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Students' Achievement and Attitudes Toward Using Traditional Learning, Blended Learning, and Virtual Classes Learning in Teaching and Learning at the University Level

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Abstract
This study aims to investigate the effects of the traditional learning, blended learning and virtual classes learning on university students' achievement and attitudes. 34 male students studying at the English Language Program, Qassim University were divided randomly into three groups, (blended learning, traditional learning, or virtual classes learning). Results indicate that there are significant differences among the instructional approaches in the achievement test scores in favor of blended learning. In addition, the results show significant differences in students' attitudes in favor of blended learning.

Key words: Blended learning; Traditional learning; Virtual classes learning; Saudi students' achievement; Attitudes; E-learning

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INTRODUCTION
Information and communication technology (ICT) such as computers, internet, multimedia, virtual classrooms, smart classrooms and so on has been used widely in different fields. In education, this technology has been introduced to the field in recent years. E-learning is one of these technologies which has been used in teaching and learning situations (Pekarova & Bitljanova, 2011; Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 1994; Bates, 1995; Baylor & Ritchie, 2002; Jhosta, 2005; Abrami Bernard, Borokhoski, Tamin, Surkes, & Zhang, 2006; Chen & Jones, 2007; Stiffler, 2008).

The idea of using ICT in language teaching has attracted more language teachers to have an interactive classroom environment (Chou, 2010). Since there is a tendency in using e-learning in teaching/learning environment, it is interesting to see whether there is a basis for the shift from traditional methods to more technological oriented approaches for better teaching/learning environment.

CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM
Buraydah Community College (BCC) at Qassim University (QU) introduced e-learning in the Fall 2009 and virtual classes in the Fall 2011 as a part of its instructional plan for better teaching and learning. BCC has adopted the use of Jusur Management System. It is introduced by the National Center for E-learning and Distance Learning (elc), an affiliate of Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia. Goal1 of (elc) is "to spread e-learning applications and solutions in all higher education institutions in accordance with the best quality standards." BCC implemented e-learning teaching/learning environment at the college to achieve an academic improvement of teaching and learning means, styles, and methods.

Equipments such as computers, smart boards, projectors have been provided in all classrooms in BCC. In addition faculty, staff members, and students have been trained and familiarized with the new e-learning environment and the use of Jusur System. They were requested to sign up in the (elc) web page in order to use the facility. Accordingly, during the first semester e-learning has been used by the majority of BCC faculty members. However, enthusiasm among motivated administrators and educators to use e-learning college-

wise is not enough to prove its significance or to give it priority over any other learning approach(es). Therefore, the present researcher feels there is a need for research to fill this gab through investigating the effects of using traditional learning, blended learning and virtual classes learning on the teaching effectiveness of the listening skill subject as one of the English Program's courses at BCC. That skill was chosen as Rost (2002) and VandergriftIt (1999) claim that listening comprehension has an important role in facilitating successful language learning. Moreover, Wilson (2003) suggests that learning listening is the most difficult skill for students studying English which requires an appropriate use of teaching approaches, skills and strategies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the literature review, previous studies and the research problem, this research endeavors to answer the following questions:

1. What are the differences among TL, BL and VCL approaches with respect to the English Program students' achievement in a listening course?
2. What are the students' attitudes toward using these three different approaches in teaching and learning at the university level?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Accordingly, the following two hypotheses can be introduced:

1. There is no significant difference in the students' achievement in favor of any approach over the other two.
2. There is no significant difference in using any approach among the students' attitudes in favor of one approach over the other two.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is targeted to explore comparatively the effects of traditional learning (TL), blended learning (BL) and virtual classes learning (VCL) on the university students' achievement of an English listening course at BCC, QU. It also aims to measures the students' attitudes toward using these three approaches.

LITERATURE REVIEW

E-learning

Stockley (2003, p. 1) suggests that e-learning is "the delivery of a learning, training or education program by electronic means. E-learning involves the use of a computer or electronic device (e.g. a mobile phone) in some way to provide training, educational or learning material." This is consistent with Sulcic and Lesjak (2007) as they claim that e-learning is using any electronic media or device such as computer programs, and internet.

E-learning (also written elearning, eLearning) is a newer concept and broader term used now for all activities previously covered by the term "computer based training", therefore, e-learning has replaced computer based training which has been used for many years (Stockley, 2003). Educators started to think of utilizing the new trend as a replacement of traditional learning (Saengsook, 2006). Thus, related concepts such as distance learning, online learning, blended learning, virtual classes, synchronous and an asynchronous learning have came out in the education field as pedagogical techniques.

Although this might seem a better chance for education improvement, it may present some major obstacles in terms of application. This application problem can be seen among learners, teachers, and instructional designers' technological literacy and how to utilize the new technology in learning/teaching advancement effectively.

Learners' individual differences such as their learning characteristics and learning styles must not be neglected since individual's characteristics and learning styles in teaching/learning are a major factor in effective teaching (Caspo & Hayen, 2006; Sarasin, 1999). Then we can say that e-learning environment is thought to provide a better chance for learners to interact with the instructional content, with their teacher and among themselves for the broader sense of processing more knowledge.

Blended learning has the benefits of cost reductions and learning outcome (Brown, 2003; Singh & Reed, 2001). Morgan (2002) claims that a person who uses blended learning can benefit from online and face-to-face environments. While "traditional learning is classroom-based or practical-meaning the student can see their teacher and classmates" (Thomas, 2010, p. 2), blended learning environment integrates the advantages of e-learning method with some advantageous aspects of traditional method, such as face-to-face interaction. Some studies found that blended learning can improve learning/teaching (Brown, 2003; Graham, 2005; Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003).

It is possible that blended learning (also called hybrid learning) which is a mixture of traditional learning and e-learning can improve learning (Singh & Reed, 2001). Nagel (2009) has found that blended learning is more effective than traditional learning. As a result, blended learning according to literature is more effective and efficient in delivering instruction to the target learners. Learners' interest and motivation can increase in blended learning (Burgon & Williams, 2003).

Stockley (2003) argues that a significant advantage of a blended program is the ability to cater for individual needs. An individual could receive additional information through extra e-learning programs whilst still attending

classroom with other students. AL-Jarf (2006) suggests that online learning facilitates a relaxed environment for the students, while Barenfanger, (2005) claims that it can help for an autonomous learning. Fallon (2011) found that although students benefited from virtual classroom on-line learning, they felt that it was a new environment.

Attitude

Language attitudes are "metacognitive knowledge" which includes general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing language learning and about the nature of language learning and teaching (Victori & Lockhart, 1995). Similarly, Dittmar (1976) claims that attitude is a cognitive component which refers to an individual's belief structure. This agrees with Sarnoff (1970), who suggests that "attitude" deals with a disposition to react favorably or unfavorably to a class of objects (see also Eagly & Chaiken, 1989; Long & Russell, 1999).

Previous Studies

Grandzol (2004) studied the students' attitudes towards blended learning and traditional learning. The results indicated that there were no significant differences. This is supported by the findings of Chen and Jones (2007) and Vamosi Pierce, and Slotkin (2004). Gomez, Rico, and Hernandez (2007) investigated the effects of instructional method in learning English for specific purposes. They found that although students benefited more from blended learning but there was no significant difference between blended learning and traditional learning achievement test final marks. Results from Lukman and Krajnc's (2012) study indicated that blended learning was more appropriate to them than traditional learning. Akkoyunlu and Soylu (2008) found similar results with their Turkish university students.

In a study by Tanveer (2011) with Omani students to explore the students' attitudes towards integrating e-learning in classroom language teaching, he found that the majority of students preferred blended learning and thought that teachers who use e-learning in the classroom were better teachers. Similarly, Adas and Abu Shmais (2011) conducted a study on Palestinian university students to find out their perceptions towards blended learning environment. The results show that the majority of learners expressed their positive attitudes towards blended learning but no significant difference was mentioned. In the same vein, Hirata and Hirata (2008) wanted to know Japanese students' attitudes towards hybrid learning. They found that students thought that blended learning was more effective. However, few students preferred traditional learning.

In another study, Držid, Seljan, Džigunovid, and Lasid-Lazid (2012) conducted a study on a university students in Zagreb learning English for special purposes. Their main goal was to find out whether there would be an effect on the students' language learning process. The results show that although students' communication with their teachers was better in traditional learning, the students who were taught with blended learning achieved better marks than those of traditional learning but with no significant difference.

