

**EFL Undergraduate Students' Expectations of Blended Learning  
in The Post-Pandemic**

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**Abstract**

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Education especially at the university level has experienced a shift from online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic to the post-pandemic era with blended learning. Blended learning combines learning using online learning methods combined with face-to-face learning. Students' experience of online learning during the pandemic sparked their hopes or expectations for the next learning they will do. Therefore, the role of teachers and educational institutions is important to know the needs of students to improve learning methods in the post-pandemic era by knowing students' hopes or expectations. This study aimed to explore the students' expectations for blended learning in the post-pandemic era. It employed a qualitative method by interviews and collected data from 10 7<sup>th</sup>-semester EFL university students in the year 2022/2023 in the public university in Bali. The interview guidelines were validated through face validity and content validity. The result revealed that the students preferred blended learning to be more interactive with lecturers and more access to resources, and technology to be used where necessary. The study provides valuable insights for the lecturers to enhance the teaching experience in future blended learning.

**Kata Kunci:**

*Pembelajaran  
Campuran,  
Bahasa Inggris,  
Ekspektasi Mahasiswa*

**Abstrak**

Pendidikan khususnya di tingkat universitas mengalami pergeseran dari pembelajaran daring pada masa pandemi Covid-19 ke era pasca pandemi dengan pembelajaran campuran. Pembelajaran campuran memadukan pembelajaran dengan menggunakan metode pembelajaran daring yang dipadukan dengan pembelajaran tatap muka. Pengalaman mahasiswa dalam belajar daring selama pandemi memicu harapan atau ekspektasi mereka terhadap pembelajaran selanjutnya yang akan mereka lakukan. Oleh karena itu peran pendidik dan lembaga pendidikan sangat penting untuk mengetahui kebutuhan mahasiswa untuk memperbaiki

metode pembelajaran di era pasca pandemi dengan dapat mengetahui harapan atau ekspektasi mahasiswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi ekspektasi mahasiswa terhadap pembelajaran campuran di era pasca pandemi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan wawancara dan mengumpulkan data dari 10 mahasiswa EFL semester 7 tahun 2022/2023 di universitas negeri di Bali. Pedoman wawancara divalidasi melalui validitas muka dan validitas isi. Hasilnya mengungkapkan bahwa mahasiswa lebih menyukai pembelajaran campuran untuk lebih interaktif dengan dosen dan lebih banyak akses ke sumber daya, dan teknologi untuk digunakan jika diperlukan. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan berharga bagi para dosen untuk meningkatkan pengalaman mengajar di pembelajaran campuran masa depan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, learning turned into fully online learning because students and teachers could not go to school to comply with social distancing rules. During the pandemic, emergency online learning was quickly implemented to enable students to continue their education even when they were unable to attend classes on campus (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020). This change has disrupted the daily routines of students who must balance learning from home with other activities to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. This presents a challenge, as students are accustomed to a more relaxed learning environment away from the distractions of homework and family. Consequently, they must learn to be self-directed learners, managing their time and finding a comfortable place to study. Another issue is the lack of social interaction with peers and instructors due to isolation rules, which can demotivate students from engaging in their studies (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020; Alhazbi & Hasan, 2021; Besser et al., 2022). Research on the implementation of fully online learning at the university level in Bali during the COVID-19 pandemic has found that it did not meet student expectations due to inflexible class schedules and poor internet access (Suryani & Sugianingrat, 2021). Students also faced challenges such as poor internet connection, lack of readiness, unclear directions on the use of online

learning, and difficulties in understanding the material (Ginaya et al., 2021; Indrawan et al., 2022). Despite being a solution for education during the pandemic, online learning is also accompanied by challenges and difficulties in its implementation.

However, the current condition of world education especially in Indonesia in the post-pandemic era has returned to implementing face-to-face learning by combining it with online learning and the use of technology in the learning process which is called blended learning. In contrast to online learning, blended learning is a type of online education that combines traditional face-to-face learning with online learning (using platform technology) (Graham, 2006). In blended learning, the instructor and the students go to campus every day which has been determined by the policies made by the institution. Theory-based learning can be done through online learning while practice-based learning requires face-to-face learning (Keshavarz, 2020). Blended learning also gives several benefits to the learning process. Blended learning increases students' desire to learn and think critically. Students learn independently with different learning designs to avoid monotonous learning. Blended learning supports students to interact with each other not only physically in the classroom directly but also in online connections outside the classroom (Zainuddin & Keumala, 2018). In blended learning, the teacher and students use technology to conduct the learning process. The use of technology will help students interact easily in learning by using media such as LMS, Google Classroom, Quizziz, Kahoot, etc. Besides, the teacher has much time to give feedback to students outside the lesson hours and allow motivating students in the learning process.

