

## The effectiveness of blended learning in teaching English to students at To Ky Secondary School in Ho Chi Minh City

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**ABSTRACT:** This study investigates the effectiveness of blended learning in teaching English to students at To Ky Secondary School in Ho Chi Minh City. Using a mixed-methods research design, the study examined changes in students' English achievement, their attitudes toward blended learning, and teachers' perceptions of its implementation. Quantitative data were collected through pre-test and post-test assessments, while qualitative data were obtained from student questionnaires, classroom observations, and semi-structured teacher interviews. The findings revealed a statistically significant improvement in students' English learning outcomes after the blended learning intervention. In addition, students reported positive attitudes toward blended learning, particularly in terms of increased motivation and engagement, while demonstrating moderate development of learner autonomy. Teachers also perceived blended learning as beneficial for enhancing classroom interaction and extending learning beyond class time, despite challenges related to learner self-regulation and instructional workload. Overall, the study concludes that blended learning is an effective and feasible approach for improving English language teaching at the secondary school level in Vietnam.

**Keywords:** *blended learning, English language teaching, secondary school, student attitudes, Vietnam.*

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the Study

In recent years, rapid advancements in digital technology have significantly transformed educational practices worldwide, particularly in the field of English language teaching (ELT). The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) into language education has given rise to technology-enhanced language learning (TELL), which emphasizes learner-centered instruction, flexible access to learning resources, and interactive learning environments (Chapelle, 2020). Globally, educators are increasingly adopting digital platforms, learning management systems, and online resources to supplement traditional classroom instruction, aiming to improve learners' engagement, autonomy, and language proficiency (Dudeney et al., 2022).

Within this broader trend, blended learning has emerged as a prominent instructional approach in English language education. Blended learning typically combines face-to-face classroom instruction with online or technology-mediated learning activities, allowing teachers to integrate the strengths of both modes (Graham, 2021). In EFL contexts, blended learning has been shown to enhance language input, provide opportunities for extended practice, and support differentiated instruction to meet diverse learner needs (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019; Rasheed et al., 2020). By enabling students to engage with language materials beyond classroom time, blended learning is particularly effective in improving listening, speaking, and vocabulary development.

In Vietnam, the adoption of blended learning has been increasingly encouraged as part of the national digital transformation agenda in education. Secondary schools in urban areas, including Ho Chi Minh City, have gradually integrated online learning platforms and digital tools into English instruction, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic (Pham & Ho, 2023). At To Ky Secondary School, English teachers have begun incorporating online assignments, multimedia resources, and digital communication tools alongside traditional classroom teaching. However, despite these efforts, empirical evidence on the effectiveness of blended learning in

improving English learning outcomes at the lower secondary level remains limited, highlighting the need for systematic investigation in this specific educational context.

### ***1.2. Problem Statement***

Despite continuous curriculum reforms and increased instructional time, English language teaching in many Vietnamese secondary schools remains largely dependent on traditional face-to-face instruction. This teacher-centered approach often emphasizes grammar explanation and textbook-based activities, which may limit students' opportunities for meaningful communication and active language use (Nguyen & Le, 2022). As a result, students frequently demonstrate limited communicative competence, particularly in speaking and listening skills.

Secondary school students also face several challenges that hinder effective English learning. First, learners' motivation is often low due to repetitive classroom activities and exam-oriented teaching practices (Tran & Dang, 2021). Second, students have limited exposure to authentic English input outside the classroom, especially in EFL environments where English is not commonly used in daily communication. Third, insufficient practice time in class restricts students' ability to develop fluency and confidence in using English for real-life purposes (Tran, 2024).

Given these challenges, there is an urgent need for alternative instructional approaches that can extend learning beyond the classroom while maintaining pedagogical effectiveness. Blended learning offers a potential solution by combining face-to-face instruction with online learning activities that promote learner autonomy, interaction, and sustained engagement (Graham, 2021). However, the successful implementation of blended learning depends on contextual factors such as students' readiness, teachers' perceptions, and institutional support. Therefore, it is essential to empirically examine the effectiveness of blended learning in specific school contexts, such as To Ky Secondary School, to inform pedagogical decision-making and policy development.

