

The Effect of Blended Learning on Children's Arabic Reading during Covid-19 Quarantine

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This study investigates the effect of blended learning approach [BLA] on second grade students' reading skills during Covid-19 quarantine in Saudi Arabia, to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference (at $\alpha=0.05$) between students' mean scores on Arabic Reading skills test due to BLA. The experimental group consisted of a random sample of 40 students from Riyadh basic schools. The participants sat for pre- and post-tests on reading skills based on the public Arabic curriculum *Lughaty* (لغتي). Blended Learning was used to teach the experimental group through blending the digital material and digital meeting with printed material at home to achieve the goal of improved learning. As the study design was quasi-experimental, ANCOVA was used to analyse data. Results showed that BLA enhanced significantly second grade students' reading skills. Based on the results, it is recommended that Arabic teachers adopt BLA principles and procedures in their classroom practices.

Key words: *Blended Learning, Arabic, Second Graders, Reading Skills, Covid19, teaching, Saudi Arabia*

1. Introduction and Background

About two months into the second school semester in March 14th, 2020, more than 400 million children worldwide saw their schooling interrupted by the outbreak of the Coronavirus. Schools had not faced this degree of distribution in decades. Yet, unlike similar events in the past, even though schools closed, educators had the opportunity to pursue schooling, as a result of the rise of e-learning, which has dramatically changed education as teaching can be carried out remotely and on digital platforms. In several schools in Saudi Arabia, the Coronavirus has played a major role in pushing online learning initiatives towards becoming a realistic alternative to conventional teaching methods. During the Covid-19



lockdown, all of Saudi Arabia's schools have offered virtual classes and enabled their learners to follow the classes over the Internet from their homes. Without the Covid-19 epidemic, schools would not have practised online learning to the same extent. However, half of the semester's curriculum had been taught face to face before the lockdown, at the traditional schools. Online learning is a modern learning method that depends primarily on the teacher giving their lectures in a virtual classroom, while the student receives the lecture from home or anywhere in the world. The virtual class opens up interactive discussion and participation for everyone involved, to help children learn wherever they may be. The need for online learning increases in emergency circumstances, such as the current conditions caused by the spread of the Coronavirus. In line with the global interest in online learning, Saudi schools have not neglected to develop and open the gates to those who want to know and learn. In several schools in developed and emerging economies, the gaps began to be evident in welcoming young learners. This is why the project of online learning came to save human civilization from the failure to involve more young learners in schools.

Online learning is based on thorough understanding and professional expertise. It invests and adapts information and communication technology systems to enrich all stages of educational processes, as well as applying international standards and specifications that guarantee the highest learning quality. In Saudi schools, interactive classes have recently emerged, which allow the teacher to deliver lectures directly to thousands of children around the world without being restricted to one location. Nevertheless, these resources have developed to enable the involvement of young learners from around the world in dialogues and interactions. Online learning is an innovative approach that is focused around the use of information management and the broad presence of learners as an integral component of modern instructional instruments (O'Flaherty & Phillips, 2015). Therefore, educators should not simplify it and prepare it merely as a substitute to meet the demand of a segment of people whose circumstances does not allow them to engage in formal education, but rather as a complete and comprehensive system for the dissemination of knowledge and education at the highest level all over the globe.

In Saudi schools, online learning involves immersive computer platforms, innovative educational resources, and advanced educational portfolio-linked applications. These resources are combined with high-level expertise such that in large populations of young learners, these training services can expand and serve any number of students. One approach that enables children and teachers to step towards the convergence to online learning, is the mix between online learning and face-to-face teaching which is called the Blended Learning Approach (BLA). This paper aims to illustrate the new turning point in Saudi Arabia's children's learning with the spread of the Coronavirus, after studying at their usual schools for two months of the semester, which has prompted students and teachers to stay healthy at home and to conduct online lessons. The researcher aims to offer an easy-to-apply, sensible approach — Blended Learning — to help school teachers combine multiple learning

experiences with appropriate technology for successful online learning, combined with traditional classes. During this quasi-experimental paper, the researcher attempts to provide evidence for BLA's effectiveness in improving the Arabic reading skills of second grade students in Saudi public schools. It will aid in future developments in the study and teaching of Arabic language for children in second grade, which will grow as online learning becomes popular alongside conventional schooling.