The expectation is an important factor influencing student learning outcomes and learning success (Gustriani & Hamzah, 2021). Students' expectations are useful for their own learning styles. According to Gonyea (2004), if students have expectations, they will learn and construct their experiences into reality for the individual. Moreover, when students have expectations in learning, they will measure their content which will influence future cognitive experiences for the students' learning outcomes (Walker, 2008).

According to Press (2006) as cited in Pinto & Anderson (2013), expectations are assumptions from an event that are usually caused by three things, namely personal experience, experiences from other people such as family or friends, and what is considered a habit. Furthermore, they also explained two categories of student expectations, namely preconceived expectations and informed expectations. When new students enter the learning environment, students will have prior knowledge as an opinion. These expectations can then change when students obtain more updated information which will become informed expectations. For example, when students who have just entered college have had previous experiences in blended learning or are influenced by experiences from friends or family, students will have preconceived expectations. After that, when students obtain new information either from personal experience or others when following blended learning, then they will have informed expectations or perceptions. In addition, in their research, Pinto & Anderson (2013) found that students' expectations of online learning regarding several aspects such as technology, interaction with teachers and students, and course content. Some of these expectations are held by students when they are just entering learning, then some of their expectations change as they get information about activities in class.

Moreover, another factors that can affect the student's expectation for the blended learning such as from the lecturer, interaction, technology, and course management (Bolliger & Martindale, 2004). The competence of educators can be observed through their pedagogical expertise. Voss et al. (2011) suggest that pedagogical knowledge encompasses an understanding of classroom management and teaching strategies. Classroom management knowledge entails the ability to address challenges that arise in the classroom, establish a well-organized learning environment, and foster an engaging atmosphere. On the other hand, knowledge of teaching methods involves instructors who can effectively employ diverse instructional approaches within the classroom, such as project-based learning, discovery learning, direct instruction, and cooperative learning. In addition, In the learning process, interaction plays a crucial role in creating a meaningful learning

experience, particularly in an online setting. According to Moore (1989), student interaction refers to the activities or events that take place between students and their learning environment as they work towards their goals. Moore further categorized student interaction into three types: student-content interaction, student-instructor interaction, and student-student interaction. Technology plays a crucial role in achieving successful learning outcomes. The availability and flexible utilization of technology are influential factors in determining student satisfaction (Bower & Kamata, 2000). Course management, specifically the provision of learning resources, is another significant factor that affects student satisfaction in the learning process (Hara & Kling, 2000). Students often encounter technical challenges when accessing these learning resources, leading to a heightened level of frustration. Examples of such learning resources include e-books and technical support (Moore & Kearsley, 1996). Therefore, instructors and educational institutions should consider these four factors as dimensions essential for the success of online learning. By looking at the results of what students expect, institutions and teachers can improve the quality of learning so as not to create student dissatisfaction with blended learning.

According to Lewis (2002) as cited in Rohana & Syahputra (2021), online learning alone cannot fully fulfill learning objectives and should be used as a complement to traditional face-to-face learning. Stein & Graham (2013) suggest blended learning, which combines face-to-face and online learning, as a solution to overcome the challenges faced by both students and instructors during online learning. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture also supports blended learning as a way to conduct learning while following health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic (DGHE, 2020). Blended learning is a combination of online and face-to-face learning (Mortera-Gutierrez, 2006). Its implementation in universities in Indonesia is still being evaluated (Norberg et al., 2011). Knowing students' experiences with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic will support the implementation of blended learning in the post-pandemic era. Expectations of students, formed from their experiences and beliefs, can help improve the implementation of blended learning and maximize the benefits for

both instructors and institutions (Pinto & Anderson, 2013). There are several factors used in this study to categorize students' expectations of blended learning in the post-pandemic era, such as the lecturers, interaction, technology, and course management used. The problem faced by the students such as poor internet connection, difficulty in group work, and lack of feedback from lecturers are significant factors that affect the experience that they get during the fully online learning based on their perception. Therefore, this study aims to explore the students' expectations based on the problem during the online learning in the pandemic. There have been limited studies on students' expectations with blended learning in the post-pandemic era. This study aims to fill the gap by exploring the students' expectations for blended learning in the post-pandemic era.