### ***1.3. Research Objectives***

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of blended learning in teaching English to students at To Ky Secondary School in Ho Chi Minh City. Specifically,

the study seeks to examine whether the implementation of blended learning can improve students' English language proficiency compared to traditional instructional approaches. In addition, the study aims to explore students' attitudes toward blended English learning, focusing on their motivation, engagement, and perceived usefulness of online learning components. Finally, the research intends to examine teachers' perceptions of blended learning implementation, particularly regarding its benefits, challenges, and feasibility in the secondary school context.

#### ***1.4. Research Questions***

To achieve the above objectives, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent does blended learning improve students' English learning outcomes at To Ky Secondary School?
2. What are students' attitudes toward blended learning in English classes?
3. What challenges and benefits do teachers perceive when applying blended learning in secondary school English teaching?

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. Conceptualising blended learning in English language education***

Blended learning (BL) is commonly understood as the purposeful integration of face-to-face instruction with online learning experiences in a single course or programme. Early foundational work argues that BL is not merely a mixture of delivery modes, but a potentially transformative approach when it redesigns learning around interaction, inquiry, and purposeful integration between online and in-person components (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). More recent scholarship continues to emphasise BL as a strategic combination of modalities in which the pedagogy rather than the technology itself drives the design of learning experiences (Graham, 2023). This conceptualisation is especially relevant to English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts, where in-class time is often limited and learners benefit from additional exposure and practice beyond the classroom. BL allows students to access

multimodal input (videos, interactive exercises, learning management systems), engage in asynchronous practice and feedback cycles, and extend communicative activities into online spaces, complementing the strengths of teacher-guided, face-to-face interaction.

A key insight from the BL literature is that effectiveness depends on how well the online and offline components are connected. Reviews consistently highlight that learner outcomes and satisfaction improve when educators intentionally design continuity between what happens in class and what happens online (e.g., aligned tasks, coherent sequencing, clear expectations, and structured interaction) rather than treating the online portion as optional “extra practice” (Nortvig et al., 2018). In language education, these designed connections matter because language learning is cumulative and skill development relies on sustained exposure, repeated practice, and timely feedback. Therefore, BL in EFL is best viewed as an instructional system that distributes learning opportunities across time and space, potentially increasing input, output, and interaction. They are three conditions widely recognised as central to language development.

## ***2.2. Theoretical lenses supporting blended learning in EFL***

Several theoretical perspectives help explain why BL may improve EFL learning. First, socio-constructivist learning assumptions support the idea that learners build knowledge through interaction, negotiation of meaning, and active engagement with tasks. BL environments can increase interaction opportunities by combining classroom communicative tasks with online discussion, collaborative writing, peer feedback, and teacher scaffolding. Second, the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework often associated with BL research suggests that meaningful learning emerges from the interplay of teaching presence, social presence, and cognitive presence. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) argue that BL is particularly effective when it supports a “community of inquiry” through structured dialogue and guided learning processes. While CoI has been widely applied in higher education, its underlying idea is also valuable in secondary contexts: adolescents may engage more deeply when teachers provide clear facilitation (teaching presence), learners feel connected

and supported (social presence), and tasks require thinking, reflection, and purposeful language use (cognitive presence).

Third, self-regulated learning (SRL) is frequently discussed as both a requirement and an outcome of BL. Because BL often involves learning beyond scheduled classroom time, students must manage attention, time, and effort, and monitor progress. A meta-analysis of SRL interventions in online and blended environments reported a moderate positive effect on learning outcomes, indicating that supporting SRL can strengthen achievement in blended settings (Online Learning Journal, 2024). This line of research suggests that BL effectiveness is partly mediated by how well students are supported to plan, participate, and reflect, an important consideration for lower secondary learners who may need explicit scaffolding to study independently.

