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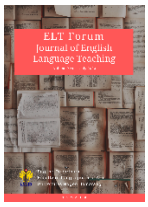

Integrating synchronous and asynchronous sessions in a blended writing course: Indonesian students' perspectives

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Abstract

In a blended writing course, synchronous and asynchronous sessions can be utilized by instructors to support students' writing activities. Although several studies have discussed the context of blended learning (BL) in EFL or ESL context, few have specifically explored students' perceptions of the combination of synchronous and asynchronous sessions in writing instruction. Guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), this study was conducted using a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews with five students, complemented by digital record observation to enhance data triangulation, with thematic analysis undertaken to identify key findings. The results revealed that combining synchronous and asynchronous sessions in writing assignments can increase student engagement. These two types of sessions complement each other; for example, synchronous sessions allow immediate feedback that asynchronous sessions cannot provide. The recommendations from this study provide implications for developing learning strategies that integrate synchronous and asynchronous sessions in the context of writing instruction in higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of technology has demonstrated an enormous impact on the field of education, particularly in addressing the demand for interactive learning through online and blended courses. Today's generation is more interested and motivated to engage in online classes made possible by innovative digital platforms (Haleem et al., 2022; Rojabi et al., 2023; Serrano et al., 2019). Thus, educational institutions, particularly instructors, should incorporate technology to create engaging learning experiences and encourage engagement among instructors and learners. Collaboration tools such as Google Docs (Hsu, 2020; Kessler et al., 2012) and videoconferencing such as Zoom (Cheung, 2021b; Rojabi & Femilia, 2023) are steadily used to support learning process in blended as well as online settings. This cost-effective collaboration tool enables instructors to efficiently provide learning content, facilitate communication, and encourage collaboration.

With the rapid advancement of technology worldwide, new approaches for instruction have emerged as alternatives to traditional methods. Blended learning (BL) has been recognized as a promising approach for creating a more engaging and interactive classroom environment (Chaeruman et al., 2018; Hewett et al., 2019; Islam et al., 2022; Rojabi et al., 2024). BL is defined as a combination of online learning and face-to-face teaching methods (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004), with a focus on pedagogical approaches that incorporate multiple media (Wright, 2017).

In BL, writing instruction can combine synchronous and asynchronous sessions to create a more comprehensive learning experience. Synchronous sessions, mediated by Zoom, enable real-time interaction between instructors and students, facilitating interactive discussions and providing immediate feedback (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Rojabi, et al., 2022). Asynchronous sessions, facilitated by Google Docs, encourage students to access writing and collaborate conveniently (Abrams, 2016; Kessler et al., 2012). The success of BL heavily depends on how teachers use the platform based on the characteristics and needs of their students. Writing is a complex skill that requires continuous practice, feedback, and interaction. In traditional classrooms, students frequently struggle to revise and reflect on their writing due to time constraints. BL, which integrates synchronous and asynchronous sessions, offers students more flexibility to work on writing assignments outside of class. Synchronous sessions provide immediate feedback, whereas asynchronous sessions allow for self-paced revision and collaboration. As a result, incorporating BL into writing instruction is critical to promoting deeper and more sustained development of students' writing skills. Combining combination of these two types of sessions also enables instructors to leverage the strengths of each platform, resulting in a more diverse and in-depth learning experience.

Several investigations have demonstrated the positive implications of digital applications in online or BL. Some of the fundamental benefits include educational value and cost-effectiveness, which can reduce college costs for anyone with an internet connection (Hussein et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2019). Online learning also allows for more flexible educational experiences since it offers internet access to anyone, at any time, and from any location (Dhawan, 2020; Singh & Thurman, 2019). However, there are some challenges in the online learning environment, such as accessible and technological barriers. Learners frequently experience challenges such as a low level of self-discipline and inadequate educational resources (Bao, 2020). Self-regulation and digital literacy are also significant issues to consider (Rasheed et al., 2020).

There is a significant relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, that is mediated by students' attitudes toward online instruction, allowing them to optimize their learning experience. Individual attitudes towards technology in education have a significant impact on online learning success, shaping how students interact with digital platforms (García Botero et al., 2018; Kemp et al., 2019). Students' attitudes towards technology contribute to the adoption of digital platforms for language learning In the context of BL, where students interact with technology using platforms such as Google Docs (Alkhateeb, 2020) and Zoom (Bailey et al., 2022), positive attitudes toward technology use can increase student engagement and motivation in writing instruction. In other words, students with a positive mindset toward technology use are more inclined to engage in online learning activities.