## **METHOD**

The study uses a qualitative method by using interview guideline based on the indicators of students' expectation such as the expectation of the lecturers, interaction, technology, and course management as the instruments of data collection. For the interview session, the researcher used the Zoom application to record the EFL students from the 7<sup>th</sup> semester of 2022/2023 in the public university in Bali to record participant statements and minimize data loss from the 10 participants, which also helped with transcription. There were 6 interview questions and validated by using face validity and content validity. Face validity is a type of instrument assessment by assessing the linguistic elements of item sentences (Taherdoost, 2018). This type of validity is carried out subjectively by expert judges, namely by using "yes" and "no" which indicate the accuracy or inaccuracy of an item (Oluwatayo, 2012). The results of the face validity shown are relevant resulting from the assessment of expert judges, which means that all questionnaire and interview items are valid. Moreover, the interview guide was validated by using cross-tabulation with the Gregory (2014) from the content which uses two options: "relevant" or "irrelevant". The result of the content validity of the interview guide was 1 and it can be categorized appropriate. Data was analyzed using an interactive model by Miles & Huberman (1994) namely

data collection in the form of participant interviews via the Zoom meeting application, data reduction in the form of eliminating unnecessary information, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The result of the interview focused on the students' expectations for the future blended learning in the post-pandemic era.

### ***Students' Expectations in Blended Learning based on Lecturer's Factor***

Based on the interview session, the students want the lecturers use a mix of online and offline activities in blended learning that provide a well-rounded educational experience. This includes the use of multimedia, simulations, group work, discussions, and interactive activities to supplement traditional lectures and readings. They also expect clear and effective communication from their lecturers, prompt feedback on assignments, and easy access to resources and support. Overall, students want a blended learning approach that is engaging, interactive, and personalized to meet their individual needs and learning styles.

*"I do not believe it is exactly what I expected. When it comes to blended learning, I expect that studying English will be more engaging since it combines online and in-person instruction."*

Moreover, as a result of this circumstance, students anticipate that the lecturer will be able to deliver better explanations while using blended learning. Additionally, students expect that lecturers would implement blended learning in a balanced manner.

*"I have distinct demands for lecturers in blended learning, such as the need that they first deliver a video introducing the content before assigning any homework. In order to make it simpler for me to grasp the assignments provided, the video may also be transmitted to other classes when they are unable to attend."*

### ***Students' Expectations in Blended Learning based on Interaction Factor***

*Students' Expectations in Blended Learning based on Interaction between Students and Materials*

Students may still access content on the internet during blended learning, so they have the same expectations from this experience as they would have for their interactions with material during online learning.

*“The same things are what I expect from future blended learning. During blended learning, I want to be able to access the content anywhere and comprehend it. I am therefore more prepared to study in person because I have background knowledge from online learning materials.”*

Moreover, students expect more contact with the subject in blended learning as a result of their experience interacting with it during online learning, where lecturers may direct students by providing a list of topics that can be accessed.

*“I have got bigger hopes for future integrated learning. I expect that information from lecturers can be accessed particularly online so that when I am in class in person, I comprehend what the lecturer teaches and that it does not greatly differ from what I study on my own.”*

#### *Students' Expectations in Blended Learning based on Interaction between Students and Lecturers*

The students expect that direct connection with lecturers will continue to take place both online and in person.

*“I have several goals for blended learning. My expectation is that lecturers will be able to divide their time between online and face-to-face interactions. For instance, lecturers may explain material and lead discussions in person, but they may also collect assignments and consult with students who may be having trouble understanding the material or assignments online.”*

Other students' expectations for blended learning interactions with lecturers change as a result of this circumstance. They anticipate that through blended learning, they will have more chances to connect with lecturers in person.

*“More engagement between lecturers and students will help students get to know them better and perhaps lessen their anxiety while learning. Additionally, lecturers must be better equipped to offer students accurate evaluations and comments.”*

*Students' Expectations in Blended Learning based on Interaction between Students and Other Students*

The students expect learning a lot when they gather in blended learning and can benefit from group work in a balanced approach.

*"In contrast to what students learn when studying online, I expect that when students are in a classroom setting face-to-face, they will be more talkative and able to share ideas. Additionally, I hope that students can fully benefit from online learning prior to their online studies so they can get along better and assist one another."*

This is also supported by other student's statement that in blended learning, they look forward to having more opportunity to mingle and get to know one another better.

