

Student Perception of Language Achievement and Learner Autonomy in a Blended Korean Language Course

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Abstract

The blended learning model became popular and more practical for both teachers and learners in foreign language education because of its effective methodology for course delivery and socialization opportunities with technology-enhanced learning activities in both online and offline environments. Although the effectiveness of blended language learning models and benefits of student achievement and autonomous learning with an language management system (LMS) have been explored, prior research resulted in conflicting data on blended instruction identifying the inconsistent findings in student achievement. The specific problem is that the low language achievement of students seems to be related to lack of autonomous language learning skills, but their perceptions of the blended language courses regarding language achievement and autonomous learning skill have not been previously identified and analyzed. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate student perceptions of course effectiveness factors for language proficiency as well as learner autonomy in a blended Korean language course. American Air Force students who attended intermediate and advanced blended Korean language courses applied with the LMS, SAKAI at the Osan Language Training Detachment (LTD), Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) in Korea, were invited to participate in the anonymous, open-ended online survey. Data from 10 of the participants were analyzed and evaluated. This study found the blended Korean language course was effective for language learning and achievement, but only 50% of participants stated it was effective for the improvement of autonomous learning skills. The factors students found to be effective and ineffective as well as suggestions offered to improve the blended language course were discussed. The findings will be able to improve language achievement and autonomous learning for future learner success as well as curriculum design in other foreign language courses in DLIFLC or other institutions.

Keywords: blended language learning, LMS, student perceptions, language achievement, learner autonomy, course effectiveness factors, curriculum design

Introduction

As colleges and universities have started offering more online educational opportunities, blended learning is one of the most important recent advances and has become well known in foreign language education (Ting & Chao, 2013). Blended learning, which combines the traditional face-to-face learning method with an online application, became popular and more practical for both teachers and learners because of its effective methodology for course delivery (Owston, York, & Murtha, 2013). To supplement the advantages of face-to-face classroom instruction, a LMS, the platform for online content and courses, has been used to assist course management, and has provided students with various benefits such as learning effectiveness, social interaction, autonomous learning, and access to knowledge and information (Juhary, 2013).

Consequently, in 2012 Osan LTD of the DLIFLC developed and implemented a blended Korean language course which combined traditional face-to-face learning with the

LMS, SAKAI. However, little is known about the factors that affect students' language learning outcomes with blended learning, especially in other foreign languages (Wu & Liu, 2013). Accordingly, this research attempted to initiate an in-depth and comprehensive study about students' perception of language achievement and autonomous learning from a blended Korean language course as well as the effectiveness factors to improve a foreign language curriculum and student success.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate student perceptions of course effectiveness factors for language proficiency as well as learner autonomy in a blended Korean language course to improve language achievement, especially in listening and reading comprehension skills. The anonymous survey was conducted online using Survey Monkey, and the questionnaire included two parts: biographic information and blended language experiences. American Air Force students, who attended intermediate and advanced blended Korean language courses applied with the LMS, SAKAI in 2014, 2015, and 2016 at the Osan LTD, DLIFLC in Korea, were invited to participate in the survey via personal email. This study is considered a phenomenological and exploratory case study because the researcher explored the participants' unique perceptions of their learning experiences in the blended Korean language courses.

Research Questions

By finding answers to the following questions, detracting methods were able to be removed, and focus was shifted to each student's trouble areas.

- Q1. How do students perceive the effectiveness of language achievement in especially listening and reading skill in a blended Korean language course which is combined face-to-face class with SAKAI, learning management system (LMS)?
- Q2. What factors do students perceive improve or hinder their listening and reading skills in a blended Korean language course?
- Q3. How do students perceive the improvement of autonomous learning skills in a blended Korean language course?
- Q4. What factors do students perceive improve or hinder their autonomous learning skills in a blended Korean language course?
- Q5. How do students perceive the effective blended language curriculum for student success?

In addition to the primary research questions, students were asked about course challenges and concerns, as well as for suggestions with the purpose to increase blended language course effectiveness and learner success.

Theoretical Framework

Sociocultural theory, constructivist theory, and metacognition theory provide a theoretical framework to inform this research because these theories share common characteristics, such as interaction, collaboration, constructive knowledge, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), scaffolding, as well as learner centered and authentic learning. According to Vygotsky's theory, students are not independent from their learning context, and their learning is influenced through their ZPD (Bashir-Ali, 2011). Vygotsky defined the ZPD as the distance between the actual developmental level and the level of potential development, and he emphasized communication and shared action in origin and cognitive language learning (Brook, 2013).