Motivation contributes a crucial part in determining students' success in online learning. Intrinsic motivation originates with the internal value assigned to a task. Extrinsic motivation refers to outside variables, such as recognition and rewards, which impact student engagement in learning. According to the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000), intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are determined by three fundamental human needs: autonomy, competence, and psychological relatedness. Engaging digital platforms tailored to

students' needs and preferences can boost intrinsic motivation in online learning by offering them control over their learning process and increasing their sense of competence and relatedness to their peers.

Previous research has found that motivated students are more inclined to engage in complex learning and accomplish their goals (Chalak & Kassaian, 2010; George et al., 2011; Schunk et al., 2008). In a BL environment, social interaction via platforms such as Zoom can boost student motivation as direct interaction with instructors and peers provides emotional support and increases social engagement (Eraković & Topalov, 2021). In contrast, asynchronous learning through Google Docs enables learners to learn at their own pace while still collaborating with peers on writing tasks (Abrams, 2016). As a result, combining synchronous and asynchronous sessions in a blended approach not only improves students' learning experiences but also supports their motivation to actively participate in the learning process.

Prior studies have thoroughly explored the use of Google Docs in higher education contexts. Collaborative platforms like Google Docs have also been shown to be effective in promoting collaborative learning, particularly in the context of writing (Abrams, 2016; Hsu, 2020; Kessler et al., 2012). Students can work together synchronously on writing tasks using Google Docs, allowing for real-time collaboration and interaction. Several studies have found that this collaboration platform boosts student engagement and productivity by allowing them to provide immediate feedback and improve their work together. Furthermore, videoconferencing platforms such as Zoom have been demonstrated to enhance communication and collaboration between students and instructors while writing instructions. These videoconferencing platforms enable live teaching and group discussions, enhancing students' learning experiences in BL environments, particularly with regard to writing activities (Cheung, 2021b, 2024; Dakamsih & Rababah, 2024). Thus, integrating a collaboration platform (such as Google Docs) with videoconferencing (such as Zoom) can provide students with a more dynamic and interactive learning experience, allowing them to achieve their learning goals effectively.

Despite these significant contributions, few studies have specifically investigated the integration of synchronous and asynchronous sessions, particularly through the use of platforms such as Zoom and Google Docs in BL writing courses. Furthermore, there is still little attention paid to students' perceptions of this integration in EFL learning environments in Indonesia. As a result, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how EFL students in Indonesia perceive the integration of synchronous and asynchronous sessions in BL writing courses. The results of this study are expected to provide new insights for teachers to develop more effective learning strategies to support student engagement and satisfaction in the digital era.

METHODS

The current study aims to fill a gap in understanding students' perceptions of BL in a writing course, which combines synchronous and asynchronous sessions via a collaboration platform (Google Docs) and videoconferencing (Zoom). A qualitative research approach was chosen as the best way to gain a deeper understanding. This study used a phenomenological approach to investigate participants' perceptions with synchronous and asynchronous platforms in BL in higher education (Creswell, 2012). This method enables researcher to gain a better understanding of how students interpret their interactions with technology, both asynchronous and synchronous. This study obtained data through semi-structured interviews to explore students' perceptions in using these platforms, as well as observations of their interactions in asynchronous and synchronous sessions.

This study was carried out in one state university in Jember, Indonesia. There were 30 students enrolled in the Academic Writing course. This course requires students to complete a final project in the form of drafting a research proposal. The writing process is carried out in groups of six, each consisting of four to five members. Students work together in groups to complete the writing stages of outlining, drafting, revising, and editing. This course was done through a BL approach that combines offline and online sessions, facilitated by digital platforms such as Google Docs and Zoom.