1.1. Blended Learning Approach

Saudi Arabia's current Coronavirus quarantine period presents an impetus for learning Arabic in new ways online. This new direction relies on combining online content with the traditional official curriculum, according to the concepts of the BLA in particular, rather than e-learning methods in general. Knight (2005) stressed that one of the early-day problems of e-learning was that the learners worked alone without any interaction with an instructor or other students. It soon became apparent that social interaction was an important ingredient in many learning situations, and that e-learning solutions would need to incorporate an interactive component. This was essentially the beginning of the "blended learning" concept, which refers to a learning solution that incorporates a mix of online and face-to-face elements. BLA 's objective is to combine delivery modalities to provide the most efficient and effective instruction experience (Alexander, 1995). Blended learning has one clear benefit, which is its ability to optimise its usefulness by combining each learning object with the right medium (Barnett, 1994).

While it is hard to completely predict what the future holds, educationalists (Rumble, 1992; Dziuban, 2005; Hanson, 2002) can be pretty confident that the movement of developing mixed-learning systems will expand. It may even become popular enough that we eventually remove the term "blended" and just call it learning as expected by Masie and Massy (2004). Regardless of what blended learning will be called in the future, it is clear that the phenomenon is here to stay. It is therefore imperative that we understand how to construct successful mixed learning environments, which integrate both face-to-face and online elements, digital and printed content, and mixed teaching methods. Discroll (2002) named blended learning the new buzzword in language education and warned that it seems too easy to combine e-learning with certain other approaches to teaching.

Many educationalists, including Kerres and Witt (2003), view blended learning as an ancient concept dressed in modern clothes. Schank (2003: p. 152) stresses the same idea by saying that "Blended learning appears to mean some e-learning and some classroom learning, ... people made up a cool term for not doing anything and naming it blended learning." Nevertheless, Bonk and Graham (2006) see it as a good trend, a more learner-centred approach that is more sensitive to the needs of the learner and the context.



Colis and Moonen (2001) described blended learning as a combination of conventional face-to-face and online learning in such a way that teaching takes place both in the classroom and online, and that the online aspect is a natural extension of traditional learning. Blended learning is therefore a versatile approach to course design that encourages the combining of multiple learning times and locations, providing some of the conveniences of completely online classes without the total lack of a face-to-face element. The effect is a robust and balanced educational environment, which can be delivered either through conventional or entirely online learning.

Valiathan (2003) claimed that the term-blended learning is used to describe a system that incorporates many different implementation mechanisms, such as applications for teamwork, Web-based courses and information management techniques. Blended learning is often used to characterise learning that combines different practices, including face-to-face classes, live e-learning, and self-paced teaching. Accordingly, BLA gives the students an opportunity to learn more.

Delacey and Leonard (2002) reported that not only did the students learn more by introducing online sessions to conventional classes, they also increased student engagement and satisfaction. Additionally, BLA improves the performance of the learners. Thomson (2003) stressed that those who learned through blended strategies, as opposed to those who learned through e-learning alone, learned sooner to perform better on real world tasks. As for studying Arabic, BLA is an effective approach to improving language skills. Valithan (2003) explained that blended learning is used to denote learning that incorporates various event-based experiences, including face-to-face classes, live e-learning, and self-paced learning to develop language learning skills; listening, reading, writing, and communicating. In reality, language learning requires engagement; the benchmark of effective language acquisition is almost a demonstration of the potential to accomplish realistic goals by constructive dialogue with other language speakers (Brown, 2001). Lund (1991) claimed that there is a very strong demand in today's language teaching culture to improve reading skills for students.

