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Exploration of EFL Teachers' Attitudes toward Eclectic Blended Method at the University Level: A Case Study

Rukminingsih Rukminingsih, Aang Fatihul Islam, Mecca Puspitaningsari

rukminingsihnew19@gmail.com

PGRI Jombang University, Jombang, Indonesia

aangfatihulislam.upjb@gmail.com

PGRI Jombang University, Jombang, Indonesia

mecca27.stkipjb@gmail.com

PGRI Jombang University, Jombang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The eclectic teaching method fosters inclusivity, flexibility, and positive interdependence among heterogeneous students in the class, utilizing a mix of teaching strategies, methods, and resources to enhance their educational success. The study employed a blended eclectic method using flipped classrooms, brain-targeted teaching, and Know-Want-To-Know-Learn (KWL) to address the different student learning styles. This study aimed to portray how the teachers' attitudes toward eclectic blended methods in EFL critical reading courses. Teachers from a few Indonesian universities in East Java participated in this study. The study employed purposive sampling to recruit participants who were English language education instructors from four Indonesian institutions. This research used both quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed case study methodology. This study used both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires as its instruments. Descriptive statistics were used to evaluate the quantitative data, while theme analysis was used to study the qualitative data. The findings showed that female teachers had more positive attitudes toward the eclectic blended method than male teachers. The younger teachers had a more positive attitude than the old teachers toward the eclectic method. The study suggests that teachers can improve their teachers' professional development by modifying their teaching strategies with the eclectic blended method and recommends further researchers conduct the study by investigating the effectiveness of implementing the eclectic blended method by using technology applications

Keywords: Eclectic blended method; EFL Teachers; Teachers' attitudes.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) requires innovative strategies, especially in the reading classroom, to boost student motivation. Poor reading skills can hinder enthusiasm, and innovative learning methods like the Eclectic blended learning method can help address these challenges. Innovative strategies, particularly in the reading classroom, like the Eclectic blended learning method, can boost student motivation in teaching English as a foreign language (Kweldju, 2015; Larkin, 2017 & Rukminingsih et al., 2021). Larsen-Freeman (2000) and Lee et al. (2016) suggests that teachers can be pluralistic, selecting methods from various ones to create their own blend, resulting in principled eclecticism. This method selection is influenced by the teacher, students, instruction conditions, and social cultural context, and should not be prescribed for success.

Researchers has developed a variety of teaching approaches and pedagogical strategies especially in teaching EFL reading, some of which are more effective than traditional ways. Innovative

teaching strategies, such as blended learning, KWL, brain-targeted teaching method, flipped classroom. Gallardo et al. (2017) found that, while there are no certain good language teaching approaches, pedagogic research does not give evidence for a generally successful method. Sakala (2012) argued that no method is universally applicable, leading to the development of Eclecticism, a conscious blend of various methods. Lee et al. (2016) emphasizes that principled eclecticism requires teachers to make decisions about classroom instruction based on a comprehensive understanding of learning theories, pedagogies, learners' needs, available materials, and teaching purpose.

Eclecticism is a methodology that employs multiple language learning methods rather than a single conventional one. It attempts to improve learners' communicative competence by combining traditional and new methods. Teachers can choose what works best for their dynamic situations, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of learning theories, materials, and teaching objectives. Because method selection requires both thoughts and actions, eclectic teachers must be able to justify their choices. The majority of their decisions address the complexities of the classroom environment, including social interactions among students (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Mwanza, 2017; Rukminingsih et al., 2024).

The eclectic method offers flexibility and adaptability by combining various teaching approaches, enhancing engagement through multimedia and interactive tools, and supporting personalized learning by selecting effective strategies for each student. Blended learning platforms provide data and analytics for further customization. The eclectic approach ensures comprehensive skill development by offering diverse activities and resources, including online quizzes, CALL application and collaborative projects. The eclectic approach is a teaching method that integrates various teaching materials, including audio, movies, music, and media, to engage both visual and linguistic aspects (Mwanza, 2016; Chernus et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2024).

The eclectic blended method in teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) reading offers several benefits. It enhances engagement by combining various teaching methods, catering to different learning styles. It improves comprehension by incorporating visual aids, interactive activities, and traditional exercises. Teachers can adapt their methods to suit students' specific needs, boosting motivation. The method encourages critical thinking by exposing students to different texts and methods. It also ensures inclusivity, allowing all students to benefit from lessons (Mwanza, 2016; Mwanza, 2017; Rukminingsih et al., 2024). The blended eclectic method combines the strengths of both systems. It employs a wide range of instructional tools and materials (including multimedia, textbooks, and interactive activities) and tailors them to both in-person and online situations. This strategy tries to accommodate different learning styles and needs, making education more inclusive and effective (Kumar, 2017; Zhou, 2018; Zhang & Zhu, 2018).

