Blended Learning in Academic Writing: Realities and Perspectives

Abstract

The present article is of two-fold aim. First, it undertakes a situation analysis through investigating students' level of motivation and academic writing proficiency along with exploring teachers' perceptions and experience with blended learning. The study, hence, hypothesizes that teachers do not fully conceive and adequately use blended learning to improve students' academic writing performance and motivation. Second, it introduces the philosophy and methodology of blended learning in academic writing for undergraduate students, and hypothesizes that blended learning in academic writing would improve students' motivation and academic writing performance. To test the hypotheses, questionnaires and composition tests were conducted, along with suggesting some guidelines for designing blended learning courses for language practitioners.

Keywords: blended learning – motivation –academic writing.

Sabah KADRI
University of Constantine 1

Hacene HAMADA
Teacher Traing School (ENS)
Constantine (Algérie)

ملخص

تتضمن الدراسة الحالية هدف ذو بعدين،أولهما مباشرة تحليل وضعية من خلال الاستقصاء في مستوى الحافز والكفاءة الكتابية الأكاديمية للطلبة، إلى جانب استكشاف استيعاب وخبرة الأساتذة بالتعلم المدمج،بالتالي فإن الدراسة تفترض أن الأساتذة ليس لديهم تصور تام ولا يستعملون على نحو كافٍ التعلم المدمج من أجل تحسين الحافز والكفاءة الكتابية الأكاديمية للطلبة، ثانيهما تقدم هذه الدراسة فلسفة و منهجية التعلم المدمج في الكتابة الأكاديمية للطلبة قيد التخرج، وتفترض أن التعلم المدمج من شأنه تحفيز حافز الطلاب وأداء الكتابية الأكاديمية. ولاختبار الفرضية أجريت استبيانات واختبارات كتابية إلى جانب اقتراح بعض التوجيهات الخاصة بتصميم دروس التعلم المدمج لمتعلمي اللغة.

الكلمات الدالة : التعلم المدمج - الحافز- الكتابية الأكاديمية

Introduction

It is nowadays widely established that the World Wide Web has effectively changed the way education is conceived and delivered leading a new generation of learners to emerge: "Net Generation Learners". Within this current development, the learning needs of this generation have determined the necessity of developing adequate teaching methods. Blended Learning (BL, henceforth) is one of those methods that represent the expansion of online teaching pedagogies. Taking the case of teaching academic writing, teachers have always attempted to apply different approaches ranging from the product-based till the process-based approaches. However, the pedagogical application of these theories has never been satisfying. The same can be

said about improving students' motivation which is seemingly a difficult task to achieve. Accordingly, there is a good evidence to adopt BL as it blends the advantages of both traditional and online learning settings and also to suggest its contribution to students' motivation and academic writing proficiency.

1.   Statements of the Problem and rationale of the study

In the present paper, we draw the attention of practitioners to the following problems encountered in the Algerian classrooms:

• *Over-crowdedness and low motivation*

BL emphasizes active learning that is proved to be difficult to apply in large physical classes. Considering the over-crowdedness of classes in the Algerian universities, one admits the difficulty of creating a motivating environment that encourages the students to be active learners. The spoon-feeding approach has now become an acceptable routine. Many students come to class less willing to participate; they just wait for the teacher to provide them with information. This teaching environment undermined teachers' willingness to cause any changes to the situation. In this problematic situation, BL seems to be a solution to be tested.

• *Time and Space constraint for learning opportunities in academic writing*

BL aims to overcome the boundaries of space and time imposed by the physical classroom. On the one hand, time constraints deprive teachers from providing students with the sufficient time to think deeply about a particular learning element. As far as academic writing is concerned, providing students with instruction alone is never enough. Learners must be given a number of opportunities to engage in the writing process. On the other hand, because of space constraints, interactions cannot occur in an organizable pattern. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest implementing BL in the teaching process.

• *Adopting Blended Learning in Algeria*

Many institutions all over the world have implemented BL in their programs. As Graham (2006:7) wrote, "we can be pretty certain that the trend toward blended learning systems will increase". Algeria, like any other spot in the world is not an exception. A large proportion of Algerian teachers and learners can get access to the Internet and use it to serve teaching purposes. This goes with the huge expansion of internet connections that are made possible today by the Algerian reforms in the field of telecommunications.

2.   Theoretical framework of the study

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this topic, a theoretical framework should be limited to the major variables of the research methodology: Blended Learning, Academic Writing, and motivation.

2.1.   Blended Learning

Blended learning-also labeled "hybrid", "mixed", "integrative"-is an approach that emerged as a result of the rapid development of Web-Based Instruction together with the evolving needs of students. This approach has emerged as a reaction to the disadvantages of both *e-learning* and *traditional learning*. On the one hand, the experience gained from e-learning resulted in students' low motivation due to the

absence of *socialization* between learners and teachers both for the lack of any physical contact and the absence of 'instant' synchronous online activities. Such a deficiency encouraged researchers to add the human interaction in a new method: "the BL instruction" (Sethy, 2008). On the other hand, time and space constraints imposed by the face-to-face (f2f, henceforth) teaching approach has been found to restrict learners from deep thinking, interacting, and receiving feedback.

According to BL, the solution to reach optimal learning is therefore by combining both learning settings. The introduction of *social networks* in education paves the way for "*socialization*" to take place both through considering the f2f contact and the possibility to conduct synchronous online lectures. In the words of Garrison and Kanuka (2004:97), "learners can be independent of space and time yet together". Similarly, the *flexibility* of online sessions assists in overcoming the boundaries of time and space.

Many definitions have been proposed and considered BL a *"combined system"* including a face-to-face (f2f, henceforth) and an online component (Sharma and Barrett, 2007).However, Clark and Myer (2003) indicate that there is no exact definition of BL. It is the term "blend" which can be confusing to many as any teaching experience is actually a result of blending some sort of teaching tools and strategies. Such a situation has brought about different understandings. Some researchers tend to define the concept from a very broad perspective while others totally narrow it to the point that it has been given percentages of its components. Two example definitions would be those of Horn and Staker (2012:3) and Dudeney and Hockly (2007: 138 – 139). The former defines BL as any "program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction ... *and* at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location…", whereas the latter specifies BL courses as those having 75 percent of online content and 25 percent delivered f2f.

Other researchers preferred perceiving the concept more as a continuum that ranges between fully online and fully physical events. Bath and Bourke (2010), and Twigg (2003, 29-35), for example, cite three BL models: *the supplemental, the replacement,* and *the emporium model*. In supplemental model, technology is used to <u>*support*</u> learning with no change in the traditional teaching method. In replacement model, technology is used to <u>*enrich*</u> the quality of learning *through interweaving an online component within the program. This requires changing the whole philosophy of learning as an attempt to find solutions to encountered problems.* In emporium model, *courses are delivered fully online where the physical contact is optional.* It should be noted that some researchers tend to restrict BL in the confinements of "the replacement model" as other models do not reflect the BL rational where no real change at the instructional strategy is involved (Vaughan, 2007).

Caraivan (*2011:2*) suggests that BL is "an on-going process that develops with every teacher or trainer who applies it". In other words, the design of the BL instruction is to a great extent *"situational"* as it depends on the learning situation and its variables. Attributing a "situational approach" to BL, however, does not mean that it is a "haphazard" strategy of combining methods; but a *"principled"* approach that aims at "optimizing the learning outcome" Singh and Reed (2001:1). For such an objective to

be achieved , some principles must be taken into account such as "learner-centeredness", "socialization", "active learning", "self-regulation" (Lin, 2007; Bonk and Graham, 2006; Smart and Cappel, 2006).

