Study on the Influence of Blended Teaching Mode on English Learners' Motivation under the Background of Information Technology

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Abstract: With the rapid development of Information Technology (IT) and the popularization of IT-based education, blended learning mode (BLM) under the background of IT has emerged. Thus, the investigation into English learners' motivation under the IT-based BLM is conducive to the development of China's college English teaching. Both the quantitative and qualitative research methods are employed in this study to investigate the issue that whether BLM have effects on English learners' motivation in universities. It can be found that the instrumental motivation is the major motivation of English learners from 6 classes. Three motivational types are higher than the average and the motivational intensity is considerably high. After a semester, three motivational types and intensity in blended learning group (BLG) have promoted separately. The results can demonstrate that employing IT-based BLM is feasible and superior, which can positively motivate foreign language teaching and learning.

1. Introduction
As the center of classroom teaching, learners play a very important role in foreign language teaching. Back in the late 1950s, Gardner and Lambert began to study foreign language motivation from the perspective of social psychology. They provided a new research perspective in the field of linguistics. Motivating students by some methods can improve learners' learning dynamic and urge learners to learn language more effectively and continuously. Thus, motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the defectiveness and success of second/foreign language learning, and has been a research focus in the field of applied linguistics. Nowadays, the deep integration of IT and education brings a systematic reform to foreign language teaching, and traditional teaching mode cannot cater to the present talent cultivation and social demand. Thus, studies on the combination of IT and foreign language teaching are gradually increasing. As one of the new teaching modes under the background of IT, BLM provides a new research perspective for looking into foreign language learning motivation in China. Probing into English learners' motivation under the background of BLM based on IT will make a contribution to the innovation of foreign language teaching mode and be conducive to the further development of foreign language teaching in China.

2. Advantages of Blended Teaching in the Context of Information Technology
At present, information technology has been widely used in teaching, and English teaching is also a part of it. Under the background of information technology, English blended teaching refers to the application of information technology to English teaching classroom, and the two are combined to provide students with a more convenient learning platform. It can bring happiness to students' learning through rich forms, so that students can understand and master knowledge more clearly. In addition, it
can also bring new teaching methods for teachers and provide more teaching possibilities. The advantages of blended teaching in the context of information technology are described as follow.

**2.1. Improve Students' Ability to Learn Independently.**
The development of information technology has greatly facilitated students' learning and brought more possibilities for students to learn independently. In the past, students' learning mainly relied on the teacher's class teaching and passively accepted knowledge. After class, there are difficulties that cannot be solved quickly and effectively, which greatly affects students' learning. With the assistance of information technology, students can learn not only through the teacher’s class, but also back home to consolidate and review.

The development of information technology has improved students' ability to learn independently, making it possible to study at home. The development of information technology gives students more opportunities to discover all aspects of knowledge, and to learn and master through multiple channels. It provides students with multiple choices for learning English, enhances students' ability to learn independently, and also enhances students' ability to choose independently in life.

**2.2. Conducive to Improving oral English Ability.**
Under the traditional teaching mode, oral English teaching has always had major problems, and most students are in a stage where they are afraid to pronounce and inaccurate. It is difficult for them to quickly integrate into this language, and there are not many opportunities for language training at ordinary times, so they can only understand through teaching in class. With the support of information technology, the use of a blended teaching model can help students consolidate their knowledge after class, and can conduct one-to-one oral practice without worrying about communication problems. With more oral training, students will be more confident and daring to speak up.

Enrich Teaching Content. In the traditional mode of teaching, the teacher basically focuses on textbook knowledge and prepares lessons and the process is boring. Students have lost interest in learning, and teachers have no more teaching methods. The interaction between teachers and students is also relatively small, and the lack of communication makes it impossible to understand each other and hinders the development of teaching. The introduction of information technology provides more possibilities for teaching, and teachers can have more teaching choices. The new teaching model not only enriches the classroom content, but also promotes communication with students. It makes the teacher-student relationship harmonious and makes a great contribution to the development of teaching.

**3. Research Method**

**3.1. Research Questions.**
From the perspective of learners, this study makes an in-depth study on the influence of blended English teaching mode on learning motivation, aiming to put forward optimization suggestions on classroom link design, online resource development and online teaching interaction under the mode, so as to promote the English blended teaching mode with new characteristics in the new era. This study will probe into the two questions as follows:

1. Does blended teaching mode have effects on English learners’ motivation in universities? If yes, what are the affecting factors? If no, what are the reasons?
2. How to motivate English learners under blended teaching mode in universities?