At the end of the course, all students were invited to share their experiences regarding technology-mediated BL process. However, this study only looked at five participants and analyzed their responses. The five participants were chosen using a purposive sampling technique with the goal of gathering rich and relevant data in accordance with the research objective, which is to investigate students' perceptions of the integration of synchronous and asynchronous sessions in BL-

based writing instruction. The following criteria were used in choosing participants: (1) active participation during synchronous and asynchronous sessions, (2) engagement with group writing assignments, and (3) willingness and ability to express their learning experiences in depth. These criteria ensured that the selected participants' experiences and reflective insights were consistent with the research focus. The participants ranged in age from 18 to 23 years old and spoke both local (Madurese and Javanese) and national language (Bahasa Indonesia). To maintain confidentiality, participant are pseudonyms in the form of codes P1–P5.

This study used semi-structured interviews and digital record observations as the primary data collection methods. Five students were selected on purpose because they actively participated in all stages of the blended writing course and were willing to reflect deeply on their learning experiences. The interviews were carried out using a narrative approach, allowing participants to share their personal experiences, and thematic analysis was employed to identify emerging patterns.

Ethical procedures were implemented in stages. Each participant was informed of the research objectives and signed a consent form. Following that, interviews were audio-recorded with their consent, and verbatim transcripts served as the foundation for thematic analysis. The interviews lasted 30-45 minutes in February-March 2025 and focused on participants' perceptions of offline, synchronous, and asynchronous sessions, as well as the use of Zoom and Google Docs.

The observation procedures are described separately to improve data triangulation. Observations were made during three offline class sessions, three Zoom sessions, and four weeks of observing Google Docs activity. Observation data included activity logs, attendance, interaction frequency, and editing history, which were used to identify patterns of engagement and collaboration consistent with the research objectives. For example, groups with active comments on Google Docs showed high participation on Zoom. Furthermore, field notes were taken during observations to record group dynamics, interaction styles, and emerging challenges.

To strengthen the findings' validity, triangulation was used to compare data from interviews, observations, and documents (for example, student proposal drafts in Google Docs). Data analysis was carried out thematically, using the six steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) familiarization, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. Interview transcripts and observation notes were read several times and then manually coded, for example, "active collaboration" or "technical challenges." These codes were initially organized into themes such as fostering student autonomy, strengthening social connections, and technical barriers and collaborative challenges, which were then reviewed and expanded upon. Validity was strengthened through triangulation between interview data and digital observations (Zoom, Google Docs), as well as member checking by participants. For example, statements about the benefits of immediate feedback on Zoom were confirmed by Google Docs activity logs after the session.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Following thematic analysis of the interview data, four themes emerged regarding students' perceptions of BL, that incorporates both synchronous and asynchronous sessions in a writing course.

Promoting student engagement

The use of both synchronous and asynchronous sessions in BL-based writing courses has been shown to increase student engagement by meeting psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and connectedness. Flexibility in managing learning time and collaboration increases students' motivation and engagement in the writing process. For example, P1 was engaged in revising his writing at any time using Google Docs, whereas P2 felt more confident because he could write and revise alongside group members. This collaboration gave students more control over their learning while also encouraging group participation, resulting in more consistent learning engagement.

> *Blended learning provides to a more engaging experience because offline sessions allow me to interact with friends while also understanding the material. Google Docs allows me to revise my writing autonomously with friends at any time. (P1)*

Offers convenience and flexibility in blended classes. When offline, I can easily understand the explanations of lecturers and friends. However, in Google Docs, I am more autonomous and motivated because we write proposals together and revise them together if we discover any mistakes or points that are missing. (P2)

P3 also emphasized the level of responsibility and effort required in BL-based collaborative writing, indicating higher cognitive engagement. The integrated use of Google Docs and Zoom not only assisted them in completing assignments, but also directed them how to manage their workload collaboratively and value their teammates' contributions.

… Learning to be responsible because we must collaborate on our proposals, sometimes in Google Docs, sometimes in Zoom. Writing a proposal requires additional time and effort. (P3)

Furthermore, the use of this technology contributed to increase student competency. P2 noted that Google Docs facilitated the writing and revision process by allowing all group members to work on the draft proposal at the same time. This collaborative process allowed them to learn from one another, make suggestions, and improve their writing together. P3 also mentioned that Google Docs allowed them to save edit and chat histories, which made it easier to track changes and learn from revisions made. This increased students' confidence in completing writing assignments because they could see the progress of their writing and learn from the feedback provided by their group members.