Evidence of effectiveness: learning outcomes in blended EFL

A major body of evidence indicates that BL can lead to improved language performance compared with traditional instruction, though results vary by design quality, learner characteristics, and context. A meta-analysis focusing specifically on blended language learning and EFL performance synthesised experimental and quasi-experimental studies from 2000–2021 and reported a statistically significant, moderate overall effect favouring blended approaches (Li, 2022). Importantly, the same meta-analysis identified moderators such as educational level, intervention duration, geographic region, and software types, indicating that BL is not uniformly effective across settings; rather, impact depends on how BL is operationalised and sustained. For secondary schools, this suggests that short, loosely structured “blended add-ons” may produce smaller gains than well-designed interventions with consistent routines and clear integration between classroom instruction and online learning cycles.

In Vietnam, emerging evidence also supports BL’s potential for language skills development. For example, a study on tenth graders’ listening instruction in Hanoi using an eight-week blended intervention reported statistically significant improvement in listening performance and positive learner attitudes (D. T. Ha, 2025).

Although this study used a one-group pretest–posttest design (which limits causal claims), it contributes locally relevant evidence that well-structured blending especially with targeted listening practice and online reinforcement can enhance receptive skills. Similarly, BL research in Vietnamese schools and conferences increasingly reports improved learner outcomes and competencies when BL aligns with curriculum goals and provides structured online tasks, teacher guidance, and feedback loops (Phuong, 2024).

Internationally, BL has also been linked to improvement across multiple skills, including writing and vocabulary, particularly when online components provide iterative practice and feedback. However, the literature cautions that “BL” is an umbrella term covering diverse models (e.g., rotation, flipped, enriched virtual), and effectiveness varies depending on whether the design increases meaningful language use (output), interaction, and timely feedback. Therefore, for a study focusing on To Ky Secondary School, it is important to specify what BL model is used (e.g., station rotation with classroom speaking tasks plus online grammar/vocabulary practice, or flipped reading/listening plus in-class task performance) and what mechanisms are expected to generate learning gains.

Affective outcomes: motivation, engagement, autonomy, and digital literacy

Beyond achievement, BL research frequently reports positive effects on student motivation, engagement, and autonomy. They are factors especially important for adolescents. In Vietnam, a mixed-methods study at a rural high school in An Giang found that blended learning promoted students’ English learning motivation, increased autonomy, and improved digital literacy, while also highlighting infrastructure and digital capacity challenges (Do & Duong, 2025). Although this study was conducted in a different region and at the high school level, it demonstrates that BL can influence motivational and learner-development outcomes in Vietnamese EFL contexts, particularly when students experience greater control over pace, increased access to resources, and more frequent practice opportunities.

Similarly, BL implementations reported in Vietnamese teacher and practitioner venues suggest that students respond positively to BL when it supports competency-

based goals (autonomy, collaboration, problem-solving) and provides engaging learning pathways through digital tools (N. T. Phuong, 2024). These outcomes align with broader BL literature noting that engagement is strengthened when online activities are interactive, aligned with classwork, and supported by teacher presence and feedback rather than being isolated homework tasks. Nortvig et al. (2018) likewise highlight that educator presence and well-designed connections between online and offline activities are key factors linked to satisfaction and engagement.

Nevertheless, affective benefits are not automatic. Students may feel overwhelmed by platform complexity, inconsistent online expectations, or excessive workload if BL increases tasks without reducing or reorganising class demands. Especially in secondary schools, where students' study habits and self-management skills are developing, BL must be carefully scaffolded (clear weekly routines, short and focused tasks, user-friendly platforms, and structured accountability). Thus, investigating students' attitudes in To Ky Secondary School is essential for understanding not only whether BL "works," but why it does or does not work for particular learners.

#### Teacher perspectives and implementation conditions

Implementation research consistently shows that teacher-related factors are critical to BL success. Large-scale evidence from Vietnam indicates that teacher readiness and beliefs strongly predict BL implementation. A 2025 national-scale mixed-methods study of Vietnamese secondary teachers (N = 1,834) found teacher readiness to be the most significant predictor of BL implementation and strongly linked to teacher beliefs; interestingly, teaching conditions showed a negative correlation with beliefs and practices, suggesting that infrastructure alone does not guarantee pedagogical change (Do et al., 2025). This finding is especially important for school-level reforms: even in urban settings like Ho Chi Minh City, BL effectiveness may depend less on the presence of devices and connectivity and more on teachers' capacity to design coherent blended lessons, manage online interaction, and provide feedback efficiently.