Many advantages have been attributed to BL such as *fostering interaction,, prompting feedback, lowering students' anxiety, and improving their critical thinking skills.* Churches (2008, cited in Bath and Bourke, op.cit.), for example, suggests the suitability of applying the different skills and activities of **Bloom's taxonomy** (1956) to BL.

2.2. Academic Writing

Along its history, writing is being conceptualized according to three major perspectives, in Hyland's (2002) terms, "text-oriented", "writer-oriented" and "reader-oriented" perspectives. Cooper (1993) describes them in relation to "behaviorism", "cognitivism", and "constructivism". These shifts reflect commonly known approaches to writing: product approaches, process approaches, and post-process approaches.

Text-oriented approaches emphasize language structures where lexical and syntactic rules are memorized using drilling exercises. Approaches within this behavioural orientation were severely criticized for not allowing room for creativity (Harran, 1993). Writing was found to be a complex skill that requires an in-depth understanding instead of being treated superficially in terms of structural aspects. Accordingly, *Writer-based approaches have emerged to consider writing a complex process that is «* best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate or organize during the act of writing" (Flower and Hayes, 1981:366). Later, process approaches were found to be overemphasizing "the cognitive relationship between the writer and the writer's internal world" Swales (1990: 220 quoted in Hyland, 2003: 13). Particularly, it fails to account for social/cultural variables and provides the product "a secondary, derivative concern" (Silva, 1990: 15-16).

In an attempt to provide a comprehensive approach to writing, a call for an *"integrated theory" was needed to combine both approaches where more attention is paid to the social context of writing*. Many scholars (such as Bruce, 2006; Breuch, 2002; Matsuda, 2003) have suggested the application of "post-process" approaches which perceive writing as a *social practice* rather than an individual cognitive activity.

In the present paper we emphasize the constructivist approach (a post-process approach) as it provides a framework that "considers both a process and some aspects of the product approach" (Zimmerman, 1993 cited in Mu, 2005:3) and *for its suitability to the BL context.* The writer "is neither a creator working through a set of cognitive processes nor an interactant engaging with a reader, but a member of a community" (Hyland, op.cit., p. 40). The writer contributes with his cognitive constructions to the whole academic community and takes benefit of the overall social constructions. Reference is given to both Piaget's *cognitive constructivism* and Vigotsky's *social constructivism*. The most suitable activities are 'reader-based' where students read other's answers/texts, be engaged in problem-solving situations and provide constructive feedback. These activities follow the principles of BL mentioned previously, mainly "learner-centeredness", and "collaboration".

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The above-mentioned writing approaches are about "how to teach writing" in general; however, it is more important in the context of this study, to consider "academic writing" as a "special genre of writing having its own rules and practices" (Bowker, 2007:4). Researchers collectively offer a comprehensive view of the important aspects which characterize any type of writing as « academic » as it helps in identifying the « what to teach » component. For space constraints we provide an example for each:

• **Objectivity:** *Academic writing is objective.* Hartley (2008), for instance, believes that a scientific text is impersonal, free from subjective statements and the use of personal pronouns.

• **Formality:** *Academic writing is formal.* Formality excludes contractions, personal pronouns, biased language, slang and jargon, among others; however it includes precise language, active voice and concise language (Formal Academic Writing, 2012).

• **Argumentation and Metadiscourse Functions:** *Academic writing includes use of "arguments" and "metadiscourse conventions".* Lai (2013:4) stresses the importance of *argumentation* stating that "the difficulties in academic writing are [primary] knowing how to think clearly and argue well". To address the reader, the writer uses "the metadiscourse functions" of the professional community he belongs to (Hyland, 1998).

• **Structural skills:** *Academic writing follows well-defined structuring patterns* (Bowker, op.cit.). Essays, for instance, follow the Introduction-Body-Conclusion pattern.

• **Research/Analytical Skills:** *Academic writing must incorporate "published literature" and "evaluation".* It necessitates the effective integration of research findings to support one's ideas; and requires *evaluating* information to emphasize the *writer's voice* (Irvin, 2010).

• **Simplicity and Concision:** *Academic writing is simple and concise.* Hartley (op.cit:4), for example, argues that academic writing is unnecessarily complicated, technical, impersonal, authoritative, humorless, and easier for non-native speakers to follow.

2.3. Motivation

Motivation had and still has a dominant position in foreign language teaching. It has been conceptualized differently by three major perspectives, namely, the behavioural, the cognitive, and the socio-cognitive perspectives. Within behavioural perspectives, motivation was understood as an impulsive response to external stimuli. Therefore, for an organism desirable behavior to be maintained, the stimulus must be emphasized through reinforcers. Theories following this orientation were found to be irrelevant to the educational setting (Weiner, 1990). Cognitive theories, then, emerged to regard humans as *proactive* rather than reactive to certain stimuli and act following their own decisions. The term "goal" was frequently used and stressed specifically by *Goal-Orientation Theory*. This theory is socio-cognitive and indicates how classroom variables influence students' learning goals. Two types of achievement goals are distinguished: mastery and performance goals (Ames, 1992) where mastery goals are considered superior for stressing the intrinsic value of learning, self-improvement and effort rather than demonstrating ability through grades (Brophy, 2005).

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Another direction within socio-cognitive theories is the Expectancy-value theories which identify two sources of students' expectations: outcome and self-efficacy expectations. Within this direction, *the attribution theory* is more centered on self-efficacy expectations (Weiner, 1985). Outcome expectations are related to one's beliefs about the task value whereas self-efficacy expectations (self-confidence) identify one's judgments' about his capabilities to do the task. Therefore, if these expectations are low, no efforts will be spent.

Another important socio-cognitive theory is *self-determination theory* developed by Deci and his associates (1989). According to this theory, effort is not an internal construct but one that depends on satisfying three needs: (1) a need for competence (to show one's abilities by engaging in challenging activities) (2) a need for relatedness (to have a feel for belonging and to be cared for) (3) a need for autonomy (to feel responsible and self-regulated).

In the present paper, we tend to focus on socio-cognitive theories previously mentioned: goal-orientation theory, attribution theory, and self-determination theory. First, *these theories are complementary.* Committing oneself to achieve *mastery goals* not only necessitates spending efforts but also *monitoring* the progress towards pursuing the goals, i.e. being self-regulated. Similarly, self-determination theory emphasizes the relationship between effort and intrinsic motivation through the need of "competence". Likewise, students cannot be actively involved in challenging activities unless their *self-efficacy* is high. Second, *the tenets of these theories are similar to those of BL and constructivism.* Therefore, they are best suited to a Constructivism-Blended Learning setting. As stated in the previous sub-sections, BL is "learner-centered", "autonomous, "self-regulated", "confidence-raising", and "socializing" whereas cognitive/social constructivism focus on generating "thoughtful feedback" through challenging tasks.

Motivation, Constructivism, and BL tenets are better summarized using Garrison's (2007) online presences in an online community of inquiry: social, cognitive, and teaching presence. Social presence refers to "the ability to project one's self and establish personal and purposeful relationships" (p.63); cognitive presence is related to "the exploration, construction, resolution and confirmation of understanding through collaboration and reflection in a community of inquiry" (p.65); teaching presence provides "practical implications for a community of inquiry and supporting social and cognitive presence" (p.67).

