# Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Perception of Blended Learning

**Parlindungan Pardede**
*parlpard2010@gmail.com*
*English Education Deparment, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,*
*Universitas Kristen Indonesia, Indonesia*

## Abstract

Due to its great prospects to maximize the advantages of both online learning and face-to-face learning, blended learning (BL) has been growing as one of the most important educational advances of the 21st century. Current studies have revealed that BL is very potential to help address students' diverse need and learning style, advance students' learning experience by developing their engagement, motivation, and capacity for reflection, and provide learners with direct experience with technology-supported skills essential for 21st-century success style. This study aimed at investigating the perception of pre-service EFL teachers of blended learning in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) setting. Employed a mixed methods research design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 32 students of the English Education Department of Universitas Kristen Indonesia Jakarta. The findings revealed that the students' perception towards blended learning was positive. The participants also valued learning using the online platform not only because it offers convenience, flexibility, and immediate access but also increases their engagement and independence and develops their technical and information literacy skills. However, they viewed face-to-face instruction more effective for it is more realistic due to the presence of direct interaction, immediate response, and the convenience of reading printed texts.

**Keywords:** *blended learning, face-to-face instruction, online platform, English education*

## INTRODUCTION

The internet-based technologies and other sophisticated computer software exponential advancement and their accelerating penetration into the educational sector have brought significant change in the educational sector, particularly in higher education. Those technologies use has provided an expanding range of possible solutions for improving teaching and learning inputs, processes, and outcomes (Pardede, 2012). One of the major innovations in the methods of teaching and learning raised from the implementation of internet-based technologies and computer software is blended learning (BL). It was devised to overcome the drawbacks encountered in e-learning (Rooney, 2003), such as insistence on students to be independent and self-regulated learners, some students' difficulties to get used to the structure of online courses, to manage time, and to maintain self-motivation (Marino, 2000), and the absence of "real" experiences such as lab experiments, guided exercises, and natural communication. It was essentially invented by combining the advantages offered by e-learning with the benefits offered by face-to-face

approaches. Therefore, it is very prospective to convey learning since it offers the convenience of an online format without the loss of face-to-face contact (Dziuban, Hartman, & Moskal, 2004).

In the implementation of any learning methodology, including blended learning, the perceptions of students who are among the key stakeholders are one of the most important successful factors. Basioudis, et.al. (2012) stated that students' perceptions of BL management system and its online materials is influential to their level of engagement. Ong and Lai (2006) highlighted that students' motivation and attitudes in using ICT may affect their BL use level. Sanders and Morrison-Shetlar's (2002) study confirmed this by showing that students' attitudes toward technology are influential in determining the educational benefits of online learning resources and experiences. Consequently, the evaluations of courses essentially rely on students' attitudes, expectations, and satisfaction (Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2008).

Current studies on students' perception of BL showed varied results. Although the majorities (Lopez-Perez et al., 2011; Kistow, 2011; Richardson & Swan, 2003; Poon, 2012; and Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2006) revealed positive views, such as that students enjoy to participate in BL due to the flexibility and the networking opportunities it offers; that BL gives greater flexibility for student learning in terms of learning style and study pace; that BL wide range of delivery methods makes it possible to improve students' experience and enhance their engagement; and that the more students participated in the online discussion forums, the more they achieved and the more positive views they developed towards BL. Yet, a few studies revealed negative views, such as that students preferred face-to-face instruction and even resented technology-mediated learning and that despite the participants' satisfaction of the proposed BL strategy in teaching vocabulary, they still preferred the face-to-face learning (Noble, 2002; Sezen, 2015).

Studies investigating students' perception of BL in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesian context is still limited in number. Although some studies (Pardede, 2011; Mudra, 2018; and Pardede, 2015) had tried to investigate students perception of the use of internet-based technologies in EFL learning, these technologies were merely used as supplementary tools. The classes were not purposefully designed to integrate the best of face-to-face and online learning. The only accesible researches on students' perception of BL in Indonesian EFL setting are the studies of Nazara and Wardaningsih (2015) and Warman (2018). The former revealed that the students' attitudes were moderate towards face-to-face instruction and positive toward BL. The latter showed that the participants' attitudes were highly positive. They agreed that BL use on reading comprehension was useful, helpful and effective in learning English anytime and anywhere.

Considering the meager number of studies investigating students' perception of BL in Indonesian EFL settings, while the perceptions of students are one of the most important succesful factors in the implementation, the present researcher was interested to conduct this study as an attempt to fill in the gap. This study aimed to explore students' perception of BL in English courses.