1.3. Problem Statement

Obviously, there is a lot of investment in the technology for education. Many academic studies have been carried out to assess the impact of technology and computer systems on the learning process in all educational fields, including languages. (Schacter & Fagnano, 1999; Valerie & Liza, 1994; Vockell & Eleen, 2019) However, most of these studies concentrated on the influence of e-learning on increasing learners' achievement without combination with any face-to-face component. After all Saudi schools were forced to turn to online learning due to the Covid-19 quarantine, there has been widespread disagreement among Saudi Arabic language teachers regarding the success of using online curricula along with the conventional book *Lughaty* (لغتي), in achieving the goals of Arabic reading lessons for second grade

students in their schools. Some Arabic language teachers, believe in using the online material twice a week to teach Arabic reading online, while some of them believe that using the electronic material is useless and that it is a waste of time and effort. However, there are a few Arabic Language teachers who believe in prioritising a mix of the traditional curriculum and the computerised online material to achieve the desired results of the Arabic reading lessons. This study seeks to examine the impact of the BLA on second grade Saudi children's reading development, contrary to historically varying views and convictions about the efficacy of using online learning in Saudi classrooms, side by side with conventional education within the classroom.

1.4. Research Question

This study attempted to answer the following question:

What is the effect of using the Blended Learning Approach (BLA) on improving the Arabic Reading skills of second grade students in Saudi Arabia?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study can provide insights that may contribute to changing negative perceptions of the use of technology in teaching Arabic language reading skills. It can also help Arabic Teachers cultivate a more pragmatic mindset towards online learning, which can be put to efficient use by following the BLA. This strategy can offer a way of combining offline learning tools with online learning resources to enhance children's reading skills' level in Arabic. Furthermore, this research aims to demonstrate whether students can gain from BLA in developing their Arabic reading skills. Furthermore, research participants can profit from the research by learning new procedures and techniques of mixing electronic and traditional information tools to achieve their teaching goals. The comparative lack of studies in this field ultimately led the researcher to explore the impact of the BLA on enhancing the reading skills of second grade Arabic language learners in Saudi Arabia.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

This research is restricted to the Riyadh basic schools, which have an adequate framework to enable the use of blended learning focused on combining the online sources with the written information sources. The study only includes second grade pupils and is limited to the students' learning skills. The researcher has designed the reading skills' pre- and post-assessments, which were used to assess students' improvement in reading ability, and the findings are be constrained as the assessment is not systematic. Lastly, the analysis is limited to material taught in the book of *Lughaty* (لغتي), which was used in Riyadh Saudi basic schools where the work was carried out.



2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Technology has had a major role in education (Umbach, 1998). As communities are more reliant on technology during the Covid-19 quarantine, information and computer literacy is becoming more relevant (Ross & Bailey, 2020). For over two decades, computers have been commonplace in schools around the world; towards the end of the 90s, Umbach (1998) reported an increasing number of classroom computers and Lemon (1997) stressed the significance of the Internet as a powerful tool for students. Teachers can take advantage of the expanded Internet connectivity by using the Internet to communicate with other experts, obtain lesson details, and encourage students to learn from various sources of knowledge, among several other things (Wilson & Marsh, 1995). Throughout today's classrooms, however, the teaching of curricula cannot be accomplished without proper personnel preparation and sufficient instructional guidance (Glenn & Carrier, 1986). Hybrid learning processes are characterised by the integrating, to varying degrees, online learning with conventional learning approaches. In recent years, the term 'Blended Learning' has gained significant popularity as a definition of specific types of technology-based teaching. This concept has many definitions; Whitelock & Jelfs (2003) described it as the blended fusion of digital learning with online web-based approaches. Eliot Masie (2006) defines BLA as "the use of two or three different approaches ... combining classroom learning with electronic teaching, instructor exposure, games, on-the-job preparation, casual workshops." Roger Schank (2006) notes that "Blended learning tends to mean ... some e-learning and some learning in the classroom. Everyone wants to invest too much on e-learning and people want to maintain what they have, so they've made up this cool term so it doesn't change much..." It is clear that BLA offers teachers and learners the opportunity to stop using full e-learning during the curriculum. Consequently, BLA does not require a major shift to combine e-curriculum with conventional textbooks. The fundamental principle of BLA is to combine or match specific amounts and varying practices with online content with conventional textbooks to achieve the lesson goals.

2.1.1. Ingredients of the Blend

The American Society for Training & Development (2001) recommends the following components in the BLA:

- 1) Synchronous interactive formats: • Instructor-led Classes & Lectures • Hands-on Laboratories & Experiments • Field Trips
- 2) Synchronous multimedia formats (Live eLearning): • e Meets • Simulated Classes • Video Seminars and Broadcasts • Coaching • Text Networking
- 3) Distributed, self-contained forms: computerised material, printed learning material...,etc.



2.2. Empirical Framework

Knight (2005) noted that one of the early-day e-learning challenges was that the learners trained independently without any contact with a teacher or other students. It quickly became apparent that social contact was a significant element in many learning situations, and that certain e-learning approaches would need to be blended with such social interactions. This was basically the beginning of the "Blended Learning" idea. Neff (1998), found that teaching a mixed course had significant impacts on her teaching. She wrote: "The forms in which I interpreted and exploited the process, the forms in which I imagined the subjectivities of my pupils, and the ways in which intermediaries impacted my authority both informed my teaching pedagogy" (p. 154). Wenger and Sydney (2000) acknowledged the enhanced learning ability of using blended experiences.

Willett (2002) reported on her own experience with using the Internet in teaching a hybrid course. She considered the student response to have been overwhelmingly positive. She cited shortened travel time as one of the key benefits of the hybrid style, while noting that the blended format takes more teacher time and is often vulnerable to technical issues. Schwartzman and Tuttle (2002) offered evidence that certain strategies for developing online courses could improve the conventional formats. They suggested that the components of online courses would improve teacher productivity and enrich student learning by increasing their participation in the course and that modern courses would benefit from implementing medium redundancy, which would also increase the number of ways students can access course content. Rovia and Jordan (2004) explored the impact on group understanding of conventional classroom, hybrid, and full online course models. There was the sense of group belonging, which should be the greatest in the combined course because of the broader variety of incentives for student contact with peers and professors. Results suggested that mixed courses ultimately created a stronger sense of community than either the conventional course or the full course online.

Dziuban (2005) explored various forms of blended learning courses and their impacts, addressing, among other factors and implications, learning performance and student satisfaction. The study found that hybrid learning in school curriculum is viewed as a disruptive concept.

2.2.1. Concluding Remarks

The insight acquired from the first wave of e-learning contributes to the understanding that one method of educational delivery may not be adequate in terms of options, interaction, social communication, significance, and meaning required to promote effective learning and results. Some studies have suggested that Blended Learning not only provides more teaching options but also that it is more successful.



From the relevant literature, the researcher concludes the following points:

- 1) The literature discussed in this study has drawn attention to the value of BLA in raising the competency of the students.
- 2) The use of online instructional equipment is critical in raising the standard of competence of the students.
- 3) Interaction between students can be improved by introducing online sessions and content to conventional classes.
- 4) BLA learners achieved success in real-world tasks more quickly than those who learned by e-learning alone.
- 5) BLA is ideal for strengthening the four language competencies.
- 6) BLA is ideal for saving time in class, energy and effort by making use of technology as a teaching resource.
- 7) Several scholars suggested that while mixed learning is not recent, it replaces "e-learning" as the next big thing (Neff, 1998 and Azuma, 2005)
- 8) Companies are rapidly finding that Blended Learning is not only more time-consuming and cost-effective, it still offers a more efficient form of learning.
- 9) Some studies have found that social engagement is a significant component in certain learning contexts and will need to be incorporated into some e-learning approaches (Knight, 2005; Vaughan & Garrison, 2005).
- 10) No research has been undertaken to determine the impact of BLA in developing the reading abilities of children when studying Arabic. There is thus a scarcity in studies that investigate the impact of mixing electronic resources of information into face-to-face content and conventional resources, especially in teaching Arabic reading skills.

3.Method

This part of the study deals with the nature this study adopted. Basically, it manages test population and survey, research instruments, experiment quality and reliability, testing methods, data processing and data review.

3.1. Design

This study uses a mixture of quasi-experimental analysis methods to analyse the impact of BLA and examines learners' responses to the read test objects. The study will only have one group, that is, the experimental group that will sit for the pre-post- tests.

3.2. Population

The population of the study consists of all children in Riyadh City's basic schools. These schools contain the second grade children in the academic year 2019/2020. There were 498 Public Basic schools of boys and girls in Riyadh City in the Academic Year 2019/2020 (Saudi Ministry of education, 2020).

3.3. Sample

One school for girls and another school for boys were selected randomly from the population of the basic schools in Riyadh City. Out of the 327 students in these schools, 40 (20 girls and 20 boys) were randomly chosen. All of these students sat for the reading pre- and post-tests (See Appendices 1 and 2). All of them had studied Arabic language in four periods of 45 minutes a week at school and had switched to online learning with the Covid-19 lockdown.

The researcher chose second grade children because they had been using electronic curriculum for two years, as their schools employ computer-based learning. In addition, second grade students are able to read and comprehend the general meaning of short texts and can answer comprehension questions based on short texts.

3.4. Procedures of BLA implementation

Using the BLA in teaching Arabic requires special training programs. These training programs prepare the Arabic teachers to use the electronic material they will prepare side by side with the conventional material of the *Lughaty* Arabic Book (لغتي) – the official governmental book of Arabic language in Saudi public basic schools. The compulsory requirements for using BLA are:

- Arabic teachers in the Riyadh Basic schools are holders of the International Computer Driving License (ICDL).
- Arabic teachers in the Riyadh Basic schools attended training programs in using technology to teach Arabic language which was conducted by the researcher via the zoom platform.

- Arabic teachers were provided with laptops and electronic CDs-ROMs or USB flash drives of the electronic curriculum of (Lughaty) Arabic Book. The Arabic teachers prepared the electronic ‘lesson plan’, ‘teaching material’, or ‘learning activities’
- Second grade Teachers were given the chance to browse the electronic material in order to prepare the reading lessons, which aligned with the desired learning outcomes of the *Lughaty* Arabic Book for second grade.
- Arabic teachers in the targeted basic schools in Riyadh city were trained to blend the electronic material and the conventional material.
- Arabic teachers were trained to prepare instructional lesson plans based on the BLA.
- Arabic teachers in the targeted basic schools of Riyadh City were trained to direct their second grade students toward self-directed learning by using the electronic material, worksheets, and classroom activities, that were prepared in advance by the teachers. These activities were available online any time and at any place.

3.5. Educational material

The current research was conducted in order to figure out the abilities of second grade students in Saudi Basic Public Schools to improve their Arabic reading during the traditional learning time at school, before transitioning to electronic learning during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. The instructional content was drawn from the first three Lughaty Arabic book sections (the book includes six reading lessons in total. Two months before moving to online learning, three lessons from the book were introduced, by traditional teaching methods, in class. The remaining three lessons of the book were converted into electronic formats and taught online. The researcher planned three reading lessons and three immersive reading lessons for the participating second grade students. The study was conducted through nine simulated classes (45 minutes a period), over six weeks. The researcher combined the digital content with the written material and met students face to face through the video conference program Zoom, to develop the second grade students’ reading skills in Saudi Arabia.

3.6. Variables of the study

Independent variables

1) Learning approach, consisting of one level:

- a. Blended Learning

2) Students' Gender; containing two levels

- a. Male
- b. Female

Dependent Variables

1) Students' achievement in the reading skills' exam of the Arabic language.

3.7. Study Design

Since the researcher did not have the ability to appoint the subjects of the study sample randomly, students were distributed to sections inside the sample schools. The researcher used the statistical analysis (The Analytical Covariance) (ANCOVA) to adjust the differences between the groups before starting the experiment. The design of the study was a quasi-experimental one. The design could be represented by the following symbols:

G1: O1 X1 O2

O1: the pre-test.

X1: the treatment of the experimental group.

O2: the post-test.

G1: the experimental group.

3.8. Instruments

For the purpose of gathering information needed to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher used the following instruments:

A-Instructional lesson plans

The researcher prepared three Reading Lesson plans for three lessons from the Arabic language book *Lughaty* book based on the BLA. These instructional plans were used by the Arabic second grade teachers in the schools through the experiment.

B-An achievement test

The researcher prepared two achievement tests on Arabic reading skills from the material in *Lughaty*, which is available in the public basic schools of Riyadh city in Saudi Arabia. The first exam was prepared to assess the reading skills taught in the first three lessons of the

book, taught at school face to face before the Covid-19 lockdown. The second test was used as a post-test for the three lessons that were taught after switching to online learning.

3.9. Validity

To ensure the validity of the research instruments, a jury of three Arabic language university professors, three Arabic language supervisors of Basic Public schools in Riyadh and four Arabic language teachers were asked to write their comments on the suitability of the achievement tests and the instructional lesson plans. Their comments were taken into consideration in the preparation of the final draft of the instruments.

In response to the jury's comments, some questions of the achievement test were omitted, some were replaced with new questions and some were modified. Similarly, some procedures in the lesson plans were omitted, and some were changed or modified, to guarantee that the plans blended computerised material with the conventional material.

3.10. Reliability

To assess the reliability of the instruments, the researcher used the following procedures:

- a) test-retest method: The reading pre- and post-test was given to five Arabic second grade students as a pilot sample. After two weeks, the test was given to the same subjects. Then, the correlation co-efficient was computed according to the Pearson Equation and found to be 0.88%.
- b) Internal consistency: The reliability co-efficient for the reading pre- and post-test's items was found to be 0.86%, using Cronbach Alpha.

3.11. Statistical Analysis

In order to answer the research question, a suitable statistical procedure was run on the data collected through the instruments. Frequency and percentage, factor analysis, correlation, means, and standard deviations were established to analyse the numerical achievement tests' data. The researcher used the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) as a statistical method to analyse the results of the students in the pre- and post-tests on the students' Arabic language reading skills.

4. Results

The study question asked about the effect of using the BLA on improving the Arabic Reading skills of the second grade students in Riyadh Public Basic Schools in Saudi Arabia.

This question tried to find out if there was a statistically significant difference between the subjects' mean scores on the Arabic reading skills test due to the teaching procedure, gender and interaction between the teaching procedure and gender. To address the results related to the first question, means and standard deviations of the students' scores were calculated on the students' scores on the pre and post-test according to the teaching procedure and students' gender. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of the Subjects' Scores on the Pre and Post Tests According to the Teaching Procedure and Students' Gender

Group Gender	Reading Skills Pre test			Reading Skills Post test			
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Adjusted Mean	Std. Error
Male	20	14.757	4.57	21.582	3.80	22.044	0.16
Female	20	16.612	4.11	23.099	3.41	22.528	0.19
Total	40	15.684	4.45	22.190	3.72	22.286	0.12

Table 1 shows that there were observed differences between the means of both groups according to the teaching procedure. Covariance analysis ANCOVA was used to find the significance of these differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$). The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of ANCOVA on the Reading Skills Post test Due to Teaching Procedure Reading Skills

Source	Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial η^2
Reading Skills Pretest (Covariate)	4212.706	1	4211.704	887.168	0.000	66.5%
Group	1786.266	1	1836.266	387.119	0.000	44.4%
Gender	1.943	1	1.833	0.397	0.534	0.1%
Group*Gender	12.856	1	12.856	2.482	0.115	0.5%
Error	2121.498	19	4.857			
Total	8333.551	19				

Table 2 shows that there was a statistically significant difference at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the means of students' scores on the pre-test and the post-test, in favor of the post-test. The difference can be attributed to the different teaching methods, and the superiority of the method based on the BLA in achieving learning outcomes in the form of improved Arabic reading skills among second grade students.