3. Research design and methodology

The research design and methodology are based on some aims that raise a number of research questions. The latter require some answers that can be gathered through testing research hypotheses and using data gathering tools with a sample population.

3.1. Aims of the study, research questions and hypotheses

The present study aims at exposing a situation analysis of two fold objectives. First, it explores students' level of motivation and academic writing proficiency. Second, it investigates whether teachers conceive and adequately use BL to improve students' motivation and academic writing proficiency. Achieving these aims helps in deciding the necessity to implement BL in the Algerian context regarding the benefits it

promises in relation to both motivation and academic writing. Furthermore, the present research provides guidance about designing BL by applying motivational and constructivist writing principles.

To achieve these aims, the present study addresses the following research questions:
1.   Are students' academic writing proficiency and motivation below average?
2.   What attitudes students hold towards current practices of teaching academic writing?
3.   Are Algerian students ready to learn in a blended learning environment?
4.   Do Algerian teachers fully conceive and adequately use blended learning to improve students' academic writing performance and motivation?
5.   What attitudes Algerian teachers hold towards adopting blended learning?
      In the light of these research questions, the following hypotheses are stated:
1.   Students' academic writing proficiency and motivation are low.
2.   Algerian teachers do not fully conceive and adequately use blended learning to improve students' academic writing performance and motivation.

Answering research questions 2, 3, and 5 serves to set the ground for the feasibility of the present research. Answers to Research Questions 1 and 4 provide data that will confirm or disconfirm Hypotheses 1 and 2 and provide the researcher with a good insight about the necessity to implement the BL approach.

3.2.   Sample Population

The sample population encompasses 68 participants as a whole. Precisely, it is composed of 15 students and 53 teachers. As the researcher is teaching the module of «Research Methodology » to second year students at Larbi Ben M'hidi University, she has chosen a sample of one of her groups to take part in the study. The English Department consists of 53 teachers. In order to reach a representative sample, the researcher has considered taking all teachers holding different academic degrees ranging from Master to Post-Doctorate degree.

3.3.   Research Methodology and tools

In the present study, an exploration method is used by means of two data collection instruments; a questionnaire and a writing composition test. Two types of questionnaires are conducted and distributed on both teachers and learners. The researcher developed the questionnaires based on a theoretical background related to motivation, academic writing, and BL. All students and 44 teachers returned the questionnaires, i.e. 98.15 % respectively.

3.3.1.   Students' questionnaire

Although our primary concern is to check students' *motivation and academic writing proficiency*, we also draw the attention to two issues which can feed us with information about the feasibility of adopting BL in the Algerian context. As the research is focused on the module of « Research Methodology », we check students' *attitudes* towards current teaching practices and their *readiness* to the BL approach. We believe that if students consider current practices of teaching academic writing to be adequate and that they are not ready to learn in a BL environment, then we cannot suggest adopting BL in our educational context. The questionnaire includes 36 questions and it is divided into six sections (see Appendix I).

3.3.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

Similar to student's questionnaire, we tend to *extend* our investigation to include not only teachers' *perceptions* and *experience* with BL but also their *attitudes* towards incorporating it in the Algerian context using Facebook. Taking into account both students' and teachers' perspectives would set the ground for the feasibility of the present study. The questionnaire includes 25 questions which are divided into five sections (see Appendix II).

3.3.3. Writing composition test and scoring

The writing test aims at investigating students' writing proficiency. To develop the test, the researcher has taken into consideration what students are taught in their first year in the module of "Research Methodology". Once checking the program used, it turned out that students were familiar with borrowing techniques although that took a period of two/three hours. Accordingly, the researcher decided to consider emphasizing "borrowing techniques" and adding some features of academic writing discussed in the literature (check p.4). These features are operationalized into sub-structures which are chosen carefully to fit with the writing task that is centered on borrowing techniques: "Quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing". They are presented in the following table:

Academic writing features	Target sub-structures
Objectivity	**Present simple** (reporting vebs/signal phrase)
	Active voice (signal phrase)
	Objective analysis of the quote
	Neutral description of the passage (summarizing)
Formality	**Reporting verb** (signal phrase)
	Signal phrase model
	Synonyms (paraphrasing)
	Formal analysis (of the quote)
Concision	**Complex noun phrases** (author's credentials)
	Avoid Unnecessary sentences
	Simplifying structures (paraphrasing strategies)
	Avoid wordiness
Structural skills/ Cohesion and coherence	**Coherent quote with ellipsis** (coherence)
	Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning
	Using link sentences (coherence)
	Avoid run-on sentences (cohesive devices)
Analytical skills	**The quote is followed by an analysis**
	Extracting only main ideas from the passage
Research skills/ Plagiarism	**In-text Citation and punctuation**
	No copy and paste

In the test, students are given three academic sources about "web-based learning"; two passages and a quote (see appendix III). Imagining conducting an academic research, they are asked to compose a text of 10 lines based on these sources in 120 minutes. In particular, they are asked to write a formal, concise, objective, meaningful, and well-structured text.

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In order to score the test, each sub-feature is counted on a scale from 0 to 2. 0 refers to the absence of a certain feature, 1 means that the feature is improperly used, and 2 means that the feature is well employed. Sometimes there is no unique answer as when it is related to « objectivity », « concision », or « formality". The answers are judged correct or wrong according to the scoring rubric presented in Appendix IV.

4.   Data Analysis and discussion

Due to space constraints, we tend to focus the analysis of the questionnaire to the most informative results in relation to the aims of the present research.

4.1. Students' questionnaire:
4.1.1.   Students' Level of Motivation and Academic Writing Proficiency

In order to check students' level of motivation and have a preliminary idea about students' writing proficiency, we selected the following questions; Q4, Q5, Q7, and Q8:

Q4: 66.66 % of the students consider having a low/very low motivation.

Q5: Taking the answers of students with a low/very low motivation, 50 % attribute the latter to *the learning physical environment* and 30 % to *communication types* allowed in class. The first factor stresses the physical conditions of the classroom which are either *unattractive* (sitting arrangements and crowdedness) or *improper* for good learning conditions .The second factor suggests either that communication used is solemnly Teacher-Student (T-S forhence) or that even when attempting to create an active learning, the communication among students is not well organized. The absence of such motivating types of communication (Student-Student) is probably due to time and space constraints stated earlier (see page…). The instructor finds the time allowed to be insufficient for an active discussion to take place and struggles to create well-structured discussions with space constraints encountered.

Q7- 60% of students perceive their academic writing proficiency as low/very low.

Q8- Once taking together the answers of those having low/very low writing proficiency, we find that 55.55 % attribute the latter to the type of feedback they receive, 22.22 % to the time provided for accomplishing the writing task, and 22.22 % to the learning resources available.

Checking the feasibility of adopting BL entails checking students' *attitudes* towards current teaching practices **(section 2.1.2),** and *their readiness* to BL using Facebook (sections 2.1.3). We analyse Q10, Q12, Q15, Q18, Q21, Q22, Q26, Q29, Q31, and Q33 :

4.1.2. Students' Attitudes toward Current Teaching Practices
Q10- 60 % think that the time available in class was sufficient to solve writing activities**.**

Q12-66.66 % revealed that they have not been given sufficient feedback on their writings.