## LITERATURE REVIEW
### What is Blended learning?
Although BL is a relatively new concept and practice, it has been simultaneously designed and implemented in multiple ways by various educators and institutions in various parts of the world. It also been studied from various perspectives. As a result, it is defined in

various descriptions and named with different terms, such as "hybrid learning" and "flipped classroom". Boelens, et al. (2015) defined it as "learning that happens in an instructional context which is characterized by a deliberate combination of online and classroom-based interventions to instigate and support learning" (p.5). Driscoll (2002) stated that BL refers to the blend of the effectiveness of the face-to-face teaching environment and ICT-mediated teaching and learning environment. Neumeier (2005) stated it is a combination of face-to-face (F2F) and computer-assisted learning (CAL) in a single teaching and learning environment. For Bonk and Graham (2006, p. 5), "Blended learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction."

Despite this wide variety of definitions, most of them are essentially just variations of a few common themes. Graham, Allen, and Ure (2005) identified three themes: (a) BL as the combination of different instructional methods, (b) BL as the combination of different modalities or delivery media, and (c) BL as the combination of face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction. They argued that the first two defines BL so broadly that they encompass virtually all learning systems. Defining blended learning in either of these two ways waters down the definition because it is very difficult to find any learning system that does not involve multiple instructional methods, instructional technology and delivery media. Such a definition will not cover the essence of what blended learning is and why it is exciting to so many people. The third definition, which emphasizes on the blend of online and face-to-face instruction, is more acceptable because it more accurately reflects the historical emergence of blended learning systems. This is supported by various authors (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Graham, 2006; Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003; Watson, 2008) who defined BL as the integration or combination of the strengths of face-to-face instruction and computer-mediated instruction or online learning.

Although BL is a new trend, it considered as one of the most important educational advances of the 21st century (Thorne, 2003) and is foreseen to be the "new traditional model" or the "new normal" in course delivery (Graham, Woodfield & Harrison, 2013) due to its potential to help address students' diverse need and learning style (Eduviews, 2009), advance students' learning experience by developing their engagement, motivation, and capacity for reflection (Hughes, 2007; Cooner, 2010; Lopez-Perez et al.,2012), and provide learners with direct experience with technology-supported skills essential for 21st century success style (Eduviews, 2009).

**Blended learning in EFL Contexts**
In the contexts of EFL teaching and learning, BL can be very effective to compensate for students' lack of exposure to the English language. The results of various studies conducted on BL in EFL settings showed that BL is beneficial for both learners and instructors. For students, it generates interest in the learning process, develops language skills, allows them to learn at their own pace, fosters their deeper learning and facilitates their involvement in technology (Abdelhak, 2015; James, 2016). In addition, BL also helps learners' preparation for future because it offers many skills that they can directly convert to solve problems in real-world, e.g., research skills, self-learning skills, self-engagement skills, sense of responsibility, and computer literacy skills.

For teachers, BL helps in improving teaching conditions, offers access to global resources and materials that meet the students' level of knowledge and interest, provides more opportunities for collaboration and meaningful professional development, and improves time efficiency (Ju & Mei, 2018). According to Rubio and Thoms (2014), a BL

implementation can empower teachers to respond to a wide variety of students' learning needs, to support learning processes, and to promote active, reflective and collaborative learning. The use of online assessment and communication tools in BL, can also enhance teachers' understanding of individual students' learning, and enables them to promote students' interactive and collaborative learning outside of face-to face classes (Pop & Slev, 2012). Its great potential to offer an ideal environment for language education (Reinders, 2012; Scida & Saury, 2006), has been attracting educators to employ it in English language education (Blake, 2011; Marsh, 2012; Reinders, 2012; Rubio & Thoms, 2014).

**Some Current Studies on Students Perceptions of Blended Learning**
In the literature, various current relevant studies revealed that students' perceptions of BL can be affected by various factors. Lim & Morris (2009) differentiated these factors into three types: instructional variables, motivational factors, and learners' variables. The majorities of studies examining students' perception of BL tend to show positive views, although a few other studies contradicted it. The study Lopez-Perez et al. (2011) showed that the use of BL has a positive effect in reducing dropout rates and in improving exam marks. Moreover, the students' perceptions on BL are interrelated with their final marks depending on the BL activities, and on the students' age, background and class attendance rate. Kistow (2011) found out that learners enjoyed participating in BL due to its flexibility and the networking opportunities it offers. The study of Richardson and Swan (2003) revealed that students taking BL viewed their learning more positively. Poon (2012) found that BL gives greater flexibility for student learning in terms of learning style and study pace. With the adoption of a wide range of delivery methods, BL can successfully improve students' experience and enhance their engagement. In addition, Akkoyunlu and Soylu's (2006) study revealed that the more students participated in the online discussion forums, the more they achieved and the more positive views they developed towards BL.