Sociocultural theory suggests that for a learner's intellectual growth and knowledge acquisition, social interaction and collaboration between the novice and expert learner should

occur within the novice learners' ZPD, and continuous negotiation between teacher and student should be involved in all teaching and learning activities (Shamir, 2013). The social interaction and collaboration is facilitated via scaffolding, which is a mediator providing external support from the instructor, peers, experts, or tools to help learners construct their knowledge (Schwieter, 2010). With the ubiquitousness of computing environments allowing students and instructors to interact with each other on the web or mobile community, computer mediated communication (CMC) has been found to increase not only students' linguistic development but also their success in using the target language through negotiations, collaborations, interactions and communications.

Constructivist theory is based upon foundational ideas of the sociocultural theory, which emphasizes social interaction and collaboration (Schwieter, 2010). Constructivist theory is based on mechanisms that learners should internalize knowledge taken from their own experiences and emphasizes authentic learning and a learner-centered focus for teaching and learning (Li, 2012). Interaction using technologies such as an LMS allows for instructors to provide a way to motivate and stimulate learners by applying authentic materials and student-centered activities through an online interface as well as a means for instructors to create a collaborative learning environment through peer and teacher interaction. In a well-planned online multimedia curriculum, students can not only practice constructivist learning by having access to the authentic materials and interacting with the instructors and other students but also improve learner autonomy by learning how to study.

Learner autonomy is a powerful tool to promote a learner's successful attainment of knowledge (Shamir, 2013). According to Kaur and Kaur Sidhu (2010), autonomous learners enthusiastically look for new knowledge and frequently engage with the cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social dimensions of the learning process. The most effective learners are conscious of their learning and have high metacognitive processes (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2008). Metacognitive awareness is the awareness of what an individual does or doesn't know (Unal, 2010). Metacognition is also defined as thinking about one's own thinking, an awareness of one's thought processes, learning how to learn, or self-regulated learning (Shamir, 2013). In second language learning, metacognition is also defined as the knowledge of the learner's learning styles and preferences (Brook, 2013). Helping students construct their knowledge is essential for metacognitive development. Direct instruction or collaboration with a mediator such as computers, teachers, and peers can guide students on how to connect previous experiences with new knowledge. In other words, designing curriculum and teaching with technology, such as an LMS, in conjunction with scaffolding will enhance metacognition skills because scaffolding can reduce the ZPD between the actual level and the potential level.

In conclusion, a theoretical lens frame work of blended learning with technology including sociocultural theory, constructivist theory, and metacognition theory not only increases the awareness of applicable notions and principles but also offers insight to the field of education in the ubiquitous computing environment. The three theories are interrelated, and the common final goal of the theories is to enhance the learners' cognitive development and autonomy by providing social interaction and collaboration with scaffolding. This research based on the three theories allows for investigating into how blended learning with an LMS influences students' language achievement and autonomous learning.

Methodology

This qualitative research followed a case study design. A case study design is the best approach for this research because the case study method is appropriate to provide an individual's description (Cozby, 2012). This study meets the criteria of a phenomenon and exploratory case study because the researcher explored the phenomenon of students'

perceptions of the effectiveness of language achievement and autonomous learning in a blended Korean language course. In this study, data were gathered through the anonymous online survey using Survey Monkey. The questionnaires were open-ended and included two parts: biographic information and blended language experiences, which asked for students' perceptions of their learning experiences in the blended Korean language course they took at the Osan LTD, Korea. The purpose of this research was to improve the student language achievement and the quality of the blended Korean language course. The collected data were analyzed based on each unit, and then the analyzed data were logically connected to the propositions after interpreting the findings based on the criteria.

For this research, a purposeful sampling strategy was used because this sampling can identify and select individuals' experiences about a phenomenon the researcher is interested in (Palinkas et. al, 2015). Based on the researcher's reserved student email list, 43 out of 73 students who took intermediate and advanced blended Korean language courses between 2014 and 2016 received an invitation letter via personal email explaining the purpose of study and consent form, and 16 out of the 43 voluntarily participated in the questionnaire online. Following Patton's (2001) recommendation for conducting a phenomenology case study, 10 respondents were selected based on two groups of Korean Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) results. All participants who received an invitation email read the online consent form for ethical considerations of human research before they started the survey. This study received approval from the Institutional Review Boards of Northcentral University before collecting the data. The researcher assured participants that all data would be confidential, and participants were allowed to leave the online survey at any time. The collected personal information was coded for confidentiality, categorized into themes, and organized into tables and figures to simplify the results. The data analysis reports the demographic information and developing themes in association with the main five questions and other concerns or suggestions.