Google Docs allows team members to generate drafts based on task division and offer suggestions for revision and editing. (P2)

Google Docs allows us to save our chat and proposal editing history... (P3)

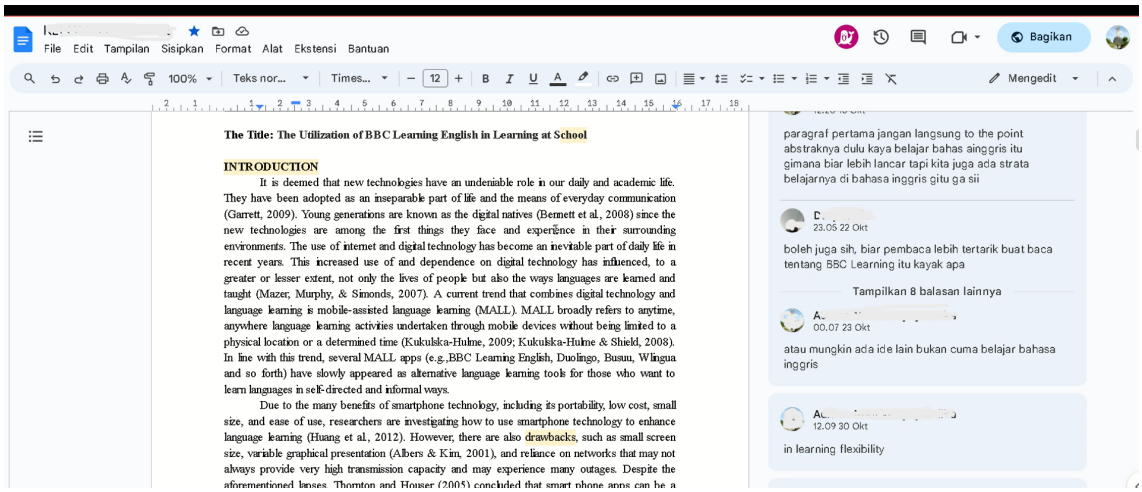

Figure 1. Google Docs activity log of group collaboration during writing revision

In a blended writing course, student engagement is demonstrated by active participation in the writing process, both individually and collaboratively. Figure 1 depicts four team members editing and revising a shared document in Google Docs. One member serves as the group's leader and facilitator, encouraging others to share ideas and feedback. For instance, the leader responded to a peer comment by saying, "paragraph pertama jangan langsung to the point abstractnya dulu kayak belajar Bahasa Inggris itu gimana biar lebih lancar tapi kita juga ada strata belajarnya di bahasa Inggris gitu ga sii" (“The first paragraph in the abstract shouldn’t go straight to the main point. It would be better to first explain how learning English is a gradual process, where fluency is developed through different levels of learning, right?”). This leader's active role exemplifies behavioral engagement by actively facilitating group collaboration. Interactions within this group also show cognitive engagement. One member commented, "boleh juga sih, biar pembaca lebih tertarik buat baca tentang BBC learning itu kayak apa" (“Sure, so that the readers will be more interested in reading about what BBC Learning is”), indicating reflective thinking and an effort to improve the writing quality. Although one member appears to be more focused on revising her own

portion of the assignment, he still demonstrates learning autonomy, which promotes engagement, as she is confident in editing her writing. She admits that her ability to revise herself gives her more confidence in the writing process. From a social standpoint (affective engagement), the collaboration that takes place both by providing feedback and discussing ideas demonstrates a sense of connection among group members. One statement, "atau mungkin ada ide lain bukan cuma belajar bahasa Inggris" ("or maybe there are other ideas besides just learning English"), it demonstrates the importance of involving all members in decision-making, which fosters a sense of community and ownership in the writing process. Thus, using Google Docs not only simplifies the technical process of writing, but also promotes holistic student engagement through in-depth cognitive, emotional, and behavioral interactions during collaborative activities. tasks.

The results of this research demonstrate that interaction with one another in BL-based writing courses sessions promotes engagement, while collaboration using applications like Google Docs significantly improves student competence through the process of sharing ideas and joint revision (Abrams, 2016; Alkhateeb, 2020). Prior investigation by Garrison and Kanuka (2004) highlighted the potential for BL transformation in higher education, where the combination of online and offline learning creates an environment that promotes more holistic student participation. Thus, BL meets students' basic psychological needs while also encouraging deeper engagement.