*"I expect that group work will be more enjoyable during blended learning and that I will have more opportunities to interact socially with other students. This will help us get to know each other's personalities so that we can adjust and feel at ease when working in groups, whether they be online or in person."*

***Students' Expectations in Blended Learning based on Technology Factor***

The students expect that to save money while implementing blended learning, instructors might consider employing technology, particularly for collecting assignments.

*"I expect that mixed learning will still need the use of technology. Apart from using technology when teaching in person, instructors may also utilize Google Drive, Google Classroom, or another LMS to collect assignments, saving students the time and hassle of printing them."*

Besides, they expect that in blended learning, the technology will be tailored to the needs and skills of the students, such as using it just to collect assignments that do not consume a lot of internet capacity and reduce connection and device restrictions.

*"In blended learning, I expect to be able to continue using technology. I do, however, also hope that blended learning technology is customized to needs, such as not constantly utilizing programs like Zoom that consume a lot of internet capacity."*

### ***Students' Expectations in Blended Learning based on Course Management Factor***

From the course management in the form of the learning sources, the students expect that face-to-face instruction will benefit from the flexibility of digital learning sources.

*“The same goes for my expectation that students will be ready to learn in class when we meet in person since they will have already done their internet research. However, it is still possible for students to use their mobile devices to access instructional materials while studying in class.”*

Moreover, the students intend need the lecturers to help them access online content in the future blended learning.

*“I have great hopes for the blended learning materials, specifically that I will have access to a wider variety of learning tools. In other words, I expect that I will still be able to read printed books and electronic books, as well as receive assistance from lecturers when I cannot easily access certain learning resources.”*

### ***Discussion***

The result from the interview shows that the students expect more interactive learning process in the future blended learning. From the lecturer factor, the students expect lecturers to be more professional in teaching, with a balanced blend of online and in-person classes, where online classes cover topics and in-person classes focus on interaction and discussion. This aligns with previous research that found students prefer blended learning (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020). From the interaction between students and materials factor, the students expect that they can have both independence and support from the lecturer to understand the material easier (Saha, 2019). In terms of interaction with the lecturers, the students for more interaction and feedback from lecturers in future blended learning (Kang & Im, 2013). From the interaction with other students for the future blended learning, they expect that they still can use online platforms such as the use of WhatsApp to make the oral and verbal communication better for discussions and expect face-to-face interactions to get to

know each other better (Ratminingsih et al., 2022). They also expect to recognize each other's characteristics and abilities for better group assignments (Baber, 2020). In terms of technology factor, the students expect more variety in technology in the future and they hope that lecturers adapt technology to their needs and minimize the use of Zoom so that they can manage the internet quota and minimize the error from the device used. Moreover, during blended learning, they still experience the same things as they experienced in fully online learning. They can still access learning resources from anywhere, including on the internet. This is also become their expectation for further blended learning, namely students can still access learning resources both online and in class when studying by using their mobile phones. Students with low satisfaction scores added that they hoped that lecturers could help them to obtain learning resources that were difficult to access by helping to provide directions on similar learning resources that they could access more easily. This is in line with the previous study which states that students will be more satisfied if lecturers can provide support in accessing different learning sources on the internet (Baloran et al., 2021).

The study on student expectations for blended learning provides valuable insights for English lecturers, students, researchers, and the government. The results of the study can be used as a reference for lecturers to improve blended learning in the post-pandemic era, for students to understand their experiences and expectations for blended learning, for researchers as a guide for future research in education, and for the government to understand the feelings and problems of students in online learning. The study highlights the importance of considering student experiences and expectations in the design and implementation of blended learning programs in the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research has explored the students' expectations for blended learning in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era. The results indicate that in terms of lecturer factors, students expect a balance between online and face-to-face interaction and discussion in blended learning. For the interaction factor with material, students

can access it from anywhere but expect more guidance from lecturers. In terms of interaction with instructors and fellow students, students expect more interaction and feedback. Regarding technology, students expect the technology to be used according to their needs and internet quota. For course management, students are flexible in obtaining learning resources and expect lecturers to provide support and assistance. The limitation of this research is that the aspect of English is too general to be discussed. Therefore, for further research, it is recommended to use a more specific research subject such as focusing more on one of the English language skills.

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