Literature Review

The goal of this literature review was to explore existing information on blended language learning models with technology tools to gain further theoretical knowledge at the university level in foreign language education. In order to evaluate blended learning effectively, this literature review is presented in three parts consisting of background of blended learning, LMS, and benefits, challenges, and suggestions of blended learning.

Background of Blended Learning

Although online education has been popular due to student learning outcomes and cost efficiency, the use of blended approaches combining online activities and face-to-face instruction has been increasing in recent years and has become more common than either face-to-face or entirely online courses (Crawford, Barker, & Seyam, 2014). One of the main reasons is that instructors have used online learning to supplement deficiencies in face-to-face instruction instead of replacing traditional classroom teaching (Wing & Khe, 2011). In order to serve each student's needs, classroom teaching alone was not enough to suit individual requirements; however, online learning was able to provide students with an opportunity to prepare themselves with the skills for online learning (Banditvilai, 2016). Network technology such as an online learning management application has brought new opportunities for teaching and learning by building and managing online courses, and online learning tools can extend the benefits of the course by supplementing the advantages of traditional classroom teaching (Ting & Chao, 2013).

The terminology "blended learning" was established around the beginning of the 21st century, and its system is one that combines face-to-face instruction with internet and digital

media (Banditvilai, 2016). The term “blended learning” is used interchangeably with “hybrid learning” (Means et al., 2013). Thang et al. (2013) also described blended learning as a pedagogical approach, where the efficacy and social aspect of the classroom are combined with the technologically enhanced active learning of the online environment. Ting and Chao (2013) explained that blended learning has become more popular and practical in second language classrooms because online learning tools provide more options and many benefits such as increased effectiveness, extended scope for learning, and easily accessible knowledge and information. In blended instruction, students are expected to be motivated and have a self-regulated learning strategy for successful outcomes.

In conclusion, a blended approach focuses on the process and synergy of blending online and face-to-face learning methods rather than on the learning design. Therefore, an important correlation is expected to be found between blended learning experiences and final achievement (Poon, 2013). Although various learning management systems provide students with methods for self-learning in a blended learning environment, teachers and the traditional face-to-face classroom are still necessary for the majority of students (Ting & Chao, 2013). For this reason, blended learning has become more popular and practical for both teachers and learners.

A Learning Management System (LMS) in Blended Learning

In a blended learning course, a learning management system is often used to provide access to the learning materials after class and to enhance online interactions between instructor and student or student and student (Poon, 2013). LMS, a software system designed for teaching and learning, has been used in face-to-face classroom for course content organization, communication, assessment, gradebook, and management of materials and activities. The majority of higher education institutions of US colleges and universities have adopted LMS rapidly for course delivery and support of face-to-face instruction (Jane & Tanya, 2010). The most popular system available to most institutions is Blackboard, WebCT, Moodle, LAMS, and SAKAI. The challenge of utilizing one of these is finding a balance between its design and pedagogy. Some of the tools in an LMS can create collaborative learning environments inside and beyond the classroom by providing an opportunity for students to communicate with each other (Wanda, 2009).

According to Jane and Tanya (2010), the primary benefits of using an LMS for students are efficiency, accessibility of materials, flexibility, and participation in learning activities. In addition, LMS tools have been found to promote cognitive and emotional engagement with group members in the learning process, as well as individual learning autonomy within a community (Sardegna & Dugartsyrenova, 2014). For instance, asynchronous discussion forums, blogs, and wikis seem to enhance the process of knowledge sharing, and help monitor and facilitate critical thinking, self-reflection, and self-evaluation processes. Wanda (2009) also found that using LMS tools created a learner-centered, online collaborative environment, in which students better understood course concepts by reading other students’ comments on the discussion board and through engaging with the course material more frequently compared to a traditional class.