Strengthening social connections

Direct interaction on Zoom assisted students feel more connected. Participants agreed that online discussions on Zoom enabled them to communicate more directly and effectively, accelerate the revision process, and correct errors in their writing collaboratively.

> *…We can have face-to-face discussions on Zoom. (P1)*
>
> *… Zoom allows us to finish revisions more quickly and identify which parts need to be fixed immediately, as well as find relevant references. (P2)*
>
> *We can use Google Docs to revise our drafts, communicate directly, and present progress on our proposals through Zoom for direct communication. (P3)*

Technology also improved social connections among students. P1 and P2 reported that Zoom was extremely effective in facilitating direct discussions and collaborative writing revisions. P1 mentioned that face-to-face discussions on Zoom enabled them to receive direct feedback, which accelerated their writing progress. P2 also mentioned that the editing process on Zoom was more efficient because all group members could see and provide feedback directly. P3 also mentioned how Zoom enabled them to present their writing progress, which increased social connectedness among group members. This direct interaction not only improved writing quality, but it also strengthened students' sense of community and emotional support, both of which are important for increasing their engagement in learning.

> *Zoom enabled us to have direct group discussions and improve certain points. Presenting our writing progress on Zoom allows for direct feedback and collaborative improvement (P1).*
>
> *Zoom is also useful in the editing process because everyone can see the screen and quickly agree to edit the text. (P2)*
>
> *Zoom allows for direct discussions by displaying proposals in Screen Sharing. (P3)*

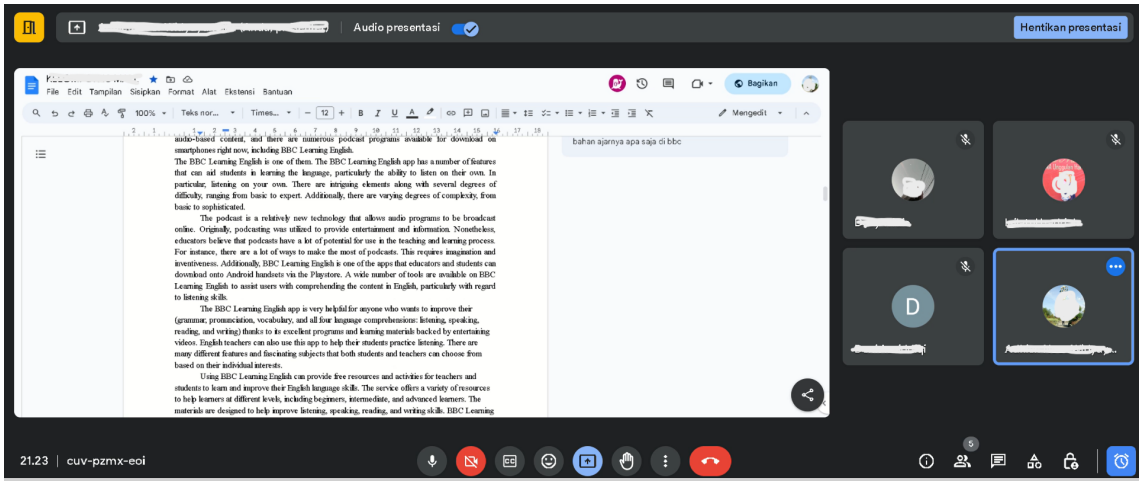

Figure 2. Zoom activity log of group collaboration during writing revision

Figure 2 shows four team members working together in a Zoom session to review and revise their joint paper in Google Docs. The document was shared using Zoom's screen sharing feature, which allowed all group members to view and provide feedback directly. Although members frequently turned off their cameras, the conversation remained lively. They alternated between providing feedback, correcting errors, and improving their drafts. The researcher participated in Zoom breakout rooms to observe group interactions and dynamics in real time, allowing him to identify patterns of engagement and collaboration among members.

Google Docs and Zoom are examples of technologies which assist students meet their psychological needs. Google Docs allows for collaborative writing and revision (Abrams, 2016; Kessler et al., 2012; Woodrich & Fan, 2017), while Zoom enables live discussions to strengthen social connections (Cheung, 2024; Dakamsih & Rababah, 2024; Eraković & Topalov, 2021). From an SDT standpoint, technology-facilitated social interactions strengthen students' connectedness, which is an important factor in creating a supportive learning environment (Deci et al., 1991). Bailey et al. (2022) draw attention to the importance of technology in supporting learning outcomes by examining students' acceptance of technology. In the context of online learning, the capacity of technology to integrate flexibility and social connectivity is critical to providing an effective learning experience.