**3.2. Research Objective.**
The research samples were randomly selected from six classes of a university, total of 296 students. Two of them are liberal arts classes and four are science classes. The six classes are divided into three groups, each of which is taught by the same teacher. Each teacher implements blended teaching (BL group) in one class and the other in traditional teaching mode (NBL group). According to the students'
English scores, the students' entrance scores are ranked, and each class is divided into three groups: good, medium and poor. After a semester of blended teaching experiment, the learning motivation scale was used to measure. The grouping of experimental subjects is shown in Table 1.

### Table 1 The grouping of experimental subjects

| Group       | Student number | Category   | Good | Medium | Poor |
|-------------|----------------|------------|------|--------|------|
| BL group I  | 62             | Science    | 20   | 21     | 21   |
| NBL group I | 53             | Liberal arts | 17   | 18     | 18   |
| BL group II | 42             | Science    | 14   | 14     | 14   |
| NBL group II| 52             | Liberal arts | 18   | 17     | 17   |
| BL group III| 40             | Science    | 13   | 14     | 13   |
| NBL group III| 47           | Science    | 15   | 15     | 17   |
| Total       | 296            | -          | 97   | 99     | 100  |

#### 3.3 Research Tools

This article selects a second language learning motivation scale that has high reliability and validity and is widely used: the "Learning Motivation Subscale" designed and developed by Pintrich et al. The scale contains six dimensions and a total of eighteen descriptive items. The six dimensions are: internal goal orientation, external goal orientation, task value, learning belief control, learning and performance self-efficacy, test anxiety. The questionnaire uses a graded scoring method. According to the survey object's own situation, each question can be scored from 1 to 7. Finally, 291 valid questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire data were analyzed by SPSS software, and the method of covariance analysis was used to analyze whether the results of the pre-test and post-test on the six dimensions of English learning motivation of students with different English foundation were significant or not.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

##### 4.1 Status Quo of English Learning Motivation Types

After the researcher collected the results of the pilot study, the questionnaire was formally distributed to all the students from six classes in order to explore the current situation of English learner’s motivation. 296 questionnaires can be distributed and collected. 291 questionnaires are valid. The valid rate is 98.3%. The reliability is 0.87> 0.7 in the formal survey, as shown in Table 2.

### Table 2 Reliability of questionnaire of motivation

|               | Cronbach’s Alpha | N of items |
|---------------|------------------|------------|
| Pilot study   | 0.89             | 34         |
| Formal study  | 0.85             | 34         |

The data collected is analyzed by SPSS, and the current situation of motivational types of NBL group and BL group, as shown in Table 3. The means of overall students’ three motivational types are all higher than the average (2.50). In general, the order of three motivational types is instrumental motivation > integrative motivation > situational motivation.

### Table 3 Current situation of motivational types

| Motivational Type | Group | Number | Mean | Standard deviation |
|-------------------|-------|--------|------|--------------------|
| Situational       | BL group | 143   | 2.93 | 0.66               |
|                   | NBL group | 148  | 2.99 | 0.69               |
| Integrative       | BL group | 143   | 3.57 | 0.70               |
|                   | NBL group | 148  | 3.45 | 0.69               |
| Instrumental      | BL group | 143   | 3.71 | 0.52               |
|                   | NBL group | 148  | 3.56 | 0.58               |
The mean of the situational motivation of NBLG (2.93) is slightly lower than that of BLG (2.99). While the mean of the integrative motivation of NBLG (3.57) is slightly higher than that of BLG (3.4). Likewise, the mean of the instrumental motivation of NBLG (3.66) is slightly higher than that of BLG (3.56). The order of two groups’ motivational types are all instrumental motivation > integrative motivation > situational motivation according to the values of mean, which demonstrates that the major driving force of college students’ English learning is instrumental motivation. English learners want to use English as a tool to achieve such specific goals as scores, information media and individual development. Besides, all the values of mean from two groups are higher than the average, which means English learners’ three types of motivation reach a level above the average in general.

The present study explores whether two groups have significant difference on three motivational types by using Independent-Samples T test. The result shows that the P value of two groups’ three motivational types are all higher than 0.05 so that three motivational types of two types have no significant difference. Therefore, the English learners of two groups can be studied as the subjects continuously.