In a blended language course of higher education, faculty and students showed positive attitudes towards the use of an LMS because of advantages such as the students’ connection between in-class work and online work, as well as the engagement and integration, and interaction between the teachers and students (George-Walker, Hafeez-Baig, Gururajan, & Danaher, 2010). In a foreign language course, an LMS was found to improve students’ listening, speaking, reading, grammar, writing, and pronunciation skills through interaction with peers and instructors on the discussion board, and was helpful in having students learn about various registers and the appropriateness of language constructions in different contexts

(Alberth, 2013). In second language education, tools such as weblog, discussion board, and instant messenger contribute to students' linguistic development as well as their autonomy by having them negotiate between using the multiple resources provided through the LMS.

Despite the many benefits of using an LMS for the transformation of education, researchers found some concerns and dissatisfaction regarding the effectiveness of LMS tools for student learning. First, some instructors have adopted only a limited number of tools from LMSs, such as communication or material distribution because of the additional demands on time required by other tools. Secondly, some students had difficulty accepting responsibility for their own learning and felt isolated from the social interaction that they get in a face-to-face classroom environment (Poon, 2013). Additionally, lack of support for course design and in acquiring new technology skills for use in the online community, discussion forums, and student management pose challenges for universities. In particular, both instructors' and students' perceived value of an LMS and their previous experience with technology have an impact on the usage of the LMS and student satisfaction. For instance, the students who perceived online discussion as burdensome and time-consuming found collaborative tasks to be purposeless and boring (Sardegna & Dugartsyrenova, 2014). Foreign language instructors have also pointed out the limitations of an LMS for language learning because these systems have not been specifically designed for language learning and its teaching purposes. When the LMS is used effectively to help students manage, organize, and keep track of their learning, the LMS course will be viewed as the greatest benefit to learning, but when the LMS is over-, under-, or misused, the course will be seen as a constraint to learning.

Benefits, Challenges, and Suggestions of Blended Learning

In the blended learning environment, students can have various benefits such as cost effectiveness, more linguistic and cultural sources, communities for educators and learners, and self-learning opportunities for students (Ting & Chao, 2013). According to Poon (2013), several research studies have shown that blended learning courses improved student learning outcomes and decreased student drop-failure-withdrawal rates. Another key benefit of blended learning is to reinforce the student's autonomy, reflection, research, and their own pace of learning by allowing them to access the internet whenever and wherever they want. Most of all, blended learning promotes student satisfaction and motivation by involving them in the learning process and developing their critical thinking skills. Student satisfaction in blended learning has been reported to be higher than in purely face-to-face courses. Online materials in the blended learning class improved integration and interaction by using an LMS (Grgurovic, 2011). Students responded that they were able to see the connection between class work and online work. According to Poon (2013), blended learning has the ability to foster not only a professional learning community, but social cohesion as well because online learning is combined with face-to-face interaction. Most of all, blended learning has potential to provide students with transformative, active and meaningful learning.

However, although the blended learning environment enhances student learning, there are some challenges for both teachers and students (Poon, 2013). For students, this includes isolated feelings, expectations of less class work, and lack of time management skills and responsibility for personal learning due to the reduced social interaction in a face-to-face classroom. Another challenge is difficulty with technologies such as poor Internet connections and lack of support for course design from universities. Time concerns and acquiring new technology skills are challenges for both faculty and students, and these can lead them to feel overwhelmed and tired. In the blended learning environment, a number of students preferred face-to-face teaching to online learning, and some students reported the lack of real-time discussion with peers and instructors and printed materials or textbooks (George-Walker et al., 2010). Since these challenges affected student engagement and

motivation, students' responsibility for their learning has been emphasized (Grgurovic, 2011). However, students' autonomic engagement and responsibility for their learning are ongoing challenges in blended learning. It is difficult to find the optimal balance between face-to-face teaching and online learning. Therefore, various blended learning techniques are necessary to optimize students' successful learning.

For a successful and sustainable blended learning environment, the curriculum for blended learning should be reviewed and adjusted, and faculty should put commitment and enthusiasm into a course and improve technical ability. In order to increase students' satisfaction in blended learning, the following factors are suggested: 1) making joint efforts by teachers and students; 2) improving the system interaction and function; 3) improving both teachers and students' computer skills and providing necessary assistance; 4) giving students timely feedback, interacting with students frequently, and encouraging students to interact with others; and 5) designing and organizing teaching activities and balancing the classroom teaching and online teaching activities (Wu & Liu, 2013). Most of all, a successful key factor is to consider the pedagogy and instructional design by utilizing the technology tools, interacting with students, motivating students for online discussion, and delivering online content materials (Wing & Khe, 2011). Since the blended learning environment provides students with a variety of face-to-face and online activities and cooperative opportunities in their learning experiences, students are required to be more active and independent for their success of learning and motivation (Isiguzel, 2014).