The current research's blended eclectic method consisted of three different methods. The methods were flipped classroom, brain-targeted instruction, and KWL. A flipped classroom is a blended

learning technique that involves assigning readings at home and emphasizing on interactive problem solving in class (Bergmann & Sams, 2014). Then apply Hardiman's (2012) and Rukminingsih et al. (2021) brain-targeted teaching technique, which includes six target brains: (1) emotional climate, (2) physical environment, (3) learning design, (4) teaching for mastery, (5) knowledge application, and (6) evaluation using formative and summative assessments. The KWL approach is a teaching and learning style that seeks to increase reading comprehension and engagement (Sholeh et al., 2020).

Some previous studies reveal that high school teachers use the lecture method due to factors such as large class sizes, wide syllabi, lack of teaching materials, exam preparation, lack of student participation, and teacher training programs. The study emphasizes the importance of teachers' knowledge of the recommended teaching methods and their attitudes towards them. Some teachers may adopt any method they find convenient due to ignorance, while others may have positive attitudes but fail to implement them. Overall, teachers' knowledge and attitudes towards teaching methods are crucial for their classroom success (Sakala, 2012; Mwanza, 2017). However, there are few studies which have investigated how teachers' attitudes toward the blended eclectic method implemented in EFL reading course in a high education setting especially by using various teaching method integrated with technology. To fill the gaps, this current research conducted the investigation to portray the lecturers' attitudes toward the blended eclectic method after there were some experimental studies conducted in some universities in Indonesia.

The Aim of the Study and Research objectives

The aim of the study was to investigate How is teachers' attitudes toward eclectic blended method implemented in EFL Critical Reading course.

The study sought to portray teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of blended Eclectic Method in EFL Critical Reading course.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive case study to portray How teachers' attitudes toward eclectic blended method implemented in EFL Critical Reading course. The research employs a mixed-data approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data sources, to provide a nuanced portrayal of the phenomena under investigation. Descriptive case study aims to portray a comprehensive understanding of the specific phenomena being examined (Yin, 2014; Rukminingsih et al., 2020) This study used a mixed research design comprising both qualitative and quantitative methods during data collection and analysis. This mixed data intends to explore the teachers' attitudes toward eclectic blended method implemented in EFL Critical Reading course. This reasoning is supported by Rukminingsih et al. (2020) who note that combining qualitative and quantitative methods is a form of triangulation that enhances the validity and reliability of one's study.

The study conducted face-to-face interviews with 6 English instructors, while a questionnaire was distributed to 40 English lecturers in higher education. Thus, the interview guide and questionnaire were the two research tools used in the study. Interviews were conducted to get information on teachers' perceptions toward the method. A questionnaire was also utilized to gather more information on teachers' attitudes toward the eclectic technique. The teachers were conveniently chosen from five purposefully selected higher education institutions. Data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Data gathered through interviews was evaluated using thematic analysis and classified into two themes in accordance with the research goals. The quantitative data was analyzed with SPSS to provide descriptive statistics.

RESULT

This objective of the study was to find out how instructors saw the eclectic approach and what knowledge they had about it. This was especially crucial since, as the MOE (1977) indicates, a successful teacher is someone who has the right mindset and sufficient understanding of the subject and instructional strategies. To respond to the query regarding teachers' comprehension and the opinions regarding the eclectic approach, in front of face-to-face interviews were employed to get information from the lecturers.

In addition, a questionnaire was distributed to educators in order to gather numerical data. The main focus of the questionnaire was teachers' opinions regarding the eclectic approach. In the interview data, teachers' responses have been labelled as R (for "response") with a corresponding number for convenience of reference. R represents "response."

To answer the question of how educators felt about the eclectic method, the study used both qualitative and quantitative data. To obtain the qualitative data, in-person interviews with the teachers were conducted. The quantitative data was gathered using a quantitative questionnaire that was also distributed to the teachers. The data from the interviews are included in the first section, and the quantitative data is included in the second.

Teachers' attitudes towards the eclectic method: Qualitative data

The following four excerpts from 3 females and one male and they are around 38 age years old illustrated a few of the positive reactions as the following:

- R2: "Eclecticism is useful to me because it doesn't limit the sources for references and the way we teach both synchronous and asynchronous while other method restrict to create teachers' and students' creativity."
- R4: "Using the eclectic blended method has the advantage of capturing all students' engagement and creativity"
- R5: "The eclectic blended method fosters creativity and innovation in teaching, it create the teaching process more effective and enjoyable learning experiences."