Q15- 86.66 % acknowledge that T-S communication is the type of communication allowed in class which reveals using teacher-centered pedagogy.

Q18- 60% of students are not satisfied with the way writing skill was taught.

4.1.3.   Students' Readiness to Blended Learning Experience using Facebook

Q21-73.33 % consider their skills in surfing on the Internet to be « good ».

Q22-66 % connect to the Internet for more than five hours per day. *This confirms that Algerian students belong to the Net Generation students who constantly use the Internet. Therefore, as teachers, we can turn the use of the Internet to serve pedagogical purposes.*

Q26- 80% state that they can easily access Internet to study an online course and explain their answer by referring to the different means they can use mainly '3G' or WIFI from home.

Q29- 86.66 % have a Facebook account which confirm students' familiarity with Facebook.

Q**31-** 100% consider Facebook an easy application revealing that no training is needed.

Q33-66.66 % are willing to study some lessons of 'Research Methodology' on a Facebook Group.

4.1.4.   Summarizing students' questionnaire results in relation to research questions (RQs) and hypotheses (RHs):

First, results of **Q4** *confirm the first part of RH1(and answer the first part of RQ1) stating that students' motivation is low* whereas results of Q7 provide a preliminary idea to the evidence of the second part of RH1 suggesting that students' academic writing proficiency is low (the test is needed to confirm it). As an answer to RQ2, *students hold negative attitudes towards current practices of teaching academic writing* namely, the time issue, the amount of feedback, and the type of communication available (which can all be refined using BL). These results also confirm the reasons behind students' low level of motivation and academic writing proficiency. To answer RQ3**, *students seem to be ready to undertake part of « Research Methodology » courses on a Facebook Group*. Both answers to RQ2 and RQ3 *confirm the feasibility* of adopting BL to our educational context.

4.2.   Teacher's questionnaire

In order to check the feasibility of adopting BL in the Algerian context, we check teachers' *Perception* of a BL approach (Q8 and Q9), their *Experience* with it (Q11, Q13, Q14, and Q16), and their readiness to adopt it in the Algerian context using Facebook (Q21 and Q23).

4.2.1.   Teachers' Perceptions of Blended Learning Approach

Q8- 65.91% of teachers reveal that this is the first time they read about BL. This indicates that the approach is new to the Algerian context and most teachers are not familiar with it.

Q9-Among the 34.09 % who answered "No", 53.33% define BL incorrectly by referring to answer « **d** » while the correct answer is « **b** » (see Appendix II). As stated

in the literature, BL is a *principled* approach that goes beyond the mere addition of an online component to serve administrative purposes (which opposes answer 'd').

4.2.2. Teachers' Experience with Blended Learning Approach

Q11-75% of teachers never taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment.

Q13- Among the 25 % (11 teachers) who answered « yes », 7 teachers stated that the object of using BL was to teach academic writing.

Q14- 27.27% mentioned that the online component was not interactive as it was used to post useful documents for learners for self-study. The majority (72.72%) who answered otherwise, mentioned Facebook, Moodle, and Skype to strengthen social relationships with students and provide extra individual explanations. However, even though acknowledging having an interactive online component, teachers did not follow the true principle of BL which is « social constructivism » that necessitates an "instant" online interaction and which is understood according to the replacement model (see pages4- 5).

Q16- 36.36 % (4 teachers) mentioned that the online component was learner-centered for allowing students to upload documents and contact their teachers at their convenient time. This explanation, however, does not reveal a learner-centered '*pedagogy*' where the learner is the focus of the learning process (eg. elaborates discussions and provides peer feedback).

4.2.3. Adopting Blended Learning in the Algerian context using Facebook

Q21- 70.45 % mentioned that they are willing at any stage in their teaching span to integrate Facebook as a teaching tool.

Q23- 86.36 % stated that they are willing to integrate any online tool into their teaching. Some explained their answer by the necessity to be up-to-date with the most innovative technological tools while others added the necessity of acquiring the professional knowledge of designing online lectures.

4.2.4. Summarizing teachers' questionnaire results in relation to research questions and hypotheses:

Results of Q8/Q9 indicate that the majority of teachers do not conceive the BL rational. The results of Q14/Q16 confirm RH2 and answer RQ4 revealing that all teachers (and the very few who attempted to use BL) do not follow the true rational of BL. As an answer to RQ5, the majority of teachers endorse the idea of adopting BL to the Algerian context (Q21/Q23).

4.3 . Writing composition test

After conducting the writing test, we reached the following results:

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Evaluative Criteria	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	Totals	Means for each criterion
Objectivity	5	2	4	0	3	6	3	4	2	0	2	5	0	4	4	44	36.66
Formality	2	1	1	2	3	1	3	2	0	3	1	0	2	3	2	26	21.66
Concision	2	3	0	3	2	3	1	0	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	28	23.33
Structural skills/ Cohesion-Coherence		4	0	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	3	4	2	3	0	29	24.16
Analytical skills	1	0	2	1	3	2	1	3	0	3	1	2	1	3	3	26	43.33
Research skills/ Plagiarism	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	21	35
Participant(s) total scores	15	11	8	9	16	15	11	11	5	10	11	15	8	16	13	174	29
Participant(s) total Means	37.5	27.5	20	22.5	40	37.5	27.5	27.5	12.5	25	27.5	37.5	20	40	32.5		

For space constrains, we address only results in relation to the general criteria which can test the first research hypothesis. Taking all criteria together reveals that the group total scores and means are below average. The total score is 174/600 and the total means is 29 %. ***These results confirm the second part of the first research hypothesis stating that students' academic writing proficiency is below average.*** The academic writing criterion that got the lowest mean is « formality » (21.66 %) whereas the criterion with the highest mean is « analytical skills » (43.33 %). All other criteria have means as follows: « concision » (23.33 %), « coherence/concision » (24.16 %), « Research skills » (35 %), and « objectivity » (36.66 %).

These results emphasize the difficulty of « formality » and the easiness of « analytical skills ». The researcher attributes the low percentage in « formality » to the complex task of writing formal language especially with the absence of any module at Algerian universities that teaches formality to students. The high percentage of « analytical skills » is probably attributed to students' familiarity with « summary strategies » from the module of "Written Expression" and pre-university studies.

5. Practical Recommendations
The situation analysis of the present research emphasizes the necessity to incorporate BL. According to Rossett (cited in Carman, 2005), designing BL courses is flexible and depends upon "the people you serve, nature of skill they must master, and context in which they are to perform". Despite the freedom it allows, researchers seem to *hold identical insights* about how BL should be designed. These are summarized as follows:
• There should be a *complementary* and a *thoughtful integration* between both learning modalities; the online and offline (Marsh, 2012; Wikibooks, 2009).

- Learning materials must be "*carefully planned*", i.e pedagogically-driven based on students' needs, the subject matter, and learning objectives. (Sharma and Barrett, op.cit., Marsh, op.cit.).
- Learners must be « *supported* » *academically, affectively, and technically* through creating a sense of a social and academic community.
- *Rethinking the way we teach* by emphasizing encountered problems such as *increasing learning opportunities*, *learner centeredness and collaboration*. (Wikibooks, 2009).
- *Sustained assessment* using both summative and formative feedback.
- *Role of teacher* and *f2f component are central (*Sharma and Barrett, op.cit.; Marsh, op.cit.).
- The instructor must promote *student-centered learning* (Marsh, op.cit.).
- Teacher must encourage *autonomous and collaborative learning* (Marsh, op.cit.).