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning and teaching setting, BL has been growing as one of the most popular educational conceptions (Halverson et al, 2014). Studies conducted in EFL contexts revealed that the perceptions of learners about the usefulness of BL varied according to the different language skills (Bueno-Alastuey & López-Pérez, 2014). According to Ayres (2002), BL online tools supports learners in their spelling and grammar development. Byrne (2007), found that BL is especially useful in writing, while Lee and Chong (2007) pointed out that web-based materials positively impact vocabulary and listening skills improvement.

In contrast with the results of these studies, Noble's (2002) research indicated that students preferred face-to-face instruction and even resented technology-mediated learning. Sezen (2015) found similar result in his study focusing on the effects of BL on EFL students' vocabulary enhancement which showed that despite the participants' satisfaction of the proposed BL strategy in teaching vocabulary, they still preferred the face-to-face learning and did not want to spend time studying new vocabulary items outside the classroom due to their lack of motivation.

While the studies investigating students' perception of BL in EFL settings conducted in various countries is considerable, such studies in Indonesian EFL settings are less prolific. Some studies focusing on students' perception of the use of internet-based technologies in EFL learning have been indeed conducted. However, the internet-

based technologies in these studies were merely used as supplementary tools. The classes were not purposefully designed to integrate the best of face-to-face and online learning.

Mudra's (2018) study, involving 55 undergraduate students at a public institute in Kerinci regency, investigated the students' views toward Blended English language learning as a course. However, blended learning in this study context refers to the use of a web-based tool to learn. Describing the participants, the writer stated that "many of them were active in an online activity such as social networks, blogs, and emails" (p. 33). The results of the study revealed that to the students, BL has some drawbacks, i.e. the non-interactive and complicated activities, slow internet connectivity, unavailability of instructors, unorganized materials, and complicated instructions. Despite these weaknesses, BL also provides some benefits, i.e. collaborative delivery method, more reading materials, useful computer programs, helpful social network application, and more valuable information.

Pardede's (2011) study was also limited to the use of blog as an additional component in writing class. The results show that the majority of the participants viewed the use of blogs interesting and effective. Another study by Pardede (2015) investigated the perception of pre-service EFL teachers of Edmodo use as a complementary learning tool. Involving 54 students of the English Education Department of Universitas Kristen Indonesia Jakarta, the finding revealed that the majority of the participants thought they are ready to use Edmodo as a complementary learning tool in English classroom, considered the use of Edmodo is a beneficial learning tool to supplement traditional face-to-face classroom settings, and had a positive view on their experiences in using Edmodo.

The study of Nazara and Wardaningsih (2015) and Warman (2018) seem to be the only accessible researches focusing on students' perception of BL in Indonesian EFL contexts in the internet. The former focused on students' attitudes towards face-to-face and BL instructions in English class and their preference towards these two learning instructions. Involving 42 students of the English Education Department of Universitas Kristen Indonesia Jakarta, the study revealed that the students' attitudes were moderate towards face-to-face instruction and positive toward BL. The latter investigated students' perception of using WhatsApp in BL on reading comprehension. The responses of 40 students at STMIK-AMIK Riau, Pekanbaru, involved in the study were highy positive. They agreed that using WhatsApp in BL on reading comprehension was useful, helpful and effective in learning English anytime and anywhere.

Considering the meager number of studies investigating students' perception of BL in Indonesian EFL settings, while the perceptions of students are one of the most important successful factors in BL implementation, the present researcher was interested to conduct this study as an attempt to fill in the gap. The findings of this study were hopefully able to contribute to the related literature through seeking answers to the research question "What are the students' perceptions of BL in English courses?"

**METHOD**

This study used a mixed methods design which combines both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for gaining a more complete insight into the research. The quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire and the qualitative data were obtained through an interview. The population in this study was the whole students of the English Education Department of Universitas Kristen Indonesia Jakarta in 2018/2019 academic year when this study was conducted (August 2018-February 2019). The quota sampling technique was employed to select the participants, i.e. by involving the 32

students attending Research in ELT course in the odd semester of that academic year.The course was taught in the flipped classroom model. The online learning activities were carried out using Edmodo as the learning management system.