The researcher and the teachers prepared the computerised material. It focused on teaching the reading skills online. The computerised material was taught through the BLA.

5. Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Discussion

This study assessed the impact of the BLA on enhancing second grade students' Arabic reading skills in Riyadh Public Basic Schools in Saudi Arabia. Table 2 revealed that there was a statistically significant difference ($\alpha=.05$) between the participating students' scores on the pre-test and their scores on the post-test. The difference is attributable to the teaching method used between the two tests, which were based on the BLA. The results can be explained by the fact that students were able to improve their Arabic language reading skills more effectively when the conventional reading lessons were blended with electronic, interactive material over the internet, as according to the BLA. Learning to read and understand the language automatically requires intensive language exposure and unlimited interaction with language users using their hearing and vision, and interacting in a wide variety of situations. In the BLA class, the environment was comfortable, cooperative, and non-threatening, which encouraged less confident students, who would normally avoid speaking in a conventional classroom setting, to take part in team presentations. Psychological barriers such as stress, anxiety, and fear could thus be removed through rich communicative blended learning activities. The results of this study were in line with those of several existing studies (for example, Ayers, George & Lewin 1988; Valerie & Liza, 1994; and Massy, 1992). The positive progress of the participants may be due to the modern learning environment, which involved the use of computers and the Internet when teaching reading and comprehension. The students in this study were removed from the classroom experience and engaged with a new learning environment and the multimedia content offered in the online courses. The students seemed interested in learning reading skills as the electronic material was presented in an interactive and interesting way, using pictures, colors, animations and sounds. Furthermore, the students had the opportunity to interact with their teachers and friends online. The electronic material also provided them with interactive evaluation activities, which allowed them to directly correct their mistakes and they received feedback very quickly. This type of electronic evaluation contributed to improving the reading skills of the students.

Researchers who stressed Blended Learning's role in students' success have also reported such results. Schacter and Fagnon (1999) stressed the fact that teaching students in a rich online world had a beneficial impact in increasing their academic achievement. The BLA gave students the ability to hear, see and communicate, while developing their reading skills. A further explanation for the student's progress is that the computerised lessons offer richer material in terms of audio, video, and animation. Online connections formed between educators, learners, and teachers also contribute to successful learning, due to efficient

communication, speedy feedback, and a sense of community. Furthermore, the significant improvement in students' performance in the BLA context, can be partly attributed to the incentives for students to evaluate and re-think information, in order to link current educational content to prior experiences. The students were also able to anticipate the material that was coming next, and they were able to improve after each task or operation as they received direct feedback. This direct guidance presented students with the right responses, independently, allowing them to proceed with more assignments or to correct the incorrect answers by returning to a question and starting over. This teaching approach lowered social anxiety and improved self-esteem, allowing students to be active learners while practicing the oral skills. These conditions generated tremendous results from students who felt insecure about answering or speaking in Arabic and avoided making mistakes in front of their peers or teachers.

In sum, students could practice reading online at any time and anywhere as the multimedia content was accessible via the school's website (e-learning) for all students, since all Saudi students had a username and password. In comparison, the significant change in the accomplishments of the students who learned Arabic language through BLA may be attributed to the concept of learning by play, role-play and simulation by the interactive content manufacturers. Without the online world, certain ways of learning may not be possible. Vockell (1992) concluded that simulation games played a significant role in raising the learning quality of the students, and they had an educational interest in the desire of the students to study. The positive effect of using the BLA may also be a product of the constructive manner in which teachers execute the system. For these reasons "Positivism" is a theory of how knowledge can be scientifically acquired and may be due to teachers being interested in using the modern approach in teaching Arabic language.

The results also revealed that there was a major gap in students' accomplishments between the pre-test and the post-test. This outcome may be explained by the fact that the students in the study group were more socialised and preferred to engage in group work by using computers and multi-media that was full of colors, sounds and effects. Students may also have been motivated to learn Arabic via the Internet because many Saudi families were unable to use the Internet to learn, so they considered BLA lessons to be a good opportunity for them to learn online in well-designed hybrid lessons.