By incorporating *Motivation and constructivism tenets, Learning Presences* of Garrison etal (2000)*, Bloom's taxonomy*, and Muilenburg and burge (2000) types of *online discussion questions,* the researcher suggested a constructivism-based BL general lesson plan together with an example of 'sessions 5 and 6' lesson plans for the first semester of second year program of the module of "Research Methodology". (Appendix VI and Appendix VII). Further issues about BL design are presented in the following decisions:

D1: How to develop *component integration between* virtual and face-to-face settings?

Following the replacement model (see page 4), each course consists of two modes in which the virtual mode '*replaces'* some of f2f setting, in particular sessions devoted for 'activities'. As a result, each course is divided into **"a physical lecturing session"** and **"an online activity session".** In the online setting, students will be engaged in both '*individual and collaborative' tasks* that foster cognitive and social construction of knowledge.

D2: What synchronous and asynchronous tools to use?

- *Facebook* is used following the reasons mentioned by Patrut and Patrut (2013): it is familiar and does not require technical training; its feature of 'Create Group' facilitates information sharing both synchronously and asynchronously; it has a friendly interface; and by using pseudonyms, communication becomes secure leading to more self-expression which is a key concept in both learner-centeredness and constructivism.
- **E-mail** is used to address any new learning events and communicate *asynchronously*.

D3: How much time students would spend in virtual vs f2f settings?

To overcome time constraints imposed by the physical environment, students would spend in virtual setting **two hours on the activities.** In doing so, students are provided with more time to think and engage in constructive discussions.

D4: How could constructive discussions be created?

In order to discuss texts/answers posted by the teacher or by peers, **students are asked to provide thoughtful contributions** rather than response that might add nothing to students' knowledge such as " I agree with u", "I think the answer is correct".

D5: How to maintain students' motivation?

Students are told that posts and replies will be assessed for both quantity and quality just like participation in f2f settings. The teacher can also use private chat where necessary to increase students' comfort.

D6: To what extent student's autonomy is allowed VS teacher guidance?

Students are allowed to choose the time that best suits them to join the online session synchronously. Within the online session, they can choose the peer's answer they want to evaluate, consult online sources, and address any questions in private chat. However, it is the teacher who monitors and sets time limits for discussion.

D7: How students' self-regulation is allowed?

Self-paced learning is a compulsory ingredient of BL and encourages students to be self-regulated. Two examples are posted **E-documents** which students consult and study on their own pace, and **online howeworks** that students read and solve asychnonously (check..).

D8: How to manage students online?

In order to keep students self-disciplined, we advise creating rules of Dos and Don'ts (be *critical* about what to post and comment, what is *expected* from the teacher and students, due dates and *time* limitations of answering/ asking questions, expectations of teacher's response).

Conclusion:

The sample situation analysis presented in the present paper emphasizes the necessity to implement BL due to students' low motivation and academic writing proficiency. However, it has been found that BL is still new to the Algerian context despite its huge expansion worldwide. None of the teachers of the sample used adequately BL and the majority do not conceive the rational of such an approach. Consequently, although some lesson plans are suggested, we recommend further research on BL. Researchers may expand the situation analysis to more than one university, cover other language skills, or use online tools other than Facebook.

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Appendix I: Students' questionnaire:

Section I: Background Information

1-Gender: a-Male ☐   b -Female ☐
2-Status:a- Employee ☐   b- Non-Employee ☐

Section II: Students' Level of Motivation and Academic Writing Proficiency

3-To what extent you think motivation is important to learn English?
a-To a great extent ☐   b-To some extent ☐   c- Not important at all ☐
4-How do you rate your level of motivation? a -Very high ☐ b -High ☐ c-Medium ☐ d -Low ☐ e-Very low ☐
5-What factors affect your motivation?
a-The content of the module you learn ☐
b- The type of interactions allowed in class. ☐
c-The type of activities you do. ☐
d-The physical environment in which you study. ☐
e- The level of your classmates. ☐
f- The teacher's behaviour. ☐
6-How important is academic writing proficiency in comparison to other language skills?
a-very important ☐   b -Important ☐   c -Somehow important ☐   d -not important ☐
7- How do you rate your academic writing proficiency? a-Low ☐ b-very low ☐ c -intermediate ☐ d -high ☐ e-very high ☐
8-What factors affect your academic writing proficiency?
a-Time provided for accomplishing the writing task ☐
b-Level of difficulty of the writing assignment. ☐
c-The type of feedback you receive (peer vs. teacher feedback). ☐
d-The learning resources the teacher provides you (lecture notes, reading materials, CDs,...) ☐
e-type of assignment you do (collaborative vs individual) ☐

Section III: Students' Attitudes Toward Current Teaching Practices

9-How much time did you spend on writing activities? a-less than 30 m ☐ b -30m to 1h ☐ c-1 h to 1h:30 ☐ d-more than 1h:30 ☐
10-Do you think that the time available in class was sufficient to solve writing activities? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
11-If your answer is NO, How much time do you need to solve your writing activities?
....
12-Have you been given sufficient feedback on your writings? -Yes ☐ No ☐
13-What type of feedback? a-Teacher feedback ☐   b -peer feedback ☐
14-Have you been given opportunities to assess your own writings? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
15-What type of classroom communication was allowed? a-Teacher-student ☐ b-Student-student ☐
16-Were the learning resources provided by the teacher sufficient for you? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
17-Did your teacher encourage you to consult further resources? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
18-Were you satisfied with the way Methodology was taught? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
19-Whatever the answer, please give the reason
....

Section IV: Students' Readiness to Blended Learning Experience

20-How do you rate you computer skills? a-Poor ☐   b-moderate ☐   c-good ☐   d-Excellent ☐
21-How do you rate your skills in surfing on the Internet? a-Poor ☐ b-moderate ☐ c-good ☐ d-excellent ☐
22-How many hours per day you stay connected to Internet? a-Less than one hr ☐ b-1-3 hrs ☐ c - 3 to 5 hrs ☐ d-More than 5 hrs ☐
23-What activities you use when you spend your time connected to the Internet?
a-Read for fun ☐
b-play computer games ☐
c-listen/download music ☐
d-watch/download videos/movies ☐
e-read information to complete a homework ☐
f-preparing for exams ☐
g-online text chatting ☐
h-writing e-mail ☐
24-Have you been taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment? a -Yes ☐ b- No ☐
25- If yes, describe..............................
26-If you are to study a course online, can you easily access internet when it is needed? a-Yes ☐ b -No ☐
27-If No, explain why..............................
28-How do you access Internet? a-Home ☐ b-Internet café ☐ c-university library ☐

Section V: Students' Readiness to Use Facebook as a Pedagogical Tool

29-Do you have an account on Facebook? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
30-How often do you connect to Facebook a-Never ☐ b-Rarely ☐ c -Sometimes ☐ d-Often ☐ e-Very often ☐
31- Do you consider Facebook an easy application to use? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
32-What do you use Facebook for?
a-Post/ or read posts for fun ☐
b-Post/ or read posts that educate you ☐
c-play online games ☐
d-listen/download music ☐
e-watch/dowload videos/episodes ☐
f-online text chatting ☐
g-online video chatting ☐
33-Will you be willing to study the course of Methodology on a Facebook Group? a-Yes ☐ b-No ☐
34-Why?..............................