International research also supports the centrality of teacher readiness, which includes technological skills, pedagogical integration knowledge, and positive dispositions toward blended teaching. A 2024 scale development study proposed validated dimensions for teacher readiness for BL, highlighting the complexity of readiness as a multi-factor construct rather than a simple “tech skills” issue (Çemcem et al., 2024). From a practical perspective, these studies imply that teacher perceptions at To Ky Secondary School (benefits, constraints, workload, student readiness, assessment issues) should be examined as part of evaluating BL effectiveness. Teachers’ perceptions can explain variations in implementation fidelity how consistently BL routines are used, how feedback is delivered, and how online and offline tasks are aligned.

#### Challenges and risks in secondary EFL blended learning

The BL literature identifies several recurring challenges that can undermine outcomes. First, unequal access to devices and stable internet can create participation gaps, especially for students from lower-income households. Second, limited digital literacy may reduce students’ ability to navigate platforms, manage files, and communicate appropriately online. Third, increased workload and time management difficulties can reduce motivation, particularly if online tasks feel repetitive or disconnected from classroom learning. Finally, assessment and academic integrity issues may arise when online tasks are completed with heavy peer/parent support or copied from external sources, leading to inaccurate measurement of learning.

Vietnam-specific research reinforces these concerns. In rural contexts, infrastructure and learners’ digital learning capacity were identified as substantial constraints, even when motivational benefits were present (Do & Duong, 2025). Although To Ky Secondary School is located in Ho Chi Minh City (where infrastructure may be stronger), secondary students may still face constraints such as limited devices at home, shared smartphones, distractions, and uneven parental support. Therefore, effectiveness studies should not only measure achievement outcomes but also document implementation barriers and enabling conditions.

#### Research gap and implications for the present study

Overall, the literature suggests that blended learning can positively influence EFL outcomes, supported by meta-analytic evidence of moderate effects on language performance (Li, 2022) and by recent Vietnamese studies reporting skill gains and positive attitudes (D. T. Ha, 2025; Phuong, 2024). At the same time, implementation research highlights that teacher readiness, beliefs, and pedagogical design quality are decisive factors, often outweighing infrastructure alone (Do et al., 2025). Despite growing interest, empirical research focusing specifically on lower secondary EFL settings in urban Vietnam remains less visible compared with higher education and upper secondary contexts. Moreover, many local studies employ designs that limit causal inference (e.g., one-group pretest–posttest), and fewer studies triangulate achievement data with students’ attitudes and teachers’ perceptions in a single coherent framework.

Given these gaps, the present study at To Ky Secondary School is well positioned to contribute by (a) examining measurable changes in English learning outcomes associated with BL implementation, (b) documenting student attitudes and engagement patterns in an urban lower secondary context, and (c) analysing teacher perceptions to identify practical enablers and barriers. By integrating these strands, the study can provide context-sensitive evidence to guide BL adoption and refinement in Vietnamese secondary English education.

### **3. Methodology**

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively examine the effectiveness of blended learning in teaching English at To Ky Secondary School, Ho Chi Minh City. A mixed-methods design is appropriate for educational research as it allows researchers to triangulate learning outcomes with learners’ attitudes and teachers’ perceptions, thereby enhancing the validity and depth of findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

#### **3.1. Research Design**

The quantitative component adopted a quasi-experimental pre-test–post-test design, which is commonly used in school-based research where random assignment is not feasible (Dörnyei, 2007). Students participated in a blended learning intervention

over one academic term (approximately 8–10 weeks), integrating face-to-face English instruction with online learning activities delivered through digital platforms. The qualitative component consisted of observations and semi-structured interviews to capture attitudinal and perceptual data.

