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The Effect of the Face-to-Face, Online, and Blended Teaching Modes on Students' Performance in Listening

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Abstract

Second-language learners must learn to listen. Effective listening helps learners understand others and express their thoughts and opinions. This study examines the students' achievement in listening tests conducted after teaching and learning processes using face-to-face, online, and blended modes. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling. The data for the study consist of secondary data collected from 392 participants from different faculties at a local public university. The data were then analyzed using the SPSS version 20 tool. The results indicate a significant difference in teaching and learning modes and students' achievement in listening tests. Next, the findings showed that the blended learning mode produced the lowest listening test score, while the face-to-face mode produced the highest test scores. Finally, there was a significant difference between faculties in their listening performance. The findings of this study suggest that even though teaching listening using the blended mode gives the best of both the online and face-to-face methods, but if students are not engaged in the online learning part, they may not be able to follow the offline or face-to-face learning part effectively. This assumption needs further investigation

by including more private and public universities and examining if a similar outcome may prevail.

Keywords: online distance learning, face-to-face, blended learning, listening test

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Listening skills are crucial because studies have shown that listening can help students pick up their second language faster (Supriyadi et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2021). Effective listening can also teach students how to communicate their ideas. This is because students who listen pick up more knowledge to reflect on and think critically about before they respond (Supriyadi et al., 2019). Students who develop better listening skills are more likely to feel confident, comfortable, and prepared to succeed in school (Wolf et al., 2019). Listening, unlike hearing, requires mental attention (Megat-abdul-rahim et al., 2021). For assessment purposes, students are taught active listening skills, where they are required to engage in listening to details played in audio and, at the same time, read and understand questions set on paper and answer the questions based on the information heard from the audio with some support from the leaners' background knowledge as suggested in Cognitive Learning Theory.

Online learning has become increasingly popular in recent years, with the rise of technology and the internet making it easier to access educational opportunities anywhere in the world. The teaching location limits the traditional English face-to-face teaching mode, and the teacher controls the teaching and learning process (Hassan et al., 2014). However, online learning can foster a sense of independence and self-motivation in students. One of the key benefits of online learning is its flexibility, as students can fit their coursework around their existing commitments and study at their own pace (Shanthi et al., 2021). However, there has been some concern about the impact of online learning on student learning, as it is often seen as more isolating than traditional classroom-based learning (Arumugam et al., 2021).

Despite these concerns, evidence suggests that online learning can enhance listening achievement when done correctly (Hassan et al., 2014; Megat-abdul-rahim et al., 2021). One study by researchers at the University of Michigan found that students in online courses could perform just as well as their peers in traditional classrooms when it came to listening comprehension. The researchers noted that online learning platforms offered a range of tools and resources to support listening to achievement, including multimedia materials, subtitles,

Language teachers use technology-based tools such as audio and video files and interactive quizzes. However, in a blended learning mode, where some lessons have contact teaching with teachers in the classroom, and at other times learners engage in self-contained preparation with online resources (Jiang et al., 2021). However, in a blended learning mode, students may require additional support in terms of technical assistance or learning support (Jiang et al., 2021). They may struggle to keep up with the learning process if they do not receive adequate support.

Against this backdrop, this study is concerned with the student achievement in listening comprehension tests in English proficiency classes when they are taught in different modes: online, face-to-face and blended (online and offline). Since studies have shown that online learning can be more of learning in isolation compared to physical classrooms, the question is whether students taught online perform any differently in the listening comprehension test compared to those taught listening in a physical and hybrid teaching mode learning.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The significance of listening comprehension skills among students should not be overlooked. This is because the skills provide an essential foundation for learning. Listening comprehension is considered an essential skill for students in learning. The key to learning a language is for the students to receive language input, and listening skill is believed to be vital in learning a foreign language (Gilakjani, 2016). Students with good listening comprehension skills can participate more effectively in communicative situations, learn more effectively, improve relationships, and enhance their critical thinking skills (Schwaben, 2019).

When teaching listening comprehension, face-to-face, blended, and online methods have pros and cons. In face-to-face teaching, students have more opportunities for peer interaction in a physical classroom and receive more explicit instruction and teacher support. On the other hand, online learning can provide students with greater flexibility in terms of the time and place of the learning process. Additionally, online learning can potentially personalize students' learning experiences through digital materials and adaptive technology (Gilbert, 2015). While in a blended learning mode, learners have the best of both online and offline learning; however, if students are not engaged in the online learning part, they may not be able to comprehend the offline learning part effectively.

The best approach to teaching listening depends on the individual student's specific needs and preferences, as some students may benefit from the social interaction of a physical classroom. In contrast, others may thrive in an online learning environment. Hence, while online learning has many positive effects on education, it may negatively impact students' listening comprehension. Hence there could be some adverse effects on acquiring listening skills for students if teachers are not aware of which teaching and learning mode produces better scores for listening comprehension.

1.3 Literature Review

Several studies have been conducted on teaching listening using different platforms. One study (Megat-abdul-rahim et al., 2021) focused on the perspectives of second language learners on web-based learning of listening and speaking skills. The study found that online learning can effectively improve listening and speaking skills when designed to be interactive and engaging. The study found that students had positive attitudes towards online learning and found it helpful in improving their listening and speaking skills. Another study analyzed 134 empirical studies on online teaching and learning practices in teacher education. The review found that online teaching and learning can be effective when designed and

implemented correctly (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Overall, these studies suggest that online platforms can effectively teach listening skills when designed to meet learners' needs and are interactive and engaging.

1.3.1 Different Modes of Learning; Face-to-Face, Online and Blended

There are three learning modes: face-to-face, online and blended learning.

Face-to-face learning: This is the traditional mode of learning involving students and instructors physically gathering in a classroom setting. This mode of learning facilitates direct interaction between students and instructors, which can promote engagement, collaboration, and personalized feedback. Instruction and tests are conducted in physