate courses". International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning 5(2), 1-13.

[25] Seddiki, H. (2016). "Technology integration in teaching English as a Foreign Language". Revue de Traduction et Langues 15(1), 451-466.

[26] Summarization rubric. (2015). International Reading Association and National Council for Teachers of English: Houston ISD Curriculum 201.

[27] http://www.readwritethink.org (retrieved on 05 May, 2018).

[28] Tang, J. (2013). "The research on blended learning of ESL based on Moodle platform". Studies in Literature and Language 6(2), 30-34.

[29] Yang, Y.F. (2012). "Blended learning for college students with English reading difficulties". Computer Assisted Language Learning25 (5), 30-34.

[30] Zehedi, Z, &Tabatabaei, O. (2015). "The effect of blended teaching on reading strategy use by Iranian EFL learners". International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research 13(11), 25-38.

[31] Zenha-Rela, M, & Carvalho, R. (2006). "Work in progress - self-evaluation through monitored peer review using the Moodle platform". 36th ASEE/IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference.

[32] Zhu, D. M. (2013). Students' learning outcomes and attitudes toward online learning in a university blended environment. Australia: School of Education, University of South Australia PHD dissertation.

Appendices

Appendix (1):

Pretest

Read carefully the text of the "Chaser", and then respond to the bellow questions:

Instruction

1. Write a summary to the story
2. Respond to the following questions:

a. How could the old man make enough money to live if he sold his love potion for only 1$

b. Why did the old man respond for Alan's "Good Bye" by saying "Au Revoir"?

Appendix (2): Posttest

*Read carefully the text of the "*After Twenty Years*", and then respond to the bellow questions:*

Instruction

1. Write a summary to the story
2. Respond to the following: "Does the story have a surprise ending? If so, why were you not expecting the story to end this way? Would you react the same way as Jimmy did?"

Appendix (3): Literary Text – Summary Rubric

Examplary Response	Sufficient Response	Partially Sufficient Response	Insufficient Response	No Response
Clearly states the overall plot of the text and provides several supporting events that identify the conflict, climax and resolution	Clearly states the plot of the text, but provides only the problem and solution in the story	Overall plot of the text is present, however there is no mention of specific events from the story	The plot of the text is not present	No response is given or response given does not relate to the text
Includes only important, essential events	Includes important events but some might be missing	Includes some relevant events but critical information is missing	Contains irrelevant events and details	
Demonstrates clear understanding of the story	Demonstrates adequate understanding of the story	Demonstrates basic understanding of the story	Demonstrates little or no understanding	

Briefly states story elements in own words	Briefly states story elements in own words with some exact language from the text	Includes story elements, but uses the exact language of the text	Includes exact language of the text that is copied indiscriminately	

Appendix (4): SCORING RUBRIC FOR Open Ended Questions

Score	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.
2	**The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.
1	**The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.
0	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**