Findings

For this study, a qualitative questionnaire was conducted anonymously online through Survey Monkey. The questionnaire was designed with two parts including basic demographic data and blended Korean language learning experiences. 10 out of 16 respondents were selected based on two groups of Korean DLPT results, advanced (3/3) and intermediate levels (below 3/3).

The Part I questionnaire included eight questions numbered 1 to 8, and collected basic demographics-- family, education, Korean language proficiency, and blended learning background information. The analysis of this questionnaire was used to determine whether any connection existed between the participants with similar responses from Part II and their respective backgrounds. All participants had obtained at least college credits or above including AA, BA, and MA degrees, but only three students, two female and one male, had experiences in blended learning at colleges. Their age group was 20 to 40, and 2 out of 10 were female. Six out of ten students were married with kids, and four were single.

The Part II questionnaire included seven questions numbered 9 to 15, and were developed to explore the five main research questions asking for the students' perceptions of effectiveness factors for language proficiency and learner autonomy in a blended Korean language course. Regarding language achievement in a blended Korean language course, all 10 participants expressed that it was effective for language learning, and one participant stated it was also effective for teaching because instructors can monitor activity, progress, and results without going to the classroom. The other reasons given for the effectiveness of language achievement were (1) providing students an opportunity to understand the content by themselves; (2) exposing students to the target language; (3) reducing English during language learning; (4) allowing students to access all materials in a self-paced manner; and (5) providing feedback and tailored techniques for studying. Eight respondents listed additional factors for improving listening and reading skills: self-study time; access to resources and materials through SAKAI; exposure to variations in grammar, reading, and audio-visual content; immediate feedback; and the discussion board to read other students' posts. Regarding the hindering factors for listening and reading skills, the following five

themes were found: (1) insufficient time for reviewing the content materials, (2) relying on the students to do more work without an instructor present, (3) unclear nuances in language when using SAKAI for self-study, (4) unreliable Internet, and (5) delay in cognitive processing.

As to the improvement of autonomous learning skills in a blended Korean language course, 5 out of 10 participants answered that the blended Korean language course clearly improved autonomous learning skills, but most of them did not think they were self-driven learners. Three out of the five who stated it was effective for autonomous learning were intermediate-level students who received 2/3 or 3/2+ in listening and reading skills, and two participants were advanced-level students who received 3/3. Conversely, six participants responded that the improvement of autonomous learning skills in the course was dependent on elements of the learning process such as curriculum, variety of activities, instructors, and students' motivation and styles. To improve students' autonomous learning skills, the following factors were found: (1) autonomous study sessions, (2) online tools and ease of access to the materials, (3) the learn to learn process; and (4) the instructor's awareness of students' needs in reaching their goals. As hindering factors for the improvement of autonomous learning skills, no instructor presence outside the classroom and other classmates' negative attitudes toward autonomous learning were also discovered in this study. Regarding the effective blended language curriculum for success of language learning, 9 out of 10 participants agreed the blended course was effective and beneficial to learning, but one participant remained unsure.

Although most participants stated the blended language curriculum for language learning success was effective, there are some challenges and concerns to be addressed including (1) over-reliance of *SAKAI* use, (2) preference of face-to-face classes, (3) students' lack of understanding of critical content, (4) necessity of tailored material for individual students, (5) excessive additional assignments, (6) using new technologies, and (7) too much work completed without an instructor. Participants suggested the following regarding the improvement of language achievement and autonomous learning skills: (1) to provide students with self-study techniques; (2) to introduce a chat feature, other applications, and a writing composition element; and (3) to reduce the amount of coursework. In addition, the teachers' and students' roles were emphasized to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the blended environment.