Enhancing group dynamics

Technology-based collaboration via platforms such as Google Docs and Zoom has been shown to enhance group dynamics in writing tasks. These tools not only help students complete assignments, but they also promote a more cohesive and interactive group process. Data show that students' approaches to writing changed, from working alone to being more collaborative and open to group feedback. For example, P1 and P2 initially preferred to write separately. However, after engaging in collaborative writing using Google Docs, they realized the value of sharing ideas and working together. P1 emphasized that peer feedback provided new perspectives, improving the quality of their writing. Similarly, P2 acknowledged that collaboration resulted in higher-quality writing because of the diverse perspectives each group member contributed. These experiences show that technology-enabled collaboration promotes more equitable contributions, active participation, and a constructive exchange of ideas, all of which are important factors in improving group dynamics.

> *Yes, I've become familiar to writing collaboratively. Initially, I preferred to write alone because it felt more comfortable. However, after writing together on Google Docs, I found it easier because suggestions from friends provided useful perspectives or ideas... (P1)*

> *… Initially, I preferred writing alone, but with Google Docs and Zoom, writing collaboratively can result in higher-quality writing due to the diverse ideas of all group members. (P2)*

In addition to facilitating collaborative writing, the use of technologies such as Google Docs and Zoom strengthens group dynamics by encouraging students to be open, respectful, and

accountable. Several participants stated that these platforms increased their openness to feedback and ideas from group members. For example, P1 believed that editing a paper together via Zoom helped him better understand and appreciate his peers' perspectives. P2 also stated that working on Google Docs and Zoom made him more open to suggestions and appreciates the contributions of other members. While P4 acknowledged challenges such as miscommunication, he emphasized that the revision and discussion process on both platforms directed him the value of each member's contribution.

> *… During the process of editing writing together on Zoom, I was able to better understand and appreciate each other's ideas. (P1)*

> *Writing with friends using technology helped me appreciate and be open to others' thoughts as well as suggestions... (P2)*

> *Writing collaboration can be challenging due to frequent miscommunication, particularly when using technology. Collaborative writing on Google Docs and Zoom enabled me to respect each other's ideas during revision and discussion. (P4)*

This study emphasizes the importance of integrating synchronous sessions (Zoom) and a writing collaboration platform (Google Docs) group dynamics in writing activities supported by technology. These tools enable students to coordinate tasks, exchange ideas, and provide feedback in real-time or asynchronously, resulting in more effective collaboration and better group work skills (Abrams, 2016; Cheung, 2024; Dakamsih & Rababah, 2024; Kessler et al., 2012). In relation to the SDT framework, such collaborative environments help students meet their psychological needs for competence and connection through structured peer interaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Students can use Google Docs and Zoom to collaborate on writing, revising, and discussing their work. This interaction demonstrates role-sharing, coordination, and shared decision-making, which strengthens the group dynamics of the writing process.

Fostering student autonomy

The use technology enhanced the capacity of students to write autonomously. P1 mentioned that using Google Docs gave them more autonomy in editing their writing at any time, without having to rely on other group members. P4 added that even though collaboration is important, they learned to value and develop their own ideas while remaining open to the contributions of others. Technology-based collaboration enables students to work more independently on their portion of the writing while still effectively working together with their peers. This encourages students to write independently and preserves writing quality through group contributions.

> *… I also feel motivated and autonomous when I share ideas in writing via Google Docs. (P1)*

> *… On Google Docs, I can edit my own work or the work of others at anytime. (P4)*

The results of this research demonstrate that BL stipulates more flexibility in learning. This is consistent with Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes addressing the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness is essential for intrinsic motivation. In the context of BL, flexibility allows learners to choose the method for instruction which most effectively meets their needs, promoting autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Technical barriers and collaborative challenges in blended learning

Technical barriers, such as unstable internet connections on Zoom, as expressed by P1 and P2, are major obstacles to BL. P1 explained that poor internet connections frequently disrupt Zoom-mediated discussion groups, while P2 mentioned that connection issues also impede the process of searching for references and editing writing collaboratively. Technical barriers hindered students' ability to interact effectively with group members and teachers, leading to decreased confidence in the learning process. These limitations also have an impact on autonomy because students are unable to fully manage their learning process with the desired flexibility, particularly when hampered by technical issues beyond their control.