5.2. Conclusion

Schools are increasingly finding that hybrid learning (BLA) is not only both time- and cost-effective, but also offers a more efficient means of studying and functioning. Schools who are in the forefront of this new wave of learning will have more active workers, will be more vigilant in initiating progress and will be more effective in meeting their objectives. An organisation's ability to learn and quickly turn the learning into practice is the greatest source of competitive advantage. Organisations need to move beyond conventional classroom



teaching borders by extending their existing best practices to incorporate modern developments in learning and innovative technology to optimise performance. Most specifically, organisations must aim to encourage each person within the organisation to become an active participant in the process of learning and cooperation.

5.3. Recommendations

The researcher proposes the following recommendations based on the findings of this study: It is critical that universities and The Saudi Ministry of Education train the Arabic college students adequately to enable them to address the demands of today's diverse workforce and demands. The researcher also urges those who teach Arabic by BLA to move on. Only then can the classroom actually be all things for the students: linked, regulated, communicative and easy. The researcher proposes the notion that every instructor might bring these collaborative practices into action online with preparation and help. Consequently, the instruction of the reading skills should also be strengthened. The researcher suggests a potential analysis to explore how demographic knowledge (age, gender, teaching experience) can influence the use of technology and how BLA class designs are introduced. It may help to explain why Arabic teachers are so hesitant to combine their traditional classes with computerised material. Such knowledge will be used to change the instructional methods and curriculum configurations to improve students' learning.



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Appendices

Appendix 1

Arabic Reading Pre Test/2nd Grade Students

الفصل	اسم الطالب /
  	السؤال الأول : اكتب الحرف بحركته أسفل الصورة :-
السؤال الثاني : اقرأ المقاطع ثم ادمجها واكتب الكلمة كالمثال :- سُحِبُ _____ _____ _____	سُحِبُ سُفُنُ حَسَنُ _____ _____ _____
السؤال الثالث : اقرأ المقاطع ثم ادمجها واكتب الكلمة كالمثال :- يَحَارُ _____ _____ _____	يَحَارُ تَسِيرُ صُقُورُ _____ _____ _____
السؤال الرابع : اقرأ المقاطع ثم ادمجها واكتب الكلمة كالمثال :- صَقْرُ _____ _____ _____	صَقْرُ حَفْلُ نَفْسُ _____ _____ _____
السؤال الخامس : اختر شكل الحرف المناسب للكلمة : (تَ - تِ - تْ - ت) (لُ - لِي - لِن)	ك.....اب ج.....م.....
السؤال السادس : اكتب بخط جميل : حَسَنُ تَلْمِيذٌ مَرْتَبٌ	السؤال السابع : اكتب ما يملئ عليك ، _____ _____ _____ _____

Appendix2

Arabic Reading Post Test/2nd Grade Students

اسم الطالب /	الفصل		
السؤال الأول : اكتب الحرف بحركته أسفل الصورة :-			
			
السؤال الثاني : اقرأ المقاطع ثم ادمجها واكتب الكلمة كالمثال :-			
بَصَلُ _____	بَصَلُ _____	بَصَلُ _____	
السؤال الثالث : اقرأ المقاطع ثم ادمجها واكتب الكلمة كالمثال :-			
بَذْرُ _____	بَذْرُ _____	بَذْرُ _____	
السؤال الرابع : اقرأ المقاطع ثم ادمجها واكتب الكلمة كالمثال :-			
صُحُونُ _____	صُحُونُ _____	صُحُونُ _____	
السؤال الخامس : اختر شكل الحرف المناسب للكلمة :			
(ص-ض-صن-صن) قَصْرُ.....نُ	(م-م-م-م) تَسْمُ.....رُ		
السؤال السادس : اكتب بخط جميل :			
رَسَمَ حُسَامٌ لَوْحَةً	رَسَمَ حُسَامٌ لَوْحَةً		
السؤال السابع : اكتب ما يملأ عليك ،			
.....