

## An Investigation into Students' Views on Blended Learning at the English Language Institute in King Abdulaziz University

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### Abstract

Advances in the Internet and online learning technologies are having a tremendous impact on educational systems. Thus, educational systems are combining Internet and digital technologies with traditional classrooms in what is known as blended learning. An established definition of blended learning is combining traditional, face-to-face (f2f) teaching with web-based online technologies; the purpose of blended learning is to provide more benefits over using one single learning delivery medium. In line with an international trend towards blended learning, the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia has started blending traditional, f2f classrooms with the online learning platform (Blackboard). This study aims at finding out the students' views on the advantages and challenges that face the implementation of blended learning at the ELI. This study is based on a mixed-methods exploratory sequential design as it starts with a qualitative interview study and is followed-up with a questionnaire survey (QUAL  $\Rightarrow$  quan). The study concludes that blended learning can enhance the EFL learning experience at the ELI as it combines the advantages of both in-class instruction and online learning. However, certain challenges need to be addressed to improve the effectiveness of the blended learning experience. The study ends with recommendations that can enhance the blended learning experience at the ELI.

**Keywords:** EFL, blended learning, Blackboard, face-to-face (f2f) teaching, online learning, Saudi context

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