4.2. Influence of Blended Teaching Mode on English Learning Motivation.
At the beginning of the semester and at the end of the semester, the researchers conducted pre-test and post-test respectively on the students with good scores in the BL group and NBL group. In order to eliminate the mixed interference of the learning motivation scores before the start of the experiment on the learning motivation post-test scores, this paper conducted a covariance analysis on the two groups of students’ learning motivation post-test scores: take the pre-test scores of the six dimensions of learning motivation as covariates, class as a fixed factor, and post-test results of the six dimensions of learning motivation as the dependent variable. At the same time, the same data processing is performed on the pre-test and post-test of medium and poor students in the experimental class and the control class.

4.2.1. Learning motivation of students with good grade
For the students with good grades in the experimental class and the control class, the covariance analysis results of the post-test by SPSS 17.0 are shown in Table 4.

| Learning motivation                          | Mean square | F    | P   |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|------|-----|
| Internal goal orientation                   | 4.574       | 0.070| 0.799|
| External goal orientation                   | 9.896       | 0.265| 0.112|
| Task value                                  | 4.009       | 0.003| 0.987|
| Learning belief control                     | 2.565       | 0.057| 0.818|
| Learning performance and self-efficacy      | 12.073      | 0.193| 0.661|
| Examination anxiety                         | 5.778       | 0.515| 0.481|

As shown in Table 4, after one semester’s experiment, the P values of the students with good scores in BL group and NBL group in the six dimensions of English learning motivation are greater than 0.05, that is, there is no significant difference. The results show that the use of blended teaching mode in classroom teaching has no significant impact on the learning motivation of students with good grades.

4.2.2. Learning motivation of students with medium grade
For the students with medium grades in the experimental class and the control class, the covariance analysis results of the post-test by SPSS 17.0 are shown in Table 5.

| Learning motivation                          | Mean square | F    | P   |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|------|-----|
| Internal goal orientation                   | 6.180       | 4.171| 0.05 |
| External goal orientation                   | 1.466       | 5.078| 0.032|
| Learning motivation                          | Mean square | F     | P     |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| Internal goal orientation                   | 6.906       | 5.303 | 0.029 |
| External goal orientation                   | 6.763       | 0.088 | 0.772 |
| Task value                                  | 12.849      | 1.205 | 0.282 |
| Learning belief control                     | 7.101       | 0.194 | 0.664 |
| Learning performance and self-efficacy      | 11.948      | 2.422 | 0.132 |
| Examination anxiety                         | 12.941      | 0.979 | 0.332 |

As shown in Table 5, in BL group and NBL group, the results show that the p value of the middle score students' post-test English learning motivation is less than 0.05 in the two dimensions of external goal orientation and task value, with significant difference. This shows that the use of blended teaching mode in classroom teaching, compared with the traditional teaching mode, has a significant impact on the learning motivation of students with medium grades in these two dimensions. In addition, in terms of external goal orientation and task value, the mean value of BL group was significantly higher than that of NBL group. This shows that the blended teaching mode can significantly improve the students' scores in learning motivation, external goal orientation and task value compared with the traditional teaching mode.

4.2.3 Learning motivation of students with poor grade

For the students with poor grades in the experimental class and the control class, the covariance analysis results of the post-test by SPSS 17.0 are shown in Table 6.

As shown in Table 6, the p value of the post-test English learning motivation score of the poor students in the two classes is less than 0.05, with significant difference. This shows that compared with the traditional teaching mode, the learning motivation of students with poor performance has significant difference in the dimension of internal goal orientation. In addition, the mean value of BL group was significantly higher than that of NBL group. This shows that compared with traditional teaching, under the blended teaching mode, students with poor performance have a significant improvement in the internal goal-oriented dimension.

5. Conclusion

From the results of covariance analysis, for students with better grades, the blended teaching model has no significant effect on improving students’ English learning motivation. However, for stimulating the learning motivation of students with medium and poor English proficiency, the blended teaching model shows great advantages. When setting up each teaching task, the teacher should clearly indicate the formative evaluation method to the students in advance, give moderate points encouragement, and mobilize the students' learning enthusiasm. Teachers should try their best to use more innovative teaching content and innovative teaching methods, so that students can make full use of the fragmented time and can use their smartphones for learning at any place. The vivid audio-visual resources and innovative task forms in the blended teaching bring new stimulation to the students and satisfy their curiosity and curiosity.

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