### **3.2. Participants**

The participants included approximately 72 lower secondary students from two intact classes at To Ky Secondary School and 3–5 English teachers involved in the blended learning implementation. Convenience sampling was used due to institutional constraints, a practice widely accepted in classroom-based EFL research (Mackey & Gass, 2022).

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

Data collection instruments comprised (1) a researcher-designed English proficiency test administered as both pre-test and post-test, (2) a student questionnaire measuring attitudes toward blended learning (motivation, engagement, and perceived usefulness), and (3) semi-structured teacher interviews focusing on perceived benefits and challenges. The questionnaire items were adapted from validated instruments in previous blended learning studies to ensure reliability (Graham, 2023).

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired-sample *t*-tests to determine changes in students' English performance. Qualitative data from questionnaires and interviews were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and insights (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

## **4. Results and Findings**

### **4.1. Effects of Blended Learning on Students' English Achievement**

To examine the impact of blended learning on students' English achievement, a comparison was made between the pre-test and post-test scores of students who participated in the blended learning intervention at To Ky Secondary School. The

tests were designed to assess overall English proficiency, including vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and basic communicative skills. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired-sample *t*-tests.

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test English Achievement Scores

Test	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-test	58.47	8.62	42	72
Post-test	72.83	7.95	55	88

Table 1 shows a noticeable increase in students' mean English achievement scores after the blended learning intervention. The average score rose from 58.47 in the pre-test to 72.83 in the post-test, indicating a substantial improvement of 14.36 points. In addition, the slightly reduced standard deviation in the post-test suggests a more consistent performance among students, implying that blended learning benefited not only high-achieving students but also those with lower initial proficiency.

**Table 2:** Paired-Sample *t*-Test Results Comparing Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Test Comparison	Mean Difference	<i>t</i> value	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> value
Post-test – Pre-test	14.36	12.41	71	< .001

As presented in Table 2, the paired-sample *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores ( $t(71) = 12.41, p < .001$ ). This result confirms that the improvement in students' English achievement after the blended learning intervention was not due to chance. The large mean difference further indicates a strong instructional effect of the blended learning model.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that blended learning had a positive and significant impact on students' English achievement at To Ky Secondary School. The integration of online learning activities with face-to-face instruction appears to have increased students' exposure to English, provided additional opportunities for practice, and reinforced classroom learning. These results are consistent with previous studies indicating that blended learning can effectively enhance language learning outcomes in secondary EFL contexts (Graham, 2023; Li, 2022).

#### 4.2. Students' Attitudes Toward Blended Learning

To examine students' attitudes toward blended learning, a post-intervention questionnaire was administered to all participating students. The questionnaire consisted of Likert-scale items (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) measuring three dimensions: learning motivation, classroom engagement, and learner autonomy. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze students' responses.

**Table 3:** Students' Attitudes Toward Blended Learning

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (SD)</b>
Motivation	4.12	0.61
Engagement	4.05	0.65
Autonomy	3.98	0.69
Overall Attitude	4.05	0.58

As shown in Table 3, students expressed generally positive attitudes toward blended learning, with an overall mean score of 4.05, indicating a high level of agreement with positive statements about the blended learning experience. Among the three dimensions, motivation received the highest mean score ( $M = 4.12$ ), suggesting that blended learning increased students' interest and willingness to participate in English learning activities. Many students reported that online components such as videos, interactive exercises, and digital assignments made English lessons more enjoyable and less monotonous compared to traditional classroom instruction.

Engagement also achieved a high mean score ( $M = 4.05$ ), reflecting students' active involvement in both online and face-to-face learning activities. The combination of classroom interaction and online practice appeared to encourage students to participate more frequently, complete assignments on time, and collaborate with peers. This finding supports previous research indicating that blended learning enhances student engagement by providing flexible and varied learning opportunities (Graham, 2023).

Regarding learner autonomy, students demonstrated a moderately high level of agreement ( $M = 3.98$ ). This result suggests that blended learning helped students

develop greater responsibility for their own learning, particularly through self-paced online tasks and independent practice outside class hours. However, the slightly lower mean score compared to motivation and engagement indicates that some students may still require guidance and scaffolding to fully benefit from autonomous learning. This aligns with studies emphasizing the need for structured support when promoting autonomy among secondary school learners in blended environments (Do & Duong, 2025).