The questionnaire administered to collect the quantitative data was adapted from the instruments developed by Balcı (2017). Some modifications were made in order to address the research questions. The questionnaire, containing 50 statements, was a 5-point Likert scale survey questionnaire consisting of four parts: (1) Online Platform (Usage-Content), (2) F2F Sessions (Usage-Content) (3) Evaluation, and (4) students' view on BL in general.  To gauge the data, the participants were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree, score 1, to strongly agree, score 5. To examine the questionnaire's reliability, it was tested using Cronbach's Alpha Test. The result showed that the overall Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of the questionnaire is ($r=0.81$) indicating a high degree of internal consistency. Thus, it is considered a reliable instrument.

The questionnaire, which was created in Google Form and was responded online by the participants, was administered in the first phase to collect the quantitative data at the end of the semester (January 2019). Two weeks later, a semi-structured open-ended interview involving six participants randomly selected from the sample, was conducted to get more insights to triangulate and elaborate the obtained quantitative data through the survey for in-depth analysis of the participants' perceptions. The descriptive statistical operation in terms of percentages and means was administered to analyze the quantitative data.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
### Students' Perception of Blended Learning
The findings obtained from the survey showed that students' perceptions vary according to different aspects of BL. As seen in Table 1, although the participants viewed the online platform use and content positive (M= 3.46) and the BL assessment activities and tasks highly positive (M= 4.09), they still valued face-to-face instruction the highest. This category got the highest mean score of perception (4.18).

Table1:
*Perceptions of Blended Learning (N=32)*

| No | Categories | SD | D | N | A | SA | M |
|----|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| 1 | Online Platform Use and Content | 9,9% | 13,5% | 23,7% | 26,7% | 26,1% | 3.46 |
| 2 | Face to Face Learning Use and Content | 2,2% | 4,5% | 9,8% | 40,2% | 43,3% | 4.18 |
| 3 | Blended learning assessment activities and tasks | 3.1% | 5% | 11.9% | 40% | 40% | 4.09 |
| 4 | General Views on BL | 6.1% | 9.6% | 17.5% | 32.7% | 35.5% | 3.82 |

### Students' Perception of Online Platform Use and Content Dimensions
As shown in Table 2, in terms of the dimensions of online platform use and content, the participants most favored its accessibility and ease aspects (M= 3.76). This indicated that the participants appreciated the easeto access materials and the possibility to do learning activities anytime and anywhere in the online platform. The second most favored dimensions is the effectivity and compatibility of the online platform with face-to-face learning (M= 3.43). The clarity and comprehensiveness of modules and instructions were the third most favored, and the opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, and collaboration were the fourth.

Table 2:
*Perceptions of Online Platform Use and Content Dimensions (N=32)*

| No | Dimensions | SD | D | N | A | SA | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Accessibility and ease | 6.9% | 9.4% | 19.4% | 30% | 34.4% | 3.76 |
| 2 | Opportunities for developing knowledge, skills, collaboration | 10.2 % | 15.6% | 28.1% | 24.2% | 21.9% | 3.32 |
| 3 | Effectivity and compatibility with F2F learning | 10.4% | 14.1% | 23.4% | 26% | 26% | 3.43 |
| 4 | Modules and instructions clarity and comprehensiveness | 11.6% | 14.7% | 24.6% | 26.3% | 22.8% | 3.34 |

These finding, that the participants' perception of these dimensions is positive but not of high level, indicated that the participants had really obtained the benefits included in the four dimensions. However, the acquisition of these benefits was not yet optimal. This is clarified by the findingsobtained through the interview. Three of the interviewees said they generally favored using the online platform to learn. However, they need more time and practices in order to optimally employ it.

> *"I love using Edmodo because it makes it possible to access the materials and other information easily. It also enables me to access unlimited sources to broaden my knowledge. While writing a literature review, I could easily access a great number of research articles online. When I was not sure how to use APA style to cite or to list references, necessary guidelines could be directly obtained. But, since my experience and skills to use the technology are still limited, I could not yet use it optimally. I need more time to practice."* (Interviewee B)

> *"Edmodo is interesting to use as a learning tool. I can submit my assignments and do other activities easily in it. Conducting researches could also be easy because the internet provides various tools to conduct a survey and contains unlimited data and information. I think, I need more detailed guidelines and practices to optimize the use of the online platform to learn.* (Interviewee C)

> *"I think using Edmodo is advantageous. It makes learning more flexible. However, in order to use it optimally, the modules should be written in easy language. They should also be provided with clearer instructions and video. Training to maximize the use of online tools for learning is also necessary. With good training and sufficient time to practice, I believe I can use Edmodo effectively.* (Interviewee E)

**Students' Perception of Face-to-Face Learning Use and Content Dimensions**
As shown in Table 3 the participants' perception of the seven dimensions of face-to-face learning use and content is highly positive. Viewing from the mean score of each dimension, the participants valued the availability of gestures and mime in the direct contacts (M=4.34) the most important. They also viewed face-to-face interactions very effective to overcome difficulties encountered in the online platform (M=4.31).