Al-Saai, Al-Kaabi, and Al-Muftah (2011) conducted a study on 43 Qatari university female students' achievement tests and their attitudes towards blended learning and traditional learning. Although results showed no significant difference in the students' achievement tests scores, there was significant difference in their attitudes towards the teaching approach in favor of blended learning. Similarly, Melton, Graf, and Chopak-Foss (2009) found that students preferred the delivery of courses through blended learning more than traditional learning.

Delimitations

The following delimitations may be taken into consideration:

1. Participants of the study are only male students.
2. The period of teaching the students is only two weeks.
3. Number of students is probably low (i.e. only 34).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study aims at investigating the effect of the learning approaches (i.e. blended learning, traditional learning, and virtual classes learning) on students' achievement of the listening course of the English language and their attitudes towards these approaches.

METHOD

Participants

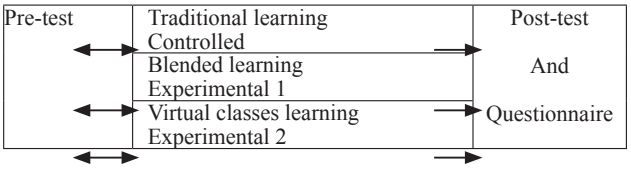
The study participants were 37 first level students who were studying a listening course at the English Language Program at Buraydah Community College, Qassim University. The sample was randomly divided into three study groups. All groups were assigned to be treated differently as a control group (traditional learning; TL), experimental group one (blended learning; BL), and experimental group two (virtual classes learning; VCL). All students were informed that they would be participating in this experimental study and they have the right not to participate if they wish. All students agreed to participate in the study.

Experimental Design

This research is considered to be an experimental field study in which three independent variables were examined to find out if they have an effect on the two dependent variables. The independent variables in this

study were the learning approaches (i.e. BL, TL, VCL). Two dependent variables were focused on in this study (i.e. students' achievement and attitudes). The study adopted the pretest–posttest control group design. The researcher has followed the experimental design as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Study Experimental Design



Experimental Groups

Control Group (Traditional Learning)

The students of this group were 12. Those students were in a traditional classroom setting, which is a face-to-face session. The students were scheduled to meet with their instructor three times a week.

Instructional materials used in TL were the textbook (Interactions 1, Listening and Speaking), a normal whiteboard, and marker.

Teaching procedure

The students in this type of setting were taught orally and visually by listening, seeing and interacting with the instructor over the content material presented by the instructor in person using only normal whiteboard.

Experimental Group One (Blended Learning)

The students of this group were 9 meeting with their instructor three times a week. They were instructed through a blended learning approach in which they have to meet face-to-face with the instructor and were taught orally and visually interacting with the instructor over the content material presented by the instructor.

A textbook called (Interactions 1, Listening and Speaking), a smart board with its marker, an overhead projector, audio-visual aids (maps, charts, listening material, drawings and photographs of different places related to the topic), and PowerPoint slides and assignments were the instructional materials used in BL.

Teaching procedure

With blended learning, the teacher used online tools and resources as part of the daily classroom instruction. The students were engaged in online activities, and had a chance to demonstrate their knowledge.

Instructional materials used in classroom are the textbook, marker board (to write the important words, figures and maps), audio-visual aids (the students were shown some pictures, charts, models and maps related to the topic), computer, internet and overhead projector. Students were asked to write the important information in their notebooks.

The internet provides numerous opportunities for English teachers to teach English. During blended teaching learning the teacher motivated students to be taught via Skype. Students were emailed in advance the material to be used, were asked to listen via Skype and do some activities like question-answers, listening for stressed words and listening for reduced and unreduced pronunciation. Unlike traditional teaching, using Skype to teach English gives teachers the freedom to set their own schedules and curriculum.

Experimental Group Two (Virtual Classroom Learning)

The students of this group were 13 meeting with their instructor three times a week. They were instructed online at a fixed time agreed on before between the instructor and the students through a "virtual classroom" using the internet. So, the students of this group are not allowed to meet face-to-face with the instructor.

Instructional materials used in VCL were audio-visual materials consisting of 10 videos, including movie clips, interactive multimedia activities via Skype, PowerPoint slides, written text, read loud material, and communication tools (chat rooms, forums).