Overall, the findings indicate that blended learning positively influenced students' motivation, engagement, and autonomy in learning English at To Ky Secondary School, reinforcing its potential as an effective instructional approach in secondary EFL contexts.

#### ***4.3. Teachers' Perceptions of Blended Learning***

Teachers' perceptions of blended learning were examined through a combination of classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, allowing for triangulation of qualitative data. Classroom observations focused on instructional practices, student participation, and the integration of online and face-to-face components, while interviews explored teachers' reflections on the benefits and challenges of blended learning implementation.

##### ***4.3.1. Perceived Benefits of Blended Learning***

Evidence from classroom observations indicated that blended learning contributed to more dynamic and interactive English lessons. Teachers were observed using classroom time primarily for communicative activities such as pair work, group discussions, and speaking tasks, while grammar explanations, vocabulary practice, and listening exercises were assigned to the online component. This instructional arrangement enabled teachers to maximize face-to-face interaction and reduce passive learning behaviors. Teachers reported during interviews that students appeared more confident and willing to participate, particularly in speaking activities, as they had opportunities to prepare and practice language structures online beforehand.

Another frequently noted benefit was the enhancement of learner autonomy. Observation records showed that students increasingly took responsibility for completing online tasks, reviewing lesson content, and submitting assignments on time. Teachers confirmed in interviews that blended learning encouraged students to manage their own learning pace and develop self-study habits. These findings align with previous studies suggesting that blended learning can foster learner independence by extending learning beyond the classroom and promoting self-regulated learning (Graham, 2023).

In addition, teachers highlighted the flexibility and accessibility of learning materials as a key advantage. Through online platforms, students could revisit instructional videos, digital worksheets, and listening materials multiple times, which was particularly beneficial for lower-proficiency learners. Teachers emphasized that this flexibility helped reduce learning gaps and supported differentiated instruction, consistent with findings reported in blended EFL research in secondary education (Do et al., 2025).

#### ***4.3.2. Challenges Identified in Blended Learning Implementation***

Despite these benefits, both classroom observations and interviews revealed several challenges. One major issue was uneven student participation in online activities. Observational data showed that while many students actively engaged with online tasks, a small number demonstrated inconsistent participation or incomplete submissions. Teachers attributed this issue to limited access to digital devices at home and varying levels of learner self-discipline.

Another challenge involved classroom management and monitoring online learning. Teachers reported difficulties in tracking students' progress, providing timely feedback, and ensuring academic honesty in online assignments. Observation notes also indicated that some students required frequent reminders to stay focused during blended activities, particularly when transitioning between online and face-to-face tasks. These challenges reflect broader concerns in the literature regarding learner self-regulation and assessment reliability in blended environments (Çemçem et al., 2024).

Finally, teachers acknowledged an increased workload and preparation demand. Designing blended lessons, creating digital content, and managing online platforms required additional time and effort, especially during the initial stages of implementation. Teachers emphasized the need for professional development and institutional support to sustain blended learning practices effectively.

In summary, the integration of classroom observations and semi-structured interviews revealed that teachers generally viewed blended learning as a valuable and effective instructional approach for English teaching at To Ky Secondary School. However, successful implementation requires careful instructional design, continuous teacher support, and strategies to address student readiness and access issues.

## **5. Discussion**

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research questions, compares the results with previous studies, and highlights pedagogical implications for English teaching at secondary schools.

### ***5.1. Interpretation of Findings in Relation to Research Questions***

The first research question examined the extent to which blended learning improved students' English learning outcomes. The significant improvement observed in post-test scores indicates that blended learning had a positive effect on students' English achievement. This improvement can be attributed to the increased exposure to English input and extended practice opportunities provided by online learning components. By combining face-to-face instruction with online activities, students were able to review lessons, practice language skills at their own pace, and receive reinforcement beyond classroom time. These findings suggest that blended learning effectively addresses limitations of traditional instruction, particularly restricted practice time and limited language exposure.