These findings indicated that, although the participants favored the use of the online platform to learn, for them the elements of face-to-face learning were still irreplaceable. The qualitative data obtained from the interview clarified this finding, as indicated in the following excerpts.

*"Many elements of the online platform are interesting and important. However, some learning activities, like doing research simulation and role-playing are more effective to do in face-to-face learning."* (Interviewee A)

*"Combining online learning with face-to-face learning, I think, is a good idea. We can do some activities best through the LMS. However, some other learning activities, like doing research simulation and role-playing are more effective to do in face-to-face learning. In addition, the use of nonverbal languages in direct interaction help me get what my lecturer means, and it cannot be replaced by technology."* (Interviewee D)

*"Some learning activities could be done more effectively in the online platform. But, face-to-face instruction is very important because when I got difficulty, I can directly ask my lecturer. Although I can as questions to the lecturers through the online discussion forum, it's possible that I need to wait for the reply in hours or even in a day."* (Interviewee F)

Table3:
*Perceptions of Face-to-Face Learning Use and Content Dimensions (N=32)*

| No | Dimensions | SD | D | N | A | SA | M |
|----|------------|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|------|
| 1 | Group and class discussions in F2F sessions deepen and enrich mastery of knowledge studied in the online sessions. | 3.1% | 6.3% | 9.4% | 40.6% | 40.6% | 4.09 |
| 2 | F2F sessions can be used to clarify unanswered questions during the online sessions. | 3.1% | 3.1% | 12.5% | 37.5% | 43.8% | 4.16 |
| 3 | F2F sessions help me learn about the contents of each unit in detail. | 3.1% | 6.3% | 9.4% | 40.6% | 40.6% | 4.09 |
| 4 | The F2F sessions help me learn better and assist in the retention of information | 3.1% | 6.3% | 12.5% | 40.6% | 37.5% | 4,03 |
| 5 | F2F sessions help in research skills mastery | 3.1% | 3.1% | 6.3% | 40.6% | 46.9% | 4.25 |
| 6 | The availability of gestures and mime in the F2F sessions makes course contents mastery more effective. | 0% | 3.1% | 6.3% | 43.8% | 46.9% | 4.34 |
| 7 | If something wrong in the online platform, the F2F sessions are needed to make things clear. | 0% | 3.1% | 9,4 | 40.6% | 46.9% | 4.31 |

**Students' Perception of Assessment Dimensions**
The participants' perception of the five dimensions of assessment included in the surveyis highly positive, with a mean score of 4.00 or more. (Table 4). Of the five assessment dimensions included in the survey, the participants valued the online quiz results which they used to monitor their learning progress (M= 4.19) and the immediate access of assignment scores that helped them track their progress (M= 4.16) are the first two highest valued.This indicated that the online assessment wasuseful, effective and convenient to them.This is in line with Wang et.al. (2006) finding that online formative assessment offers learners with quick feedback required to evaluate their learning and remedy weaknesses in teaching and their learning.

Table 4:
*Perceptions of Assessment Dimensions (N=32)*

| No | Dimensions | SD | D | N | A | SA | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The evaluation criteria in the online platform are clear and understandable. | 3.1% | 6.3% | 12.5% | 37.5% | 40.6% | 4,06 |
| 2 | The evaluation criteria in the online platform guide in how and what to do in exercises. | 3.1% | 6.3% | 15.6% | 37.5% | 37.5% | 4,00 |
| 3 | The quiz results showing my mastery of content helps in monitoring learning progress. | 3.1% | 6.3% | 9.4% | 40.6% | 43.8% | 4,19 |
| 4 | Immediate accessibility of every assignment score helps me track my progress. | 3.1% | 3.1% | 9.4% | 43.8% | 40.6% | 4,16 |
| 5 | Feedbacks to online assignments obtained from the discussions in the F2F sessions help me reflect my progress. | 3.1% | 6.3% | 12.5% | 40.6% | 37.5% | 4,03 |