Teaching procedure

Collaboration was emphasized on during delivering instructional materials, so students' interaction environment was created to maximize participation and comprehension. All of the session were done at the evening. The teacher taught all students via Skype. Students felt the lessons were pleasant and useful as they were happy and interested to participate in the conversation on Skype. During the two weeks of teaching and learning, students were free to come online on Skype, as all of them were motivated to speak. Some of them emailed their assignments to the teacher in advance and he later discussed them over Skype in the online session. Although the teacher felt that the sound quality on Skype was not always great but overall it was so nice to teach students via Skype.

The activities that the students used were listening to native speakers, question-answers, exploring main ideas, listening for stressed words, listening for reduced and unreduced pronunciation, and listening for specific information. They were provided electronic worksheets and the teacher would give them his feedback immediately. Students were given home assignments which were uploaded on JASUR learning system.

Procedures

The experiment went through the following stages:

Preparation for experiment

The researcher coordinated with the Students' Affaires of BCC to have two classrooms for the TL and BL groups, while he coordinated with the E-learning Unit Supervisor of BCC to sign up the VCL group to the Jusur System so they could have their sessions with their teacher. The students' teacher negotiated with his VCL students the suitable time for him and the students of this group, then time of the sessions was allocated. Students of VCL then

were trained for a period of three hours by the staff of the E-learning Unit at BCC in using Jusur System and how to use virtual classes.

Pilot study

The study design included a pilot study on a random sample of ten students from the same level, but from a different college who should not be included in the main study. The reasons behind that were to see what problems or obstacles that may face the researcher or the students, to be assured of the good condition of the devices that would be used in the main experiment, and to know if there were any internal or irrelevant variables that might affect the results so these variables would be eliminated. Since the study sample members were very small in number, all of them were included in the main experiment which obliged the researcher to have the pilot study sample from another college. The classrooms and devices were checked and then the suitable ones were chosen.

Main experiment

The students of sample of the study were 37 students at the first level of the English Program at BCC who were divided randomly into three groups. These groups were the controlled group which was taught by the traditional learning approach, experimental group 1 which was taught by the blended learning approach, and experimental group 2 which was taught by the virtual classes learning approach (see Table 2).

Table 2
Distribution of Students on Groups

Group	Teaching approach	Number of students
Controlled	Traditional learning	12
Experiment 1	Blended learning	12
Experiment 2	Virtual classes learning	13
Total		37

Three students of experiment group 1 were excluded because one student did not attend the pre-test while the other two students did not attend the post-test.

Research Tools

Two instruments which were the achievement test, and an attitudes scale were developed. In order to insure the instruments' reliability and validity, each one of them had gone through different stages as follows:

Achievement pre and post tests

A forty-six multiple choice item achievement test was taken from the teacher's book of the listening course. Based on the reviewers' feedback and comments, the researcher had to evaluate and fix and eliminate some items. So, as a final version, the researcher ended up with a forty item achievement test. Students were asked to take an achievement pre-test in order to see the students' level of knowledge of the content that would be taught to them. All students in these approaches had to take the achievement pre-test before receiving chapter five content of the course. Marks were analyzed to find out the level of the students' knowledge background.

Table 3
Pre-test Learning Background Level of All Students

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	342.269	2	171.134	.384	.685
Within Groups	12924.631	29	445.677		
Total	13266.900	31			

The results as shown in Table 3 indicate that there was no significant difference of the means of all groups was found. This is an indication that all students were similar in terms of learning background before conducting the experiment.

After two weeks of teaching a post achievement test was carried out which was the same pre-test to measure the students level of knowledge. There was an alternative of considering changing this test to void learning transfer, but there was the danger of level difficulty differences between the two tests.

The attitude scale

The scale was designed to measure the students attitudes towards each learning approach in teaching listening. The scale has four dimensions; importance of the learning approach in teaching listening, the learning approach efficiency in learning and teaching, students' perceptions of the learning approach, the learning approach ability in increasing students' learning motivation.

Based on the review of the literature, the researcher has designed and developed a forty-five item attitudes questionnaire scale for each group. Likert scale of five (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, strongly disagree) was used in measuring the students' attitudes by ticking (√) the box they feel appropriate against each statement.

The questionnaires (one copy for each approach) then were given to a jury of professionals (two in the field of Information Technology, two in the field of Applied Linguists, and two in the field of language teaching) to be reviewed and evaluated for internal validity. The professionals commented on some of the scale's items (e.g. some items to be re-written or eliminated, and reduced). Accordingly, the researcher modified the questionnaires to end up with a twenty-five item attitude scale for each questionnaire.