The second research question focused on students' attitudes toward blended learning. The results revealed generally positive attitudes across the dimensions of motivation, engagement, and learner autonomy. High motivation and engagement levels indicate

that blended learning created a more stimulating learning environment through the use of multimedia resources and interactive online tasks. Although learner autonomy received slightly lower mean scores, students still demonstrated increased responsibility for their learning, suggesting that blended learning can gradually foster independent learning skills when appropriate guidance is provided.

The third research question explored teachers' perceptions of blended learning. Findings from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews showed that teachers perceived blended learning as beneficial in enhancing student participation, optimizing classroom time, and supporting differentiated instruction. However, teachers also reported challenges related to students' self-regulation, unequal access to technology, and increased workload. These perceptions highlight that while blended learning is pedagogically valuable, its effectiveness depends on contextual and institutional factors.

## ***5.2. Comparison with Previous Studies***

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research demonstrating the effectiveness of blended learning in EFL contexts. Studies by Graham (2023) and Li (2022) reported that blended learning leads to significant improvements in language performance by integrating technology-mediated practice with face-to-face interaction. Similarly, Vietnamese studies have shown that blended learning enhances English achievement and learner motivation at secondary and high school levels (Do & Duong, 2025; Pham & Ho, 2023).

The positive student attitudes found in this study align with earlier research indicating that blended learning promotes motivation and engagement through flexible learning opportunities and interactive content (Nortvig et al., 2018). However, the challenges reported by teachers echo concerns raised in other studies regarding learner self-discipline, assessment reliability, and teacher workload (Çemçem et al., 2024). These similarities suggest that the findings at To Ky Secondary School reflect broader trends observed in blended learning research rather than isolated outcomes.

### ***5.3. Implications for English Teaching at Secondary Schools***

The findings of this study offer several implications for English teaching at the secondary school level. First, blended learning should be implemented as a structured instructional approach rather than an optional supplement. Clear alignment between online and face-to-face activities is essential to maximize learning benefits. Second, teachers should receive professional development focused on blended lesson design, online assessment strategies, and learner support mechanisms. Third, students particularly lower secondary learners, need explicit guidance in developing self-regulated learning skills to fully benefit from blended learning environments.

Finally, school administrators should ensure adequate technological infrastructure and provide institutional support to reduce teachers' workload and address access disparities. When implemented thoughtfully, blended learning can serve as an effective pedagogical approach to enhance English language teaching and learning in secondary schools, contributing to improved learning outcomes and more engaging educational experiences.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study investigated the effectiveness of blended learning in teaching English to students at To Ky Secondary School in Ho Chi Minh City by examining students' English achievement, their attitudes toward blended learning, and teachers' perceptions of its implementation. The findings provide empirical evidence that blended learning is a pedagogically effective approach in the secondary school EFL context when it is purposefully designed and appropriately implemented.

Quantitative results demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in students' English achievement following the blended learning intervention. This improvement suggests that the integration of online learning activities with face-to-face instruction successfully enhanced students' exposure to English input and provided additional opportunities for practice beyond classroom time. These findings confirm that blended learning can help address common limitations of traditional English teaching, such as restricted instructional time and limited communicative practice.

In addition, students reported positive attitudes toward blended learning, particularly in terms of motivation and engagement. The use of multimedia materials, interactive online exercises, and flexible learning schedules contributed to a more stimulating learning environment. Although learner autonomy showed slightly lower levels compared to motivation and engagement, the results indicate that blended learning can gradually foster independent learning skills among secondary school students when adequate guidance and scaffolding are provided.

Qualitative findings from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews revealed that teachers generally perceived blended learning as beneficial for enhancing student participation, optimizing classroom time, and supporting differentiated instruction. However, challenges related to students' self-regulation, unequal access to technology, and increased teacher workload were also identified. These findings highlight that the effectiveness of blended learning depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on teacher readiness, learner support, and institutional conditions.

Overall, the study concludes that blended learning is a viable and effective instructional approach for English teaching at the secondary school level in Vietnam, particularly in urban contexts such as Ho Chi Minh City.

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