**Students'Perceptions of Blended Learning Dimensions**

As it was previously shown, although the participants valued face-to-face instruction higher than learning using the online platform, it did not mean that they had a negative perception towards BL. As shown in Table 5, their favorability of BL is highly positive (M= 4.0). They also valued the convenience and flexibility offered by the online platform (M= 3.9). In addition, 75% of them agreed and strongly agreed that learning using the online platform increased their engagement in learning and developed their time management, technical, learning, and media literacy skills. Finally, 75% of them agreed and strongly agreed they were in favor of applying BL implementation. This is in line with Carter (2013) who stated that the flexibility and accessibility of e-learning, including the various online learning resources exposure and the convenience of self-pacing and regulating their study increase students' enthusiasm. The information obtained from the interview clarified this.

Table 5:
*Perceptions of Blended Learning Dimensions in General (N=32)*

| No | Dimensions | SD | D | N | A | SA | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Increase of engagement, and develop- ment of technical, time management, learning, and media literacy skills | 6.7% | 9.4% | 12.5% | 34.4% | 40.6% | 3.79 |
| 2 | Convenience and flexibility | 5.5% | 9.4% | 13.3% | 33.6% | 38.3% | 3.9 |
| 3 | Effectiveness | 6.3% | 9.4% | 18.8% | 32.5% | 33.1% | 3.77 |
| 4 | Favorability of blended learning implementation | 3.1% | 9.4% | 12.5% | 34.4% | 40.6% | 4.00 |

*"The most advantageous feature of the online platform for me is the quiz and formative assignment. They help me monitor my learning progress. The results or scores can be accessed very quickly. Therefore, I can immediately reflect and make necessary revisions."* (Interviewee B)

*Thanks to technology for it enabled me to access the results or feedbacks of the quiz and formative assignment I have just taken right away. Those feedbacks were very important for me to review my progress.* (Interviewee E)

The majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the various advantages they can obtain through online platform use. Many of them also realized that the online platform offers various interesting media like pictures and videos that helped them study the modules. However, they still valued face-to-face instruction higher due to the realistic interactions it offers.

Another notable reason that explained why the respondents valued face-to-face instruction is their preference for studying printed modules than e-modules. For them, reading printed texts is more effective than the digital version. This clarified Woody, Daniel, and Baker's (2010) finding that students still prefer print to digital books. It is also in line with Miller, Nutting, and Baker-Eveleth's (2013) finding that although the current generation of university students is comfortable with digital ICT tools, they still prefer paper books printed books.

The qualitative data obtained from the interview clarified these findings, as indicated in the following excerpts.

*"In my opinion, learning through the online platform is interesting and effective. It also develops my computer and media literacy skills and makes me more involved and independent in learning. Yet, face-to-face instruction is very crucial because it makes learning more realistic and natural"* (Respondent A)

*"I am really content with learning using the online platform. It offers many advantages. However, since this practice is still new, I need more time to adjust with it. The components of the online platform also need to develop. Providing easier texts to read and accompanying them with supporting images and videos will make it more interesting and effective."* (Respondent B)

*"I love learning through the online platform. It enables me to learn in my own pace and in the place I like most. It also developed my skills in using ICT tools and in selecting good sources of information. However, reading the printed texts is much more convenient than e-texts. It can also be frustrated if the online course texts are difficult to study. Of course, you can ask the lecturer or classmates through the discussion forum. But, you need to wait quite long to receive the response. In such a condition, face-to-face sessions are very critical.* (Respondent D)

*"I'm in favor of using an online platform. It makes learning convenient and flexible. But, it should not replace the face-to-face classes because they are very useful for me … Interacting directly with the lecturer and classmates is necessary, and I can have it only in the face-to-face classes. Besides that, in the face-to-face classes, I can ask questions and if I have something to say or discuss I can discuss it directly."(Interviewee F)*

**CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**
Based on the research finding and discussion in the previous section, some conclusions were drawn. First, the students' perception of BL was positive. However, they viewed face-to-face instruction more effective than online learning because learning in the face-

to-face classroom was more realistic due to the direct interaction, immediate response, and the convenience of reading printed texts. Second, the students were in favor of BL, but they need more time and practices in order to optimize learning using the online platform. Third, to help students learn more effectively in the online platform, the amendment of the modules is necessary. The modules need to be rewritten with easier texts to understand and be supported with relevant images and videos.

Since this study involved only 32 university-level students of the same major and the datawere collected through a survey and interview at one point in time only, the findings may be valid only to students in that single study program. It cannot be generalized to other students in other institutions. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve a larger number of participants of various majors.