Discussion

In this research, all 10 survey participants perceived the course to be effective for language achievement in listening and reading skills. This finding supported the literature stating computer mediated communications (CMC) such as a learning management system have been found to increase students' linguistic development and success in using the target language through negotiations, collaborations, interactions, and communications (Dang & Robertson, 2010). On the other hand, concerning the increase of independent learning skills, this research did not fully demonstrate it because only 5 out of 10 participants perceived the blended Korean language course improved their autonomous learning skills, and the other half said improvement was dependent on elements of the learning process such as curriculum, activities, instructors, and students' motivation and learning styles. This finding is in support with Vygotsky's theory, which explains students are not independent from their learning context, and their learning is influenced through their ZPD by communicating and sharing action in origin and cognitive language learning (Bashir-Ali, 2011). Dang and Robertson (2010) also found the level of effects on each student varied due to the different interpretations of learning, online habits, and lack of confidence in managing their own

learning even if the LMS component was found to support students with initiating, monitoring, and evaluating their learning to improve learner autonomy.

Regarding the effectiveness of successful language learning in the blended Korean language course, 9 out of 10 participants answered that it was effective and beneficial to language learning, and one participant said he was not sure about its effectiveness. Two participants gave the reason for effectiveness as its allowing student's access to materials outside of classroom hours and the success in building Korean language skills. This finding concurred with Yu et al. (2010) who also examined teachers' and students' LMS experiences about language teaching and learning, and discovered all participants generally had a positive attitude towards the use of the LMS because it provides collaborative learning and convenient access to course materials and language resources. However, five out of nine participants expressed their concerns about the lack of traditional face-to-face student-teacher settings such as one-on-one speaking practice or a real-time chat function. Therefore, the findings support the literature which emphasized academic institutions' support system for the development of LMS design for language teaching and learning is necessary to minimize the disadvantages of blended language courses.

Limitations

The researcher was aware of the limitations of this study because of the sample size and the case study methodology. Generalization of the case study results was difficult due to the small size and similar population of participants. Since Osan LTD offers Korean language courses to only American Air Force students, the sample population was a limitation. Another limitation was the potential bias because the researcher and participants were from the same LTD. Since the researcher taught the participants and was familiar with their attitudes or motivation towards studying the Korean language, reporting of the researcher about the students' perceptions might include bias. Also, validity can be considered a potential threat, but a reviewer audited this study to avoid possible bias and subjectivity. The researcher provided the study information to participants via email before they took the survey for transparency and credibility of the research process. The awareness of the researcher's bias and the feedback of the reviewer helped to mitigate these limitations.

Recommendation

From the research findings, the need for interaction and collaboration between teachers and students was noted to improve students' cognitive language learning. Teachers and students should continuously negotiate on teaching and learning activities and curriculum. Moreover, teachers should receive further training on the effectiveness of blended language education, how to design a student-centered curriculum using LMS tools, and how to help learners construct their knowledge and become autonomous learners. Also, technology support including the use of LMS tools for faculty and students was identified to help learner success in using the target language through negotiations, collaborations, interactions, and communication. Before the start of a blended course, students need to receive an orientation regarding the effectiveness of blended language learning, use of LMS tools, the importance of learner autonomy, and realistic expectations for students to improve their autonomous learning and language achievement. A more detailed study about the effectiveness of faculty and student training and the faculty and students' grasp of autonomous learning skills should be completed to better determine the effectiveness of blended language education and the significance of learner autonomy. Interviews of a focus group, a large number of participants for data collection, and compared perceptions between faculty and students are also recommended for a future study. A close examination of the course effectiveness and challenges for faculty that may increase or decrease the benefits of blended language

education should also be completed. Finally, it is recommended that further studies for blended language learning be completed on a regular basis as student demographics change and emerging education technology tools are necessary for student use.

Conclusions

The current study found most students recognized the effectiveness of language learning and achievement in the blended Korean language course, but they were not confident about the effectiveness of autonomous learning either because they were not self-driven learners or they perceived it dependent on other learning elements of the blended curriculum. Regarding the improving and hindering factors of language achievement and learner autonomy, the following were identified: the significance of autonomous learning sessions, the need for improvement of blended curricula for autonomous learning, and the requirement to train for better understanding of learner autonomy, the language learning process, and more efficient use of an LMS. Furthermore, students depended on the teachers' role for assistance such as immediate feedback, tailored materials, and altering the amount of assignments. Therefore, further study about teachers' perceptions of blended language courses as well as training for designing and teaching a blended language course are recommended. Although various factors were not recognized by this study due to the small number of participants, the findings could contribute to increasing language course effectiveness, satisfaction, and successful student learning in the blended language course modality.

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