A reliability analysis of Cronbach's Alpha was done for each variable's questionnaire (i.e. blended learning, traditional learning, and virtual classes learning). The following tables show that all of the items of the three questionnaires were reliable as they all have a high alpha factor.

Table 4

Reliability Statistics of Blended Learning Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.755	25

Table 5
Reliability Statistics of Traditional Learning Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.895	25

Table 6
Reliability Statistics of Virtual Classes Learning Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.923	25

Conducting the experiment

After the pre achievement test, each group was taught for two weeks by the same teacher using the same content but with different learning approaches. Instructions to the teacher were to explain to each group the nature of the learning approach, but without giving the students any indication or being bias to any learning approach.

Statistical procedures

All data obtained from the pre and post tests, and the attitudes scale were entered in SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Sciences) for analysis which will be discussed in the results section.

RESULTS

Achievement Tests

Tables 7 and 8 show the means and standard deviations of the pre and post achievement tests for the three approaches. The tables show that there were a positive effect from each approach on the students' achievement as all the means of the post-test have greater values than the means of the pre-test. It can be noticed that the values of the means of the pre-test for all approaches are convergent and while they are in the post-test convergent for the TL and BL approaches it is not so for VCL approach.

Table 7
Pre Achievement Test Means

Approach	N	Mean	S. D.	Std. Error	Min	Max
TL	12	53.3333	21.50809	6.20885	16.67	83.33
BL	9	45.9267	22.77939	7.59313	23.33	86.67
VCL	13	47.2727	19.19596	5.78780	16.67	73.33
Total	34	49.1669	20.68730	3.65703	16.67	86.67

Table 8
Post Achievement Test Means

Approach	N	Mean	S. D.	Std. Error	Min	Max
TL	12	83.3333	16.99673	5.12471	53.33	96.67
BL	9	80.0000	12.84832	4.54257	66.67	100.00
VCL	13	51.2121	20.45443	6.16724	23.33	86.67
Total	34	70.6667	22.63148	4.13192	23.33	100.00

Table 9 shows that there is a significant difference of the students' achievement of the means of the three approaches at (0.05). This is because of the different approach of learning.

Table 9
A Summary of the Achievement Test Differences

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6625.051	2	3312.525	10.870	.000
Within Groups	8228.283	27	304.751		
Total	14853.333	29			

Table 10 shows which group has gained more knowledge. The table indicates that there is a significant difference for all approaches as all values are less than 0.05.

Table 10

Most Effective Approach on Students' Achievement

Groups (I)	Groups (J)	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Most effective
Traditional	Blended	-.24589-*	.10373	.019	BL
	Virtual Classroom	.23796*	.10373	.024	
Blended	Traditional	.24589*	.10373	.019	BL
	Virtual Classroom	.48385*	.10373	.000	
Virtual Classroom	Traditional	-.23796-*	.10373	.024	Both TL and BL
	Blended	-.48385-*	.10373	.000	

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The table shows that there is a significant difference for the means of the students' scores. This means that the blended learning approach is the most suitable one for the students compared with the other two, then the traditional learning approach and lastly it is the virtual classes learning approach.

Attitudes Scale

Table 11 shows the differences among the students' attitudes towards the four dimensions.

Table 11
Students' Attitudes Towards the Four Dimensions

Dimensions	Source of dif.	Sum of squares	Mean square	F	Sig
Importance	Between Groups	0.960	0.480	5.017	*
	Within Groups	1.149	0.096		
	Total	2.109			
Efficiency	Between Groups	2.323	1.162	5.998	*
	Within Groups	2.905	0.194		
	Total	5.229			
Attitudes	Between Groups	1.185	0.593	6.345	*
	Within Group	0.841	0.93		
	Total	2.026			
Ability	Between Groups	0.0801	0.400	3.500	*
	Within Groups	3.089	0.114		
	Total	3.889			

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 12 shows which group has more positive attitude to which approach.