Section VI: Further Suggestions
35-Do you have any further suggestions?

Appendix II: Teacher's Questionnaire

Section one : Background Information

1-Gender : a-Male ☐   b-Female ☐
2-Age :   a-From 23-30 ☐   b-from 31-40 ☐   c- more than 40 ☐
3-Highest Level of Education : a-Master ☐   b-Magister ☐   c-Doctorat ☐   d-Postdoc ☐
4-Teaching Experience : a-from 1-5 years ☐   b-from 6-10 years ☐   c-more than 10 years ☐
5-How do you rate your skills in surfing on the Internet? a-Poor ☐ b-moderate ☐ c -good ☐ d-excellent ☐
6-Do you have a Facebook account?   a-Yes ☐   b- No ☐
7-How many hours per day you stay connected to Internet? a-Less than one hr ☐ b- 1-3 hrs ☐ c- 3 to 5 hrs ☐   d-More than 5hrs ☐

Section two: Teachers' Perceptions of Blended Learning Approach

8-Is this the first time you read about the blended learning approach? a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐
9-If no, according to you, which of the following situations refer to blended learning:
a-Incorporating technology in the physical classrooms such as showing students a video to explain a specific aspect/subject. ☐
b- Dividing a course into an online lecture when all students are being online at the same time and another lecture in the physical classroom. ☐
c-Using different methods of learning inside the classroom such as audio-lingual and the communicative method. ☐
b-In addition to the physical lecture, teacher uses a specific online application (eg. Website) in which he posts useful documents, course schedule, due dates while students join at any time to check them. ☐
10-Based on your knowledge, can you state the difference between blended learning, e-learning, and distance learning?
....

Section three: Teachers' Experience with Blended learning Approach
11-Have you ever taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment? a-Yes ☐   b- no ☐
12-If no, why not:
a-I doubt the success of online teaching in Algerian context (Internet connection, passive students,…). ☐
b-I consider myself not prepared technically. ☐
c-I am accustomed to the methods being used. ☐
d-I don't know much about teaching online (managing time, managing a virtual classroom, encouraging interactive setting…) ☐
-If yes:
13-was the objective of the course to teach academic writing? a-Yes ☐   b- No ☐
14-Was the online component interactive? a-Yes ☐   b- No ☐
15-Explain...
16-Was the online component learner-centered? a- Yes ☐   b- No ☐
17-Explain...
18-If you ever taught a writing course in a fully or a partial online setting , what were your reasons for choosing to add an online component?
a-To increase students motivation. ☐
b-To improve students' academic writing proficiency. ☐
c-To add extra writing activities. ☐
d-To be up-to-date with current teaching practices. ☐
e-Because the time allowed in classroom is not enough. ☐
f-Because it is difficult to create a learner-centered, interactive environment in the classroom. ☐
19-Please state the challenges or frustrations you faced while teaching online.
....

Section four: Adopting Blended Learning in the Algerian context using Facebook
20-Show your agreement with the following statements by putting a tick in "yes" or "no" columns:

Statements	Yes	No
Necessity of Blended Learning		
1-Traditional methods alone are not very useful these days.		
2-There is a need to combine online and offline teaching methods to cope with the evolving needs of Net Generation students.		
3- When it is taken as part of the curriculum, online teaching can be useful especially for practicing skills.		
Facebook Utility		
4-Facebook is an easy application to use.		
5-Facebook can be effectively used for pedagogical purposes.		
Blended learning and Motivation		
6-Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' *comfort.*		
7-Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' willingness to *communicate* with peers and the instructor.		
8- Conducting part of sessions online is *useful* since it *reduces the cost of education* for learners and teachers.		
9-Conducting part of sessions online is *useful* due to the *flexibility of time and space* they offer.		
10-Using Facebook may help teachers to *support students academically, affectively, and technically* more than in traditional classes.		
11- Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' *self-confidence*		
12- Online sessions may encourage learners *to learn independently and be responsible* on their own learning		
13- Online sessions may teach better students *punctuality and self-discipline* (checking Group/e-mail updates, to be on-time for the course…)		
14-Online sessions may encourage students to *make much effort* than in traditional classes.		
15-*Face-to-face sessions* may serve in raising students' motivation.		
Blended Learning and Academic Writing		
16- Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may help teachers *provide feedback* for each student better than in physical classroom		
17- Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may encourage students to provide *peer-feedback* through commenting.		
18- Reading others' posts and receiving others' suggestions on one's writing on Facebook Group may result to a true *community of inquiry.*		
19- The fact that students' writings are seen by everyone in a Facebook Group may encourage them to *be critical* about what they write.		
20-Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may improve *students' analytical skills of analyzing and evaluating.*		
21-Online sessions may provide *enough time* for students to discuss and think about questions.		
22-Using Facebook Group, students *can memorize information* better since online discussions are accessible online any time anywhere.		
23-The possibility of posting *e-documents online* may increase students' understanding of the course concepts.		
24-The simultaneous accessibility of *websites* during the online session may help students clarifying ambiguous concepts (eg: vocabulary).		
25-Using grammar checker feature of Facebook may encourage students *to revise their writings* before posting them.		

All in all:
21-Will you be willing at any stage in your teaching span to integrate Facebook as a teaching tool? a-Yes ☐   b- No ☐
22-Explain...
23-Will you be willing at any stage in your teaching span to integrate any online tool into your teaching? a-Yes ☐   b- No ☐
24-Explain...
Section Five: Further Suggestion
25-Do you have any further suggestions?
....

Appendix III: Writing Composition Test (120 minutes/2hours)

Instruction: **Suppose you are doing a research about "web-based learning" and you have the following sources,** compose ***a formal, concise objective, meaningful, and well-structured essay*** of 15 lines in which you combine information from the three sources by ***summarizing the passages and shortening the quote***

Passage one : "Advantages of web-based learning on students' learning"

The study was conducted in the Department of Foreign Languages at Batna University. The main aim of the course is to help students improve their overall proficiency in the English language which will enable them to follow their departmental courses with ease. Out of 630 students enrolled in the system, six students were chosen. These students were selected through intensity sampling because they are expected to have more experience with the web-based instruction system.

Web-based learning support contributed to students" learning. The students recognized the contribution especially in terms of vocabulary learning. Moreover, web-based learning support contributed to students ' motivation. As they were using technology and multimedia**,** they liked the course more, they did not get bored of doing the same kind of activities and this provided higher level of motivation. Also, as they could easily recognize their success in doing the activities , they saw the activities as reinforcement to their learning. Finally, flexibility of learning was seen as a contribution. The students thought that the topics that they should study were presented on the web-page as a summary and they felt the convenience of time and place in addition to the variety of resources. **Source: Bahloul, A. (2004).Students' Insights and Experiences of Web-Based Learning Support ; The Case of Second Year Students of the University of Batna.**

About the author: Dr. Amel Bahloul has been an English instructor at the University of Batna since 1998. She is specialised in theoretical and applied linguistics.