**REFERENCES**
Abdelhak, E. (2015), An ICT-based approach to teaching civilisation to EFL learning. *Arab World English Journal,* 6 (1), 185-199.
Akkoyunlu, B. & Yilmaz, S. M. (2006). A study on students' views on Blended Learning environment. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education, 7(3), pp. 43-56.*
Akkoyunlu, B. & Soylu, Y. (2008). A study of student's perceptions in a blended learning environment based on different learning styles. *Educational Technology and Society*, 11(1), 183-193. http://www.ifets.info/journals/11_1/13.pdf
Ayres, R. (2002). Learner attitudes towards the use of CALL. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 15(3), 241–249.Sciences,* 5(1), 287–302.
Balcı, E. (2017). Perceptions on blended learning: a study on student and instructor experiences in an English preparatory program. Unpublished Master Thesis, Pamukkale University, Institute of Educational Sciences.
Basioudis, I. G., De Lange, P., Suwardy, T., & Wells, P. (2012). Accounting students' perceptions of a learning management system: An international comparison. *Accounting Research Journal,* 25(2), 72-86.
Blake, R. J. (2011). Current trends in online language learning. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 31(Mar), 19-35. doi: 10.1017/S026719051100002X
Boelens, R., Van Laer, S., DeWever, B., & Elen, J. (2015). Blended learning in adult education: towards a definition of blended learning. Retrieved November 2017 from https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/6905076
Bonk, C.J. & Graham, C. R. (Eds) (2006). *The handbook of blended learning*. Pfeiffer, San Francisco
Bueno-Alastuey, M. C., & López-Pérez, M. V. (2014). Evaluation of a blended learn-ing language course: students' perceptions of appropriateness for the devel-opment of skills and language areas. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 27(6), 509-527.
Byrne, T. (2007). Marrying two existing software packages into an efficient online tutoring tool. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 20(5), 459–468.
Carter, M. A. (2013). A study of Students' perception of the Online Components of Hybrid Postgraduate Course. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84, 558 – 568
Cooner, T. S. (2010). Creating opportunities for students in large cohorts to reflect in and on practice: lessons learnt from a formative evaluation of students' experiences of a technology-enhanced blended learning design. *British Journal of Educational Technology,* 41(2), 271–286.

Driscoll, M. (2002). Blended learning: Let's get beyond the hype E-Learning, 1(4), 1 –3. Retrieved June 2014 from http://www-07.ibm.com/services/pdf/blended_learning.pdf

Dziuban, C. D., Hartman, J., & Moskal, P. (2004). Blended Learning. *Educause Center for Applied Research Bulletin,* 7, 1-12.

Eduviews. (2009). Blended learning: Where online and face-to-face instruction intersect for 21st-century teaching and learning. *A K-12 Leadership Series*.

Garrison, D. R. & Kanuka, H. (2004). Blended learning: Uncovering its transformative potential in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 7(2), 95-105.

Graham, C. R., 2006. Blended learning systems: Definition, current trends, and future directions In: C. J. Bonk & C. R. Graham, eds. *The handbook of blended learning:Global perspectives, local designs*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer, pp. 3-21.

Graham, C. R., Allen, S., & Ure, D. (2005). Benefits and challenges of blended learning environments. *Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology*, , 253 –259

Graham, C., Woodfield, W., & Harrison, J. (2013). A framework for institutional adoption and implementation of blended learning in higher education. *Internet and Higher Education* (18), 4-14.

Halverson, L.R., Graham, C.R., Spring, K.J, Drysdale, J. S, & Henrie, C. R. (2014). A thematic analysis of the most highly cited scholarship in the first decade of blended learning research. *Internet and Higher Education*, 20: 20-34

Hughes, G. (2007). Using blended learning to increase learner support and improve retention. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 12(3), 349-363

James, J. (2016), ICT integration in academic writing: An experiment in blended learning. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, 7 (3), 336-355.

Ju, S.Y. and Mei, S.Y. (2018). Perceptions and Practices of Blended Learning in Foreign Language teaching at USIM. *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research* 12(1):170-176. DOI: 10.26417/ejser.v12i1.p170-176

Kistow, B. (2011). Blended learning in higher education: A study of a graduate school of business, Trinidad and Tobago. *Caribbean Teaching Scholar*, 1(2), 115-128.

Lee, K. C., & Chong, P. M. (2007). An observational study on blended learning for Japanese language studies. In Fong, J., & Wang, F. L. (Eds.), *Blended learning* (pp. 88–100). Edinburgh, Scotland: Pearson.