… Meanwhile, in Zoom, unstable internet connections can frequently be a challenge. (P1)

… Discussion in Zoom struggles during the process of editing writing or searching for references together due to an insufficient internet connection. (P2)

The lack of group member participation, as described by P1 and P2, is another significant challenge in BL. P1 mentioned that as group leaders, they should ensure that all members contribute to the writing, whereas P2 explained that the difficulty in establishing solid teamwork is frequently caused by members who are passive and do not contribute enough to the revision process. This lack of participation undermines members' connectedness by preventing effective communication and collaboration. When one or more members do not actively participate, group's social connections decrease, reducing members' sense of connectedness. Furthermore, inactive members' lack of contribution can have an impact on the group's overall competence, as the quality of work results becomes uneven.

In Google Docs, as a leader, I must ensure that all group members contribute to the writing because their assignments are distributed evenly. The leader frequently reminds the members who are not actively contributing to the discussion. (P1)

The main challenge in Google Docs is effective team collaboration due to passive members who contribute less to writing revisions. (P2)

Another challenge in adapting to different learning modes, as expressed by P3 and P5, is the difficulty in navigating the transition between synchronous (Zoom) and asynchronous (Google Docs). When students should adapt to multiple shifts in learning modes, they may feel less autonomous of their time and learning process. Rapid changes between learning modes can create confusion or uncertainty, which eventually impacts student motivation and engagement.

Difficulty adapting to various learning modes. I sometimes use Google Docs and sometimes Zoom. It's challenging to balance time management, responsibility, and autonomy.

I work hard, and it's not easy because we have so many learning options, such as offline learning, Zoom, and collaborative writing projects in Google Docs. Some of my friends do not participate in collaborative writing on Google Docs, so I sometimes did it alone. (P5)

Despite the numerous advantages of BL, there are still some challenges. Technical barriers such as unstable internet connections and a lack of group member participation are significant impediments. In SDT, these barriers can prevent students from meeting their autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Poor internet connections, for example, can impede communication in online discussions, and passive group members can reduce collaboration success (Cheung, 2021a; Ironsi, 2021; Rojabi et al., 2024). Islam et al. (2022) and Rojabi et al. (2024) discovered that the success of BL depends extensively on students' adaptation to various learning modes. Thus, it is critical to address these barriers through technology training and strategies that encourage student participation, such as clear assignments and group leader supervision.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that incorporating synchronous and asynchronous sessions in BL-based writing instruction improved student engagement. Synchronous sessions allowed students to receive immediate feedback, which significantly improved the revision process and group discussion, whereas asynchronous sessions gave students the freedom to explore ideas independently. These two types of sessions complement one another, resulting in a learning environment that meets students' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as explained in Self-Determination Theory. However, this study discovered challenges in the implementation of BL, such as technical barriers and less-than-optimal group member participation, which can have an impact on learning effectiveness.

This study has several pedagogical implications; higher education institutions can create curricula that strategically incorporate synchronous and asynchronous sessions to meet students' learning needs. Synchronous sessions can concentrate on collaborative activities and immediate feedback, whereas asynchronous sessions can be used for individual tasks requiring independent exploration. Furthermore, the integration of synchronous and asynchronous in blended courses encourage a personal approach that supports student autonomy while also encouraging group collaboration that strengthens social connectedness and teamwork skills. With these findings, this study contributes to the development of more effective learning strategies in the context of BL, especially for writing instruction in higher education.

However, this study has limitations. Since only five students participated in the study, the results may not be fully representative of the larger population. More research with larger samples is required to strengthen the validity of the findings. This study examines writing course in the context of EFL in higher education. Generalization of the findings to other learning contexts or levels of education may necessitate modifications. The qualitative approach yields detailed insights, but it does not allow for quantitative measurement of the impact of synchronous and asynchronous sessions on learning outcomes. Further research using quantitative or mixed-methods approaches may provide a more complete representation.

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