Passage two: topic: "Using smartphones in teaching" (example one)

The world is moving forward and a lot of new technologies have been offered to people all around the world in order to compete and gain data and new knowledge faster than before. Nowadays, human beings are more familiar with technology which leads the new generation to choose and prefer to use their smart phones in every single matter and issue**.**

Therefore, in order to build and develop suitable reading programs or courses, it is such important parts for university EFL programs to expect and estimate their students" reading capability In addition; most universities around the world prefer online method of teaching where all the progress reports will be saved in new software application. The progress report can be accessed through mobile unit especially smart phone because it comes with special software and application where this characteristic offers better and easier way to download most of the applications exactly like what we have in laptop and personal computer. So, clearly this tool is better, practical and smart since

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mobile device is smaller, easy to carry, easy to keep and easy to sleek compared to laptop.

Source: Al-Momani, A., Hussin, S., & Hamat, A. (2015). An Investigation of Smartphone Reading Strategies Behaviours from the Views of Jordanian Students.

Quote: "Using Gloster as a teaching tool" (example two)

"The internet no longer simply allows learners to explore and discover their own learning pathways, but it allows learners to construct their own content and add to the online database of resources in the form of multimedia-based UGC (user generated content) built on the premise of sharing and socializing . One such application built on this premise is the free–for-use web-based interactive digital poster publishing tool Glogster (2008).As a free-for use web-based poster publishing platform audio, images, and video can all be imported into a Glogster 's glog page, or linked to or grabbed from a webcam feed, while text titles, stickers, and speech bubbles can be created on the glogster's glog page directly. Various effects such as frames, shadows, font size changes and color schemes can be implemented as well. Space on the Glogster webpage (glog) can be used freely, meaning items can be placed or replaced, rotated, overlaid, and resized. In addition, all content can be linked to other glogs or other web pages or content around the internet".

Source: Kent,D.B. (2010). Exploring the Perspectives and Potential of Incorporating Glogster in the University EFL Curriculum. Arab World English Journal, 1 (1), 130-170.

Appendix V: Scoring rubric

Sub-structures	0 point	1 point	2 points
Present simple	No use of present tense for the all the reporting verbs	Only some reporting verbs are in present	Using present simple adequately for all reporting verbs
Active voice	No active voice (0) for al signal phrases	Active voice is wrongly formulated OR some signal phrases are in active, others are in passive	All signal phrases are in active
Objective analysis of the quote	No objectivity (personal pronouns and subjective evaluation)		Completely objective (no personal pronouns and careful evaluation)
Neutral description of the passage	No objectivity if students uses personal pronouns and personal opinions)		Objective for no use of personal pronouns and personal opinions.
Formal reporting verbs	Informal (using weak/phrasal verbs)	Semi-formal (formal verbs are calculated : below 40 % = "0" score, 40 % - 60 % gets "1" score; exceeds 60 % = "2" score.	Formal (no use of weak/phrasal verbs)
Signal phrase model	Same signal phrase model	Changed the model only once	A good change of the use of signal phrase models
synonyms	No synonym is formal	Semi-formal (using the same procedure for 'formal reporting verbs')	All synonyms used are formal
Formal analysis of the quote	Informal !!!!!!!!!	Semi-formal	Formal
complex noun phrases	No use of complex noun	complex noun phrase not	The signal phrase includes complex noun
Avoiding unnecessary sentences	Extensive use of unnecessary sentences	rare use of unnecessary sentences	No use of unnecessary sentences
Simplifying structures	Not used at all	Not used efficiently (structures are not meaningful when changed OR rarely used)	Used efficiently
Avoid wordiness	Not used at all	in some cases used, in others not	Used efficiently (in a suitable manner)
Coherent quote with ellipsis	Not used coherently	in some cases used coherently in others not	Ellipsis used coherently
Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning	Re-ordering with no coherence	Some sentences are understood when linked together , others do not make sense	Re-ordering ideas with a coherent paraphrasing
Linking ideas with cohesive devices	no use of cohesive devices	where necessary some ideas are linked, others are not	Where necessary, all ideas are linked together
Quote followed by analysis	No analysis	there's an analysis but the analysis is not linked to the idea of the quote	Analysis perfectly covers for the idea of the quote
Extracting main ideas from the text	main ideas with details are mentioned	some main ideas are mentioned, others are not	All main ideas are mentioned
In-text citation	No in-text citation at all	Not always used OR there is an absence of an	Respect of in-text citation for each reference

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Appendix VI: Constructivism-based Blended Learning Genenral Lesson Plan

Constructivism/ BL tenets	Motivation Theories/ Learning Presences	Phases	Delivery mode	ICT tools	Time	Instructional activities	Online discussion questions	Bloom's taxonomy
F2F mode is a vital component								
Students' readiness	-SDT (relatedness) -Attribution theory	Phase1: Lecturing	F2F setting		15m	-Teacher asks questions to recall prior related learning.	Recall facts Q	remember
					1h	-Teacher presents new materials. -Teacher provides reading materials.		understand
					15m	-Teacher asks questions to assess students' understanding.	Comprehension checking Q	understand
Critical thinking/	-Cognitive presence -Teacher presence	Phase2: Activities	Synchronous virtual setting	Facebook Closed Group (FBG)	15m	Teacher poses a question to stimulate discussion and break the ice. Students start an informal socially-oriented discussion	Attention getting Q	
	-SDT (competence) -GOT (effort)				20m	-Teacher asks questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. -Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other. -Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.	Recall questions	remember
Active learning	-SDT (competence) -GOT (effort)				70m	-Depending on the number of activities, teacher posts a sentence/paragraph text on the group page and asks students to re-write it in a way to avoid plagiarism, mistakes in in-text citation, and apply formality, objectivity, concision and coherence while paraphrasing/ summarizing. -Students post their answers (sentences/paragraphs).	Higher level process Q/ Diagnosing Qs	Apply/ create
learner centeredness Social and Cognitive Construction	-SDT (self-regulation) -SDT (social presence)					Teacher encourage students to initiate a discussion: -Students answer self-assessment questions regarding their own drafts. -Students are asked to give their opinions and suggest recommendations on peers' texts and providing reasons for their suggestions. (peer-assessment) -Teacher reminds students of using chat to ask for any clarification -Teacher posts a summary of the discussion shows areas of agreement disagreement, and provides his feedback.		Analyse/ evaluate
Active learning	-Attribution theory -Teacher presence							
Self-paced learning	-SDT (self-regulation)		Asynchronous digital tools	-Emails -Uploaded E-documents	10m Time Independent	-Teacher reminds students to answer/ or check teacher's online feedback to their homework. -Teacher reminds students on checking emails for any announcements or answers or check/read Pdf files posted.		