Lopez-Perez, M. V., Pérez-López, M. C., & Rodríguez-Ariza, L. (2011). Blended learning in higher education: Students' perceptions and their relation to outcomes. *Computers vs Education*, 56(3), 818–826.

Marino, T. A. (2000). Learning Online: A view from both sides. *The National Teaching & Learning Forum*, 9(4), 4 – 6.

Marsh, D. (2012). *Blended learning: Creating learning opportunities for language learners*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, J., Nutting, A., & Baker-Eveleth, L. (2013).The determinants of electronic textbook useamong college students.*American Economist*, 58(1), 41-50.

Mudra, H. (2018). Blended English Language Learning as a Course in an Indonesian Context: An Exploration toward EFL Learners' Perceptions. *Journal of Foreign Language Education and Technology*, 3(2), 28-51.

Nazara, S. and Wardaningsih, EFF. (2016). Students' Attitudes towards Face-to-Face and Blended Learning Instructions in English Class. A paper presented at *UKI.s English Education Department Collegiate Forum* held on Friday, April 8, 2016.

Neumeier, P. (2005). A closer look at blended learning: Parameters for designing a blended learning environment for language teaching and learning. *ReCALL* 17(2), 163–178.

Noble, D. (2002). *Digital diploma mills: The automation of higher education*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Ong, C. S., & Lai, J. Y. (2006). Gender differences in perceptions and relationships among dominants of e-learning acceptance. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 22(5), 816-829.

Osguthorpe, R. T., & Graham, C. R. (2003). Blended learning environments: Definitions anddirections. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 4(3), 227-233.

Pardede, P. (2011). Using BALL to develop writing skills: Students' interest and perception. Paper presented at SWCU International Conference 2011held in Satya Wacana Christian University, Salatiga, November 2011.

Pardede, P. (2012). Blended learning for ELT. *Journal of English Teaching*, 2(3), 165-178.

Pardede, P. (2015). Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Perception of Edmodo Use as a Complementary Learning Tool. A paper presented at UKI.s English Education Department Collegiate Forum held on Friday, June 12, 2015.

Poon, J. (2012). Use of blended learning to enhance the student learning experience and engagement in property education. *Property Management*, 30(2), 129–156.

Pop, A. & Slev, A. M. (2012). Maximizing EFL learning through blending. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 46, 5516-5519. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.467

Reinders, H. (2012). Blended and online instruction. In A. Burns & J. Richards (Eds.), *Guide to second language pedagogy* (pp. 287-294). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richardson, J. C., & Swan, K. (2003). Examing social presence in online courses in relation to students' perceived learning and satisfaction. Retrieved April 2014 from https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/18713

Rooney, J. E. (2003). Blending learning opportunities to enhance educational pro-gramming and meetings. *Association Managment*, 55(5), 26-32.

Rubio, F. & Thoms, J. J. (Eds.). (2014). *Hybrid language teaching and learning: Exploring theoretical, pedagogical and curricular issues*. Boston: Heinle Cengage Learning.

Sanders, D., & Morrison-Shetlar, A. (2002). Student attitudes toward web-enhanced instruction in an introductory biology course. *Journal of Research on Computing in Education*, 33(3), 251-262.

Scida, E. E. & Saury, R. E. (2006). Hybrid courses and their impact on student and classroom performance: A case study at the University of Virginia. *CALICO journal*, 23(3), 517-531.

Sezen T. (2015). The effects of blended learning on EFL students' vocabulary enhancement. *Social and Behavioral Sciences* 199 P. 641 – 647 conference proceeding.

Thorne, K. (2003). *Blended learning: How to integrate online and traditional learning*. London: Kogan Page.

Wang, K. H., Wang, T., Wang, W.-L., & Huang, S. (2006). Learning styles and formative assessment strategy: enhancing student achievement in Web-based learning.

*Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 22(3), 207–217. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2729.2006.00166.x

Warman, L.A.D. (2018). Students' Perception of Using WhatsApp in Blended Learning on Reading. *J-SHMIC(Journal of English For Academic),* 5(2), 27-38. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25299/jshmic.2018.vol5(2).1848

Watson, J. (2008). Blended learning: The convergence of online and face to face education. *The North American Council for Online Learning*. Retrieved July 2010, from http://www.inacol.org/research/promisingpractices/NACOL_PP Blended Learning lr.pdf

Woody, W., Daniel, D., & Baker, C. (2010). E-books or Textbooks: Students prefer textbooks. *Computers and Education*, 55(3), 1-13.