Table 12
Students' Most Preferred Approach

Dimensions	Groups	Differences among the three groups			Preference
		TL	BL	VCL	
Importance	TL	-	-.60404*	-	BL
	BL	.60404*	-	-	
	VCL	-	-	-	
Efficiency	TL	-	-.85605*	-	BL
	BL	.85605*	-	-	
	VCL	-	-	-	
Attitudes	TL	-	-.76768*	-	BL
	BL	.76768*	-	-	
	VCL	-	-	-	
Ability	TL	-	-35565*	-.33670*	Both BL and VCL
	BL	.35565*	-	-	
	VCL	.33670*	-	-	

Table 12 shows there is a significant difference in the first, second, and third dimensions in favor of the blended learning approach over the other two approaches, while it is in favor of both the blended learning and virtual classes learning approaches. This indicates that students prefer the blended learning approach as their first and most useful one for them in the learning mode. It also shows that students do not prefer the traditional learning approach.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research will be discussed in light of the results, related literature and previous studies considering the research questions and hypotheses. The first research question states, "What are the differences among traditional learning, blended learning and virtual classes learning approaches with respect to the English Program students' achievement in a listening course?" The results as shown in Tables 9 and 10 indicate that there is a significant difference among the three approaches in the achievement gain scores in favor of BL. This result disagrees with the first hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the students' achievement in favor of any approach over the other two". We can see that the blended learning group achieved better than the traditional learning group and virtual classes learning group. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

The result may be attributed to the students' motivation and willingness of using blended learning which is reflected in the attitude scale (see Tables 11 and 12). This is consistent with some studies such as Alloyunlu and Soylu (2008); Držid *et al.* (2012); Hirata and Hirata (2008); Lukman and Krajnc (2012); Melton, *et al.* (2009); Ponzurick, France, and Logar (2000); and Terry, Owens, and Macy (2001) who concluded that students preferred blended learning over traditional learning. However, the result is inconsistent with the results of Al-Saai *et al.* (2011); Gomez *et al.* (2007); Iverson, *et al.* (2005); Gagne and Shepherd (2001); Grandzol (2004); Vamosi *et al.* (2004); and Chen and Jones (2007) who found that there was no significant difference in the students' results in favor of blended learning.

The research second question illustrates "What are the students' attitudes towards using these different approaches in teaching and learning at the university level?" looking at the results in Tables 11 and 12 we can see that there is a significant difference in the students' attitudes in favor of the blended learning approach. Therefore, the second hypothesis "There is no significant difference in using any approach among the students' attitudes in favor of one approach over the other two" is refuted. In other words, the attitudes of BL students are more positive toward using BL approach than the other two approaches' students. This agrees with Adas and Abu Shmais (2011); Al-Saai *et al.* (2011); Hirata and Hirata (2008); Sauers and Walker (2004); and Tanveer (2011) who found that students favored blended learning. However, in the fourth dimension of the attitude scale which is "The learning approach ability in increasing students' learning motivation", VCL students are more positive than TL students which agrees with (Felix, 1997). Comparing this preference of VCL students with the achievement test, we notice a contradiction. If we refer to Table 10, it can be seen that the significant difference is for TL approach over VCL approach while in Table 12 there is a significant difference in favor of VCL over TL in the fourth dimension. Such a result might be due to the fact that the students prefer using VCL approach since it has the computer and internet interaction but the problem that they might face is the skills of using it. They did not get enough training as the duration of teaching was only two weeks. This is supported by the finding of Tanveer (2011) and Vamosi *et al.* (2004) as students need more training to use virtual classroom learning effectively (see also Falloon, 2011).

In this regard, it can be noted that the e-learning environment whether it is blended learning or virtual is preferred by students since they both have

more interactive learning environment between students and instructor, students themselves, and students and course content. From the students' reactions to some statements of the attitude scale the students feel that these types of environment created by BL and VCL give them a better chance for involvement. This would provide a social context that may help students in their learning environment.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigated the students' learning outcome from traditional learning, blended learning and virtual classes learning approaches and attitudes towards these approaches. The results showed significant differences in the achievement test scores in favor of blended learning. In addition, the results indicated that there is a significant difference in the students' attitudes in favor of blended learning over the other two approaches. These results imply some suggestions to language teachers and instructional designers in using different teaching approaches as students may prefer one over the other. Poor training or knowledge about an approach can be a disadvantage to students although they may prefer that approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this study findings, the following recommendations are presented:

1. More studies need to be carried out in the future dealing with the different approaches of teaching/learning utilizing e-learning environments with different English courses.
2. Longer teaching period should be taken into consideration when studying the effect of using e-learning approaches so students can get used to and understand their environments.
3. Further studies on female university students and different study levels are suggested to be conducted in the future.

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