Appendix VI: Example lesson plans 'sessions 5 and 6'

Topics	Lecturing Type	Progress	Instructional Activities	Constructivist-BL Tenets	The *added* Academic writing elements	Motivation tenets	Final learning objective
How to use SIGNAL PHRASES to introduce quotations: -what is a signal phrase. -Formal signal phrase modal. -Formal reporting verbs. -Active versus passive voice. -Using	Physical Lecturing Session (05)/ Week 05	introduction	-Teacher asks students recall questions about the topic of the previous physical lecture. -Teacher interacts with students and reminds (clarify any misunderstandings) that in quotations we need an in-text citation which can be introduced before the quote or at the end. -Teacher states that this lecture is to be about how to introduce borrowed information (quote, paraphrase, or a summary) by using "signal phrases".	-Learning is developmental -Synchronous communication		Raising Enthusiasm and S-T/T-S interaction	
		development	-Teacher starts with defining what a signal phrase is and what it "at least" contains (author' name + reporting verb). -Teacher explains its importance in relation to quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing in avoiding dropped information. -Teacher in this regard recommends using the signal phrase rather than the parenthetical citation to maintain the flow of ideas. -To write academically, signal phrases should be formal, objective, and concise. **1-Formality:** -It must contain a structure that is beyond the subject+ verb structure to avoid monotony. To vary the structure of signal phrases, students are provided with a list of different models of signal phrases. This includes changing structure and language style to create a more formal academic language. Examples of formal expressions: "In the words of", "in the author's view", "with reference to", "author states that", "as stated by", "according to". However, the teacher emphasizes using models that include reporting verbs because they are more informative of the authors' stance (see ...). -Using Formal reporting verbs that are suitable for the context of the information borrowed and the author's stance toward the information cited or an information previously mentioned. An example is to avoid using the general verb "to say" and use "to argue" or "denies" instead. The use of "argue" and "deny" depend also on the author stance whether he is defending or denying a certain point of view. -A list of formal reporting verbs with their examples is handed and explained to students. -Students should use single word verbs than phrasal verbs (ex: talk about VS discuss). -While discussing reporting verbs and one-word verbs, teacher asks students to provide examples of their own in which they compare between different reporting verbs or between synonymous single-word verb and phrasal verbs. Teacher write examples on the board and appoint students to negotiate together on the suitable reporting verbs. **2-Objectivity:**		Coherence / Formality / Formality / Objectivity	S-T/S-S Interaction	Students will be able to introduce a borrowed information using a language that is formal, objective, concise, and coherent. (Week 5 + Week 6)

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		Stage	Procedure		Objectivity / Concision / Coherence	T-S/S-T/ S-S Interaction

- Using the present simple tense for the reporting verb unless the date in which the quote is stated is provided (using MLA style). It stresses reliability of sources.
- Stressing the active voice because what is stressed while borrowing information is the author when credibility and reliability of sources is ensured. Not to say "it is stated that…" but "author states that".
  3-Concision:
- In order to reinforce the reliability of sources used, the author's credential can be mentioned. In order to be concise, teacher teaches students how to use complex noun phrases to condense information about the author. Author's credentials are added not in a separate phrase or sentence that goes between commas, but before the subject. Introducing a sentence between two commas means that information is additional and can be omitted. (teacher reminds students of non-defining relative clause taught in the module of Grammar).
Ex: to say "The president of the human cloning foundation and a supporter of cloning George Smith argues that.", not "George Smith, who is a supporter of cloning and the President of the Human Cloning Foundation, argues that.". The second makes the credentials optional rather than being important for source credibility (a non-defining relative clause).
- In order to maintain a better coherence and flow of ideas, teacher stresses the importance to relate the borrowed information to the previously mentioned ideas in a full sentence. There are two suggested ways:
1-adding a complete or a partial sentence followed by colon or comma
2-adding a statement that ends with "that"
- Teacher writes examples on the board with both strategies where context is adequately mentioned and asks students to extract the phrase/sentence that carries the context. He asks students to try to change the signal phrase using their own structure when peers can provide their feedback.

present tense. -Complex noun phrases for author's credentials (concision) -Avoid dropping information by adding context. (Week 5 + Week 6)

Objectivity — Concision — Coherence

closure
- Teacher asks question to check students' understandings and allows students to ask any questions. He points other students to answer their peer's questions.
- He provides students PDF files about topics covered to be read at home as further exploration.

-Socialization
-Self-paced learning.

S-T/S-S Interaction Self-regulation

Online Activities Session (06)/ Week 06

introduction
- Teacher posts a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group or in chat to individual learners.
- He poses an attention-getting question such as "how many of you know play the Facebook vocabulary game "Wordox"?" to get students involved.

-students' preparedness

Raising comfort/self-efficacy

development
- Teacher posts questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. An example is "based on the previous lecture, who can define the signal phrase, state when to use it, and what does it consist of? (you can comment on each other answers in case they considered their answers are incorrect)

-Learning is developmental
-Develop social

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Content		Formality	Category
-By reminding students that they can comment on each other answers, teacher encourages spontaneous discussion. -Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other.	-Learning is developmental		Autonomy/ Social presence
-Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.	-Develop social and critical thinking skills/ Learner centeredness		Teacher presence
Exercise 1: **Re-write the following borrowed ideas by correcting any mistakes in SIGNAL PHRASES. Try to vary the model of signal phrases. (pay attention to I.o remind you, in signal phrases (1) author's credentials, (2) the reporting verb tense, and (3) the voice used.**		**Formality/ objectivity/ concision**	
-Teacher posts each time a borrowed idea including a signal phrase and asks students to correct its mistakes. -For each statement, teacher selects one answer (wrong answer) and asks the students who answered it self-assessment questions. Then he asks other students to comment on his answer using peer-assessment questions.			**Academic Support**
-Teacher does not state what the mistake is (verb tense, voice, credentials); he lets students discover what the mistake and correct it accordingly.	-Developing social and cognitive constructions/ Experiential learning/learner centeredness/ active learning		**Mastery goals: effort**
-Teacher motivates students who are not participating by privately chatting with them.			**Comfort/ self-efficacy**
-For each statement, teacher monitors discussion, and corrects students' misunderstandings when needed, and only at the end of the discussion he provides the final feedback (answer). -Teacher reminds students to use private chat with the teacher in case they have any problems (pedagogical, digital, or personal).			**Teacher presence**
Exercise02: **Fill in the blanks in each of the following signal phrases with a suitable reporting verb. Make sure it is formal and explain your choice.**		**Formality**	**Academic/ technical support**
-The teacher posts each time a borrowed information with a signal phrase where a reporting verb is missing.			
-He reminds students of checking the PDF of reporting verbs uploaded on the Group page. He also posts website links of vocabulary and asks students to share any useful vocabulary-defining websites to search for any ambiguous verbs.	Computer-generated		**Academic support/self**

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Phase	Procedure	Objectives	Coherence	Presence/Support
	-Students are asked to suggest reporting verbs. While answering through comments, the teacher encourages learners to engage in a constructive discussion when they provide corrections or suggestions on their peers' answers. After the discussion is well set, the teacher provides this final feedback. **Exercise03:** Reminder: In addition to using signal phrases, information should be put in CONTEXT to be related to previous ideas. -The following quotes are dropped. Rewrite them in a way that you add context in a signal phrase. You can infer the context from information mentioned between parentheses or from the quote itself (provide suggestions to peers whenever you think their answer is incorrect) -Teacher reminds students of consulting websites for checking the meaning of ambiguous terms. -Teacher each time provides *a dropped quote* with the context that was mentioned previously either cited between parentheses or before the quote. He asks students to link the quote to the context. -Peer and teacher assessment can include the tense and choice of the reporting verb, the voice used, and formal and objective style. -At the end of the discussion, teacher provides the answer. -Students are invited to ask for explanation if needed.	Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing. -developing social and cognitive constructions/ experiential learning active learning	Coherence using context/ Formality/ objectivity	presence/ support **Teacher presence** **Academic support** **Social and cognitive presence**
closure	-Teacher posts the names of students who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a modal to the rest of the group members. -Teacher reminds students to check the correction files of the quotation homework posted in the Facebook Group. -He reminds students to consult the teacher E-mail for any announcements or to address any question.	Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing. -developing social and cognitive constructions/ experiential learning Self-paced learning/ asynchronous communication		**Self-efficacy** **Self-regulation**

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