R6: “The eclectic approach to education ensures that all subject areas and skill levels are covered and students acquire an effective education by combining several kinds of teaching methods”.

From the four excerpts, four English teachers claimed that the eclectic blended method was effective and innovative teaching method. This method allows the teacher to employ a number of methods to explain the material to the students. Eclecticism makes learning more dynamic and allows teachers to find connections between many pedagogical techniques. The eclectic blended method is the combination between eclectic method and online learning approach offers flexibility, variety of materials, learner-centred instruction, and a balanced combination of traditional face-to-face instruction and online learning, ensuring personalized and effective learning experiences for all students.

The following two excerpts from two males and they are around 50 years old illustrated a few of the positive reactions as the following

R1: “The eclectic blended method takes a lot of time. You can arrange a class at times. It's time out after all those activities. You are then unable to lead an exercise session. The lesson should then be moved to the following period. Thus, the duration is excessive. A lesson involving learners will take several weeks to complete. Students in Lusaka might be able to assist. But they are unable to learn here in the country.”

R3: “Slow learners in particular find it confusing. A slow learner will believe that something is completely different if you describe it in a different way. As a result, you fool the students as a teacher. Thus, we never use it. Although it's only for supervisors, we included it in the course. However, we employ what helps students. Thus, the lecture approach is employed. Since the individuals who review the file anticipate an eclectic approach, we include it in the lesson plan and just write it down on paper. In corrective treatment, we employ a different technique in this regard.”

From the two excerpts, two English teachers claimed that the eclectic blended method was not effective. They claimed that the eclectic blended method is time-consuming, requiring multiple classes and time-outs to lead exercises. Slow students may find it confusing to describe things differently, so we avoid using a lecture approach. We use an eclectic approach in lesson plans, but write it down on paper. Corrective treatment uses a different technique.

Teachers' attitudes towards the eclectic method: Quantitative results

The statistical results gathered by the questionnaire mainly corroborated the conclusions drawn from the interview data, especially with regard to opinions regarding the eclectic approach. In line of the statements in the questionnaire, take into consideration the following statistics.

Table 1. The eclectic approach is the best way to teach English

Item	Frequency	Percent
Valid	24	60 %

Disagree	6	15 %
Not sure	3	7.5 %
Don't know	7	17.5%
Total	40	100 %

Based on table one, it showed the frequency and percentage from the response toward the statement whether the eclectic approach is the best way to teach English. It was found that 24 (60%) teachers involving 15 female teachers and 9 male teachers. All of them were round under 45 years old chose **agree**, 6 (15%) teachers involving 5 male teachers and one female. Four of them were 55 years old and two others were 40s years chose **disagree**, 3 (7.5%) teachers involving male teachers and they were around 30s and 40 years old chose **not sure**, 7 (17.5%) teachers involving 5 male teachers and two others were female teachers. Some of them were 35s and the other were 50s chose **don't know**. The results showed that compared to male teachers, female teachers had higher positive attitudes of the eclectic blended method. When it came to the eclectic method, the younger teachers' attitudes were more positive than the older ones.

It can be inferred that the study found that 60% of teachers, including 15 female and 9 male teachers, agreed with the eclectic approach to teaching English. However, 15% disagreed, 7.5% were not sure, and 17.5% did not know. Female teachers had higher positive attitudes towards the eclectic blended method, while younger teachers had more positive attitudes.

Table 2. The eclectic approach is an interesting method to teach English

Item	Frequency	Percent
Valid		
Agree	25	62.5 %
Disagree	5	12.5 %
Not sure	4	10%
Don't know	6	15
Total	40	100

Based on table two, it showed the frequency and percentage from the response toward the statement whether the eclectic blended method is an interesting method to teach English. It was found that 25 (62.5%) teachers involving 17 female teachers and 8 male teachers. All of them were round under 45 years old chose **agreed**, 5 (15%) teachers involving 5 male teachers. All of them were 55 years old chose **disagreed**, 4 (10%) teachers involving male teachers and they were around 30s and 40 years old chose **not sure**, 6 (15 %) teachers involving 5 male teachers and the other was female teachers. Some of them were 35s and the other were 50s chose **don't know**.

