

## **Blended English Language Learning as a Course in an Indonesian Context: An Exploration toward EFL Learners' Perceptions**

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to explore EFL learners' views toward Blended English language learning as a course. It was focused on three domains of the questionnaire of BL for English course consisting of perceptions and attitudes of BL, negative impressions of BL, and the concept of BL as the learners perceive them (Ja'ashan, 2015). The method of this study was descriptive design which employed a questionnaire as the main instrument. The data were analyzed by estimating frequency and percentages, means and SD, and by exploring significant differences between male and female EFL learners' views of BL. The results revealed that there are several problems and weaknesses found in BL such as non-interactive and complicated activities, slow internet connectivity, unavailability of instructors, unorganized materials, complicated instructions. BL has some benefits for the learners such as collaborative delivery method, more reading materials, useful computer programs, helpful social network application, and more valuable information.

**Keywords:** EFL learners, blended learning, English course.

### **Introduction**

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesian classroom contexts has become a productive component which mainly relies upon media, learners, teachers, and methods of teaching and learning. Each element is related with each other as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners are the targets of teaching and EFL teacher need to be able to teach the EFL learners properly by applying several techniques or methods creatively. In order to be creative, according to Ayob, Hussaini, & Majid (2013), it is a need for an EFL teacher to do an appropriate way such as "combines

the existing knowledge with a new way that is new or unique or introduces a new process to nourish cognition to obtain a useful outcome (learning).” What EFL teachers usually do in the classroom and have in mind has to be incorporated in new way of teaching and learning English. The teachers can blend the teaching and learning process they are working on with online learning (Bonk & Dennen, 2003; Schmidt, 2004). Blended learning is a learning model that consists of a combination between conventional method and advanced method such as online learning.

Blended learning (BL), for some experts, is defined in many ways. According to Kupetz & Ziegenmeyer (2005), BL is “the purposeful arrangement of media, methods and ways of organizing learning situations through combining traditional media and methods with e-learning elements and possibilities” (pp. 179-180). In line with that, Oliver & Trigwell (2005) states that BL “the integrated combination of traditional learning with web based online approaches.” Sharma & Barret (2007) define BL as a course which focuses on the use of advancing technology such as the internet with which face-to-face learning is blended. Two instructional methods consisting of traditional and online way of learning are combined into one concept (Driscoll, 2002). Media play important roles in BL as the traditional method is blended by using online media such as the internet. However, online media do not replace what has been undertaken in an EFL traditional classroom. “Face-to-face learning,” a common term which refers to the way of teaching in a classroom traditionally, could not be taken away from BL (Welker & Berardino, 2005). It is because the term “blended” is a combination between face-to-face learning and online learning.

BL has many advantages for English language learning. BL offers two ways of delivering a lesson through face-to-face learning and online learning. Both ways of teaching delivery enable learners to learn English both in the classroom and online. Hijazi, Crowley, Smith, & Shaffer (2006) stated that utilizing two ways of teaching delivery is useful for learners. Learning English can be more appropriate when EFL learners use in-between methods such as BL. It is because BL provides various

choices for learners to learn not only in a fully classroom-based, but also in fully online (Singh, 2003). One sample of research which combined the use of technology and flashcard has increased the effectiveness of vocabulary learning (Byrd & Lansing, 2016). Another study of BL is conducted by Ahmadi and Besharati (2017) who focused on face-to-face interaction and web-based media. For EFL learners, BL is an accomplishment of face-to-face learning (Ginns & Ellis, 2009; Driscoll, 2002) as it helps to get deep understanding toward a lesson. In the same line, BL allows learners to utilize internet resources over traditional classroom materials and increases learners' deep understanding (Chen & Jones, 2007).

Another advantage of BL for EFL learners is its "flexibility" which means that learners keep their learning without becoming worried of time and place (Miller and Lu, 2003). According to O'Connor, Mortimer, and Bond (2011), BL is "thus a flexible approach to course design that supports 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. The result is potentially a more robust educational experience than either traditional or fully on-line learning can offer" (p. 64). The flexibility of BL enables EFL learners to study English whenever it is and wherever they are as long as they are connected with the internet. So, both teachers and learners do not have to be in the same time and at the same place (Williams, Bland, & Christie, 2008; Garnham & Kaleta, 2002) when a lesson needs to be acknowledged. Fortunately, face-to-face learning is still the part of learning online and it accomplishes the use of BL as a flexible approach to English language learning. A lesson can be learnt in the classroom and it can also be accessed through online sources under schedule (Owston, Wideman, Murphy, & Lupshenyuk, 2008).

Apart from its strengths, several challenges and problems of applying BL need to be faced. Merrill (2009) mentions that BL requires both teachers and learners to work more than is necessary as they should both attend a course in the classroom and undertake online delivery. Many instructors are worried to use technology as they are not used to using it in their classroom. The use of technology in BL causes

threatening sense of the instructors (Abbas, 2015). Because of that reason, Hamuy & Galaz (2010) state that the use of technology has not been fully accepted by instructors or administrators in several institutions. As for learners, new way of learning by using technology does not really change their thoughts about learning as they have not adjusted themselves with the use of technology for learning (Kenney, 2011). The common problem in applying BL in English language course is concerned with both instructors and learners' lack of abilities in understanding what new approach of delivery by using technology is. This problem emerges because a lot of instructors do not attend any workshop or training focusing on how to implement BL approach in the classroom (Hunt, Davies, Richardson, Hammock, Akins, & Russ (2014).

Another problem is either instructors or learners are likely to face some technical problems such as "learners' background and readiness, course design, instructor, access to technology and so forth" (Abbas, 2015) which can affect expected success and goals of delivery. EFL learners are not ready for BL course as they do not have sufficient knowledge to use technology like the internet. An EFL course in BL approach cannot be easily designed because the instructors need to be accustomed and knowledgeable with BL before they plan to design the course. Some places do not have good access to the internet due to bad signal receiver in rural areas. In line with that, Mtebe & Raphael (2013) mention several challenges BL course such as "out-dated learning resources, internet connectivity and computer access, learning support, availability of instructors in online sessions, the use of learning centres, and technical issues."

The relationship between learners, instructors, and academic staff is maintained in the traditional classroom. Such atmosphere cannot be directly found when BL course is implemented by using technology (Higgins & Gomez, 2014). Furthermore, they state that direct teaching and learning through face-to-face method is still an appropriate way of delivering EFL course. Face-to-face method in the traditional classroom allows learners to get direct contact with instructors or staff more easily

compared to that through the use of technology such as the internet. The learners get direct and spontaneous responses, clarification and feedback in face-to-face delivery (Idaho Digital Learning Professional Development, 2009). Traditional classroom is more effective than BL (Hofmann, 2011) in term of direct access and learner-instructor interaction. So, to solve the problems, the instructors need to confirm what the learners have to follow and how they are benefited by the implementation of technology (Dahlstrom, Walker, & Dziuban, 2013). In addition, the learners can be more interested in BL as their English abilities are developed properly (Ja'ashan, 2015).

It is pointed out that learning English language is not only conducted through face-to-face delivery, but also by using technology as in BL course. Based on the strengths and the challenges of BL approach, the present study used the Blended Learning for English Course questionnaire which is mainly designed to explain EFL learners' perceptions towards BL English course and consists of three related domains in BL such as "perceptions and attitudes", "negative impression", and "concepts" of BL integrated in English courses (Ja'ashan, 2015).

### **Research Questions**

The study seeks answer the following research questions:

1. What are EFL learners' perceptions toward blended English language learning in an Indonesian context?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female EFL learners in term of perceptions and attitudes of BL, negative impressions of BL, and the concept of BL?

### **Method**

#### *Design of the study*

The current study employed descriptive study as the research design which aimed to explore EFL learners' perceptions toward experiences of BL. Descriptive study is

concerned with the “current state” or “a particular phenomenon” of a circumstance (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001).

#### *Participants and setting*

The participants of this study were fifty-five EFL learners who are currently learning English in an undergraduate program at a public institute in Kerinci regency, Indonesia. There were twenty male learners and thirty-five female learners. They have been learning English for three and a half years in the institute and many of them were active in an online activity such as social networks, blogs, and emails. They were asked to give a response to the questionnaire about BL. All of them were cooperative to enter the classroom and complete the questionnaire as they returned it sooner after they were asked to do so. Fifty-five questionnaires were accomplished and returned by fifty-five EFL learners as expected.

#### *Instrument*

The instrument employed in this study was a questionnaire ‘Blended Learning for English Course’ developed by Ja’ashan (2015) which was used to explore EFL learners’ perceptions toward blended English language learning. This questionnaire uses five close-ended Likert scale ranging from 1=Strongly Agree (SA), 2=Agree (A), 3=Undecided (UD), 4=Disagree (DA), and 5=Strongly Disagree (SD). It consists of 3 domains and 36 items. The first domain, the students’ perceptions and attitudes of BL for English course, consists of twelve items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12). The second domain is the negative impressions of BL for English course from learners’ perceptions and consists of twelve items (13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24). The last domain, concept of BL as learners perceive them, consists of twelve items (25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36). As for the validity and reliability, the Cronbach’s Alpha of the instrument is 0.79 which proves that it is highly reliable and valid as a data collection tool (Ja’ashan, 2015).

## **Data Analysis**

After the questionnaires were completed, the analysis for each questionnaire was undertaken in two steps. To find out the answer for the first problem of the study, the data were analyzed by counting and presenting the frequency and percentages. As for the second problem of the study, Kolmogorov-Smirnov' and Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality were used to find out whether the data were in the level of normality. Due to the normality of the data, independent t-test was employed to explore significant differences between male and female EFL learners in term of three domains of the questionnaire. In addition, means and standard deviations were also estimated regarding to find out slight differences between males and females in term of mean scores. All of the quantitative data were analyzed by using SPSS 16.

## **Findings**

The findings of this current study were divided based on the two research questions. Each answer of the question was resulted from the quantitative analysis of the BL questionnaire completed by fifty-five EFL learners. The first part of the findings was the answer for the 1st question and then followed by the answer of the 2nd question.

*1st question: What are EFL learners' perceptions toward blended English language learning in an Indonesian context?*

Each item of BL for English course was analyzed by estimating the frequency and percentage rates and the items were grouped into their domains in Table 1, 2, and 3. The first domain, EFL Learners' perceptions and attitudes of BL for English course, was presented in the following table:

**Table 1.** EFL Learners' perceptions and attitudes of BL for English course

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Blackboard activities are presented logically	7	12.7	11	20	11	20	17	30.9	9	16.4
2. Blackboard activities give me the chance to read	9	16.4	17	30.9	13	23.6	13	23.6	3	5.5
3. BL activities are interactive	3	5.5	13	23.6	19	34.5	15	27.3	5	9.1
4. BL makes my English language skills better	7	12.7	15	27.3	11	20	17	30.9	5	9.1
5. BL is easy	5	9.1	13	23.6	18	32.7	19	34.5	-	-
6. BL is collaborative	4	7.3	19	34.5	16	29.1	11	20	5	9.1
7. BL courses are useful and interesting	8	14.5	16	29.1	8	14.5	14	25.5	9	16.4
8. BL enhances the interaction between teachers and learners	7	12.7	15	27.3	15	27.3	13	23.6	5	9.1
9. BL tasks are clear	3	5.5	15	27.3	19	34.5	16	29.1	2	3.6
10. BL gives me enough time to do my tasks	3	5.5	19	34.5	17	30.9	10	18.2	6	10.9
11. I can always learn from Blackboard	3	5.5	20	36.4	16	29.1	14	25.5	2	3.6
12. I can learn from Blackboard in my own style	6	10.9	14	25.5	19	34.5	13	23.6	3	5.5

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

The result of the analysis in the Table 1 revealed that the EFL learners gave various perceptions and attitudes toward BL for English course. One of the common tool of BL acknowledge by the learners was blackboard activities. However, the activities of blackboard were not considered as an easy task to follow since 30.9% of the EFL learners believed that the activities were not systematically presented (item 1). Fortunately, the learners (30.9%) were able to read contents in the blackboard (item 2). This was positive because reading increased their knowledge about a topic even though some parts of the activities were not well organized. The learners (34.5%) were doubtful that BL was interactive (item 3) as they were not able to discuss with their classmates and to get a quick response from their instructors.

A number of EFL learners (30.9%) viewed that their English skills were not developed when they attended BL course (item 4). It revealed that BL provided



neither sufficient learning materials nor proper learning methods which were more important for their English skill development. For most EFL learners (34.5%), BL was still considered as a complicated method for learning English (item 5). One common reason was because BL combined both traditional method and advanced technology which were new for most EFL learners. The learners (34.5%) agreed with the statement 'BL is collaborative' (item 6). It meant that by implementing BL, English can be learned both in the classroom and online. In line with that, the EFL learners (29.1%) believed in the usefulness and strengths of BL (item 7).

An interesting result of the study was that two groups gave similar number of percentages (item 8). The first group (27.3%) considered that BL enhances the interaction between teachers and learners. However, the second group (27.3%) was doubtful whether they experienced better interactions with their teachers. It was also doubtful (34.5%) for the EFL learners that BL tasks are clear (item 9). Some EFL learners faced several problems in doing the tasks given. The others were able to work with the tasks as expected. Fortunately, the learners (34.5%) got more extended time to do their tasks and homework before they were submitted (item 10). Time extension was expected to be a chance for each learner to work on their tasks more properly and carefully without any pressure. Furthermore, new technology applied in BL has encouraged the EFL learners (36.4%) to explore the resources provided in BL (item 11). BL offers files from various sources which can be used as learning materials for each EFL learner. Some learners (34.5%) did not know how to learn English in their own way, but the others used their learning styles to adjust themselves to the new method of teaching (item 12).

**Table 2.** Negative impressions of BL for English courses from EFL learners' perceptions

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
13. Slow internet connectivity is a problem for BL	28	50.9	10	18.2	6	10.9	6	10.9	5	9.1
14. My teachers do not reply my emails quickly	27	49.1	18	32.7	4	7.3	5	9.1	1	1.8
15. BL materials aren't well organized	28	50.9	12	21.8	8	14.5	6	10.9	1	1.8
16. The instructor isn't on time for all activities	27	49.1	13	23.6	8	14.5	7	12.7	-	-
17. BL is frustrating to use	25	45.5	12	21.8	8	14.5	9	16.4	1	1.8
18. BL is a waste of time	19	34.5	20	36.4	12	21.8	3	5.5	1	1.8
19. BL can lead learners to cheating and to other unethical practices	22	40	14	25.5	11	20	5	9.1	3	5.5
20. BL instructions aren't easy to follow	25	45.5	13	23.6	13	23.6	3	5.5	1	1.8
21. I find BL difficult to do	23	41.8	15	27.3	12	21.8	4	7.3	1	1.8
22. BL makes me socially isolated	27	49.1	15	27.3	7	12.7	3	5.5	3	5.5
23. BL makes me need more face-to-face interactions	24	43.6	16	29.1	10	18.2	5	9.1	5	9.1
24. BL knowledge is less than classroom knowledge	25	45.5	16	29.1	8	14.5	5	9.1	1	1.8

*SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree*

Having analyzed the perceptions and attitudes of EFL learners toward BL for English course, the result of Table 2 showed that many negative impressions of BL for English courses were revealed by the EFL learners. Twelve items ( item 13 - item 24) were utilized to explore the negative impressions which were mainly the weaknesses of BL as the learners experienced. A common problem faced by the EFL learners and teachers was slow internet connectivity (item 13). The learners (50.9%) and the teachers could not implement BL as planned if the internet connectivity was slow. It is because half of the activities in BL uses the internet as teaching and learning media. The problem with the internet connectivity has also discouraged the learners to work with their tasks online. The teachers used email as a communication tool in BL. However, the use of email can be a problem for the learners (49.1%) when their emails were not replied sooner by their teachers (item 14).

The availability of materials in BL is important for both teachers and learners to access. In fact, the learners (50.9%) did not get a good access to the materials since they were not well organized (item 15). This problem resulted in negative effects for the learners. One of them is that they did not try to explore another materials which were more accessible for them. Another negative impression is that their comprehension toward the materials was worse than the use of organized materials for learning. Moreover, the learners (49.1%) found that their instructor for BL was not on time for most parts of the lesson (item 16). This negative impression discouraged most learners to interact with the instructors and discuss their lesson with them. The worst impression might be that more learners (45.5%) were frustrated when they attended BL as a course (item 17). Several reasons underlying the negative impressions were slow internet connectivity, less accessible materials, slow online response, and unavailability of instructors.

Another negative impression as viewed by the EFL learners (34.5%) was that BL is a waste of time (item 18). It revealed that the learners did not expect any combination between face-to-face method and the use of technology as a new approach of teaching and learning as it took more extended time. Due to the use of online resources in BL, the learners (40%) worried about learners' cheating habit or unethical practices which were likely to increase when the learners did not attend face-to-face classroom (item 19). Face-to-face method can prevent the learners to cheat or do some unethical practices as they are managed and controlled by the teachers simultaneously. In line with that, the learners (45.5%) viewed that BL consisted of many instructions which were difficult to follow (item 20). All steps of delivery of face-to-face method and the use of technology are blended into a group of instructions. The learners did not find a way of following and adapting the instructions in their lesson. Therefore, many learners (41.8%) felt that BL was a difficult approach to follow (item 21).

For most learners (49.1%), BL did not allow them to socialize with the environment (item 22) such as classmates and teachers. They were isolated from other learners as they were expected to do their tasks themselves. They could not interact with their

teachers directly, but they were asked to discuss their lesson online. This can be done at home, in a park, in a yard, and the like. The absence of classmates and teachers has encouraged the EFL learners (43.6%) to choose face-to-face interaction as the method (item 23). It is because face-to-face interaction enables them to interact with their classmates and teachers intensively and discuss their lesson properly. In addition, they (45.5%) obtained more knowledge through face-to-face interaction than in online learning (item 24).

**Table 3.** The concept of BL as EFL learners perceive them

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
25. Online videos allow us to listen to native speakers	15	27.3	12	21.8	14	25.5	6	10.9	8	14.5
26. BL layout is attractive	13	23.6	19	34.5	12	21.8	9	16.4	2	3.6
27. I find BL more convenient than face-to-face learning	16	29.1	13	23.6	9	16.4	12	21.8	5	9.1
28. BL helps us to think in-depth about a subject	17	30.9	14	25.5	8	14.5	13	23.6	3	5.5
29. My personal devices (cell phone, mp3 player, PDA) help me in learning	14	25.5	12	21.8	7	12.7	18	32.7	4	7.3
30. Social network applications (Facebook, Twitter....other) help me in learning	12	21.8	18	32.7	9	16.4	11	20	5	9.1
31. BL has motivated me to succeed	15	27.3	14	25.5	9	16.4	12	21.8	5	9.1
32. We need BL training	17	30.9	13	23.6	15	27.3	7	12.7	3	5.5
33. My blended course experience has helped me get more information	10	18.2	15	27.3	16	29.1	13	23.6	1	1.8
34. BL allows us to use different computer programs	10	18.2	19	34.5	11	20	9	16.4	6	10.9
35. BL helps me to master the material	9	16.4	16	29.1	16	29.1	11	20	3	5.5
36. BL helps me to be able to apply what I have learned in the future (?)	15	27.3	13	23.6	9	16.4	14	25.5	4	7.3

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

Item 25 - item 36 explored the concepts of BL as the EFL learners perceived them. The EFL learners have more experiences in online activities. One of the activities was

using online videos as learning resources. The learners (27.3%) used the online videos to listen to native speakers (item 25). Online videos are paramount in learning English because the contents are authentic and useful for those who intend to increase their listening skill. Another concept of BL is its layout. The learners (34.5%) found that BL layout was attractive (item 26). It can be seen from its procedures and arrangements. The availability of pictures and colorful features can also make BL become more attractive.

As stated in the previous item (Table 2) that the learners (45.5%) obtained more knowledge in face-to-face interaction than in BL (item 24). However, other learners (29.1%) believed that BL was more convenient than face-to-face learning (item 27). Due to its convenience, the learners (30.9%) were able to think in-depth about a subject they preferred through BL (item 28). Several advanced devices such as hand phone, ipad, mp3 player, and laptop were mostly used as communication tools. The learners (32.7%) did not utilize the devices as a learning tool (item 29). The devices were not used to help them in learning. Fortunately, a number of learners (32.7%) used social network applications such as Facebook, Twitter, or email to help them in learning English (item 30). The social networks can be used as learning tools because the learners can interact with other learners and their teachers online. Therefore, more learners (27.3%) were motivated to be successful in their learning (item 31).

One of the challenges in implementing BL as an approach of learning was the need for training (item 32). The EFL learners (30.9%) need to be trained before they attend English course which adapt BL as the delivery approach. Lack of training and knowledge about BL has caused a big problem for the learners. They (29.1%) were doubtful whether they got more information adequately during the delivery (item 33). Information is very important in learning because it develops learners' knowledge and comprehension toward a lesson.

The use of technology in BL such as the internet enables EFL learners to be more creative in learning. It is pointed out that the learners (34.5%) used various computer programs in BL course (item 34). By using different programs, they (29.1%) were

able to master the learning materials provided in BL (item 35). It was because the programs directed them to various links of information. Moreover, they (27.3%) believed that what they learned through BL can be applied in the future (item 36).

*2nd question: Are there any significant differences between male and female EFL learners in term of perceptions and attitudes of BL, negative impressions of BL, and the concept of BL?*

To explore the significant difference between male and female EFL learners, the data were analyzed based on the domains of the questionnaire. The result of each domain was presented in Table 4 (perceptions and attitudes), Table 5 (negative impressions), and Table 6 (the concept of BL). As for the first domain, perceptions and attitudes, the data were analyzed by examining test of normality (*Appendix 1*). To do this, two types of normality test 'Kolmogorov-Smirnov' and 'Shapiro-Wilk' were employed. The result showed that the data were normal ( $p > 0.05$ ). This can be seen from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which shows that male score ( $p = .200$ ) and female score ( $p = .200$ ) are normal. Shapiro-Wilk test also shows that male score ( $p = .978$ ) and female score ( $p = .167$ ) have reached level of normality.

Independent t-test was used to estimate significant difference between male and female EFL learners. The following table presents the first domain of the questionnaire, perceptions and attitudes of BL for English course.

**Table 4.** Males and females Independent t-test of perceptions and attitudes of BL for English course

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.855	.359	-.546	53	.587	-.750	1.374
Equal variance not assumed			-.567	44.371	.573	-.750	1.322

Table 4 above revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female EFL learners in terms of perceptions and attitudes of BL for English course ( $p > 0.05$ ). The score of t-test for equality of means was higher ( $p = .587$ ,  $df = 53$  &  $p = .573$ ,  $df = 44.371$ ) than t-table ( $p = .05$ ). It proved that the perceptions of BL given by male and female learners were not different. Also, the attitudes of BL shared by male and female were almost similar.

The data of negative impressions of BL as the second domain were analyzed by examining data normality (*Appendix 2*). As a result, the scores gained from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test were not normal for male ( $p = .013$ ) as it was below the t-table score ( $p = 0.05$ ), but it was normal for female ( $p = .200$ ) or higher than the t-table score ( $p = 0.05$ ). Fortunately, the normality scores counted through Shapiro-Wilk test proved that male score ( $p = .132$ ) and female score ( $p = .264$ ) were normal as both scores were higher than t-table score or  $p > 0.05$ . Therefore, Shapiro-Wilk scores were used to determine the normality of the data of the second domain.

The second domain, negative impressions, was quantitatively analyzed through an independent t-test and the result is presented in the following table.

**Table 5.** Males and females Independent t-test of negative impression of BL for English course

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.078	.781	-.476	53	.636	-.536	1.125
Equal variance not assumed			-.473	38.979	.639	-.536	1.132

Table 5 shows t-test result of male and female EFL learners of negative impressions of the questionnaire. The result revealed that no significant difference was found between male and female learners in term of the second domain, negative impressions. The score of Levene’s test ( $p = .781$ ) was higher than t-table ( $p = 0.05$ ). Moreover, the scores of t-test for equality of means ( $p = .636$ ,  $df = 53$  &  $p = .639$ ,  $df = 38.979$ ) were also higher than the t-table score ( $p = 0.05$ ). Therefore, the result means that both male and female EFL learners viewed BL as negative approach of teaching and learning.

The data of the third domain, the concept of BL, were analyzed to find out the normality of the data (*Appendix 3*). Based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the results showed that male score ( $p = .200$ ) and female score ( $p = .200$ ) were normal as they were higher than t-table score ( $p = 0.05$ ). The result of Shapiro-Wilk test also revealed that the data were normal as male score ( $p = .267$ ) and female score ( $p = .472$ ) were higher than t-table score ( $p = 0.05$ ). So, both results of normality test can be used to state that the data reached level of normality.

Having determined the normality of data, independent t-test was employed to examine significant difference between male and female learners in term of the concept of BL as presented in the following table.

**Table 6.** Males and females Independent t-test of the concept of BL for English course

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.072	.790	-1.129	53	.264	-1.321	1.170
Equal variance not assumed			-1.128	47.430	.265	-1.321	1.171



The above table revealed that the score of Levene's test ( $p = .790$ ) and the scores of t-test for equality of means ( $p = .264$ ,  $df=53$  &  $p = .265$ ,  $df= 47.430$ ) were higher than the score of t-table ( $p = 0.05$ ). It showed that there was no significant difference between male and female EFL learners in term of the concept of BL for English course. Each group of gender shared similar views on the concept of BL.

Each domain (perceptions and attitudes of BL, negative impressions of BL, and the concept of BL) was analyzed to find out differences of means, SD, and t-test results between male and female EFL learners. The differences can be clearly seen in the following table.

**Table 7.** Independent t-test differences between males and females of all domains

Domain	Male		Female		F	p	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.				
Perceptions and attitudes of BL	34.85	4.46	35.60	5.12	.855	.359	53	.587
Negative impressions of BL	23.35	4.06	23.89	3.98	.078	.781	38.979	.639
The concept of BL	30.30	4.29	31.62	4.27	.072	.790	47.430	.265

Table 7 revealed that there was a slight difference between male and female EFL learners in responding to each domain of the BL questionnaire. As for the first domain, perceptions and attitudes of BL, female score ( $M=35.60$ ,  $SD=5.12$ ) was higher than male score ( $34.85$ ,  $SD=4.46$ ). However, no significant difference was found as the t-test score was higher ( $p = .587$ ,  $df=53$ ). Similarly, the t-test result of negative impressions of BL as the second domain showed that female score ( $M=23.89$ ,  $SD=3.98$ ) was slightly higher than male score ( $M=23.35$ ,  $SD=4.06$ ). The result of t-test of this domain was higher ( $p = .639$ ) than t-table ( $p = 0.05$ ). In line with that, the third domain, the concept of BL revealed that female score ( $M=31.62$ ,  $SD=4.27$ ) was higher than male score ( $M=30.30$ ,  $SD=4.290$ ,  $p = .265$ ) which meant that there was only a slight difference between male and female learners in term of the concept of BL as the learners perceived them.

## **Discussion**

The result revealed that various views of BL were given in term of the three domains, namely perceptions and attitudes of BL, negative impressions of BL, and the concept of BL as the learners perceive them. It is pointed out that several weaknesses and strengths of BL were found. One of the problems was that most learners did not have sufficient knowledge or experience of BL as a course. Face-to-face interaction was still an appropriate method for them to learn English. Consequently, it was difficult for the instructors to introduce new delivery method which employs technology. This is in line with Aldrich (2006) who states that it is difficult to divide between when face-to-face interaction should be conducted and when technology should be used.

The implementation of BL as an English course affected face-to-face or classroom meetings. It was because BL combines classroom meeting with online mediated technology. For both learners and teachers, the classroom meeting was much popular as it enables them to interact and discuss lessons directly inside the classroom. However, BL requires interactions undertaken online and, of course, classroom interactions are reduced (Allen & Seaman, 2013). One solution for this is by ensuring that BL is more flexible than face-to-face interactions as the learners and the teachers can arrange their time online. Garrison & Vaughan (2008) state that BL is more flexible than classroom meetings.

The importance of the internet in BL encouraged the learners to increase their knowledge of how to use the internet properly even though slow internet connectivity has become a common problem for learners (Ja'ashan, 2015). The need and interest to the internet increases as the learners are aware of its integrated benefits (Pew Research Center, 2014). Moreover, BL enables the learners to develop their metacognitive awareness which is helpful for them in learning (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000). The learners develop their metacognitive awareness during both face-to-face interaction and online mediated learning. Koban-Koç & Koç (2016) stated that learners used metacognitive strategies during online learning.

The materials provided in BL need to be understandable and accessible to each learner. One problem faced by the EFL learners in working with their tasks was unavailability of well-organized materials provided in the internet. To solve this problem, it requires stakeholders' supports to allow the instructors in designing BL course and both teachers and learners have to learn how to undertake both classroom learning and online learning (Bliuc, 2007). Collaboration between teachers and learners enhances the effectiveness of language learning (Shim & Benhantar, 2016). Moreover, to organize a BL course, it is a need for the instructors to ensure that the course has been accomplished with appropriate online delivery application, delivery methods, communication tools, and practical evaluation (Elsenheimer, 2006) as the learners can access and operate them properly.

### **Conclusion and Limitations**

The present study investigated EFL learners' perceptions of BL as an English course which were analyzed based on the three domains of BL, namely perceptions and attitudes of BL, negative impressions of BL, and the concept of BL as the learners perceive them (Ja'ashan, 2015). The study was mainly focused on how the EFL learners view BL as an English course. As for the first domain, perceptions and attitudes of BL for English course, it is pointed out that learners were doubtful with the implementation of BL as it is considered as non-interactive and difficult method for learning. The course was neither designed properly nor presented systematically. Consequently, it is not easy for the learners to increase their English skills. Fortunately, the strength of BL is that it enriches learners' knowledge and understanding by providing sufficient reading materials. It is paramount for learners to be able to access and utilize various materials as resources (Ostughrope & Graham, 2003). Moreover, BL allows the learners to do their tasks by giving them enough time.

One of the negative impressions of BL as viewed by the EFL learners is slow internet connectivity. It affects the instructors not to respond to emails sooner and not to be

online on time. BL is considered as a method which is frustrating to use and waste of time. The learners find it difficult to follow the instructions of BL as the materials provided are not well organized. Another negative impression is that BL can affect the learners to cheat or do other unethical practices. The choice for attending more face-to-face interactions are still high. It might be because BL makes the learners socially isolated as they have to work with their tasks by themselves. In addition, the learners get more knowledge in classroom meetings than in BL.

As for the concept of BL, the learners believed that they can listen to native speakers by listening to online videos. Even though BL is difficult to follow by some learners, the others believed that BL has an attractive layout and it is also convenient compared to face-to-face learning. Another drawback of BL is that more learners do not use their personal devices such as handphone or PDA to help them in learning. Other learners find it helpful to use social network applications such as Facebook and Twitter as learning tools. More importantly, training and experiences in BL enhance both teachers and learners' deep understanding to design and implement BL more properly and appropriately. The instructors should adjust BL with the learners' thinking styles. It can enable the learners to proceed with knowledge by accessing and using the knowledge in their learning (Öztürk, 2017). This study also revealed that male and female EFL learners have similar views on BL as an English course. It is pointed out that there is no significant difference between males and females in term of each domain of BL questionnaire (perceptions and attitudes of BL, negative impressions of BL, and the concept of BL as the learners perceive them).

This current study has some limitations because it was conducted in a small size sample. It is highly recommended that future study on similar topic should be conducted by employing a large size sample. It can be done by employing more learners from various majors, years, and even universities. It is also recommended that future study focuses more on colleges or universities which are experienced and have implemented BL for a long time.

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