It could be inferred that table two shows the frequency and percentage of respondents who agree or disagree with the eclectic blended method for teaching English. The majority 62.5% agree, while 15% disagree, 10% are uncertain, and 15% don't know.

DISCUSSION

Based on the finding from the teachers' interview found that Four English teachers, in higher education setting, complimented the eclectic blended technique for its novel approach to teaching, which combines eclectic methods with online learning. This method provides flexibility, a diverse range of materials, learner-centered education, and a balanced mix of traditional and online learning. It is in line with Kweldju, (2015); Larkin, (2017) & Rukminingsih et al., (2024) that the eclectic blended method facilitates a teacher's communication with, all of the students, regardless of their differences. The eclectic method ensured that all subject areas and skill levels are covered and students acquire an effective education by combining several kinds of teaching methods. The eclectic blended method ensured that all subject areas and skill levels are covered. Using the eclectic method has the advantage of capturing all students' engagement and Creativity language.

The four teachers also found that eclecticism is beneficial as it allows for flexibility in both synchronous and asynchronous teaching methods, as opposed to other approaches that impede the development of teachers' and students' creativity and the benefit of using the eclectic blended method is that it captures all students' needs, learning style and language skills. It is also in line with Mwanza, (2016); Mwanza, (2017); Rukminingsih et al., (2024) that the eclectic blended method in teaching English combines various teaching styles to cater to diverse students' needs and students' learning styles. It offers flexibility, a variety of materials, and a learner-centre approach. It combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning, providing a balanced and comprehensive learning experience. Benefits include enhanced engagement, improved learning outcomes, and adaptability, as teachers can quickly adjust their methods based on lesson effectiveness and student feedback lessons.

Based on the results of the questionnaire, the majority of respondents' opinions on the eclectic blended method for teaching English was positive attitude. In table one with the statement whether the eclectic approach is the best way to teach English. It was found that (60%) agreed, (15%) teachers disagreed, 7.5% unsure, 17.5% uncertain. In table two with the statement that the eclectic approach is an interesting method to teach English showed the percentage with 62.5% agreeing, 15% disagreeing, 10% unsure, and 15% uncertain. It is in line with Richards & Rodgers, (2014); Mwanza, (2017); Rukminingsih et al. (2024) that eclecticism is a language learning methodology that incorporates traditional and novel approaches to develop communicative competence in learners. Teachers must justify their method choices, considering the classroom environment and social dynamics, to ensure holistic understanding of learning theories and materials.

Nevertheless, some educators had negative attitude of the blended eclectic method, claiming that students found it complicated and time-consuming. They continued by saying that since the teacher had to use multiple classroom activities, it was excessively demanding of them. Additionally, educators clarified that the methodology was particularly perplexing for slow learners. They clarified that when a teacher employed just one strategy, students acquired things with ease. In contrast, students would

become confused and fail to understand the lesson if a teacher added a new topic or changed the focus of an activity during a single class. Because of this, they claimed that an eclectic approach, which asks for the use of multiple activities within a single lesson, is more complicated and restricts learners' ability to follow the lesson than a single technique using a single activity (Li 2012). It is contradiction with activities Mwanza, (2017), Rukminingsih et al. (2024) the eclectic blended method is learner-centered and integrates a variety of classroom Teachers, however, find the strategy time-consuming, too involved, and unsuitable for certain learners, as seen by the two outcomes above. They believed that a single method approach was preferable to an eclectic approach because of these factors. Although these results point to teachers' lack of practical knowledge of the eclectic method, it is also possible that the teachers' inadequate training left them unprepared to understand the theory and application of the eclectic method. This could explain the teachers' negative attitudes toward the method. Despite being the suggested method in the senior high school syllabus, these findings clearly have impacts for how teachers implement the approach. Those who exhibited ignorance and doubt about the method would obviously not be able to apply the method to teach English.

CONCLUSION

The objective examined English teachers' attitudes of the eclectic approach. According to the survey, a few teachers demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the method. According to the study, younger teachers have a more positive attitude of the eclectic blended method, indicating that by altering their teaching methods, it can improve professional development. They claimed that it entails incorporating several methods into a single lesson. They added that it may be adjusted to accommodate different learner types in the classroom. The applicability and significance of the method were not evident to all of the teachers. Other teachers did not understand the strategy. Some teachers had illusions about the strategy, believing it involved trying multiple methods until one was effective. It was considered that doing these represented efforts for a specific method. These findings suggest that teachers who are lack understanding or confidence in using the eclectic method in the classroom may struggle to implement it effectively. The teachers also claim that they were not properly taught to understand the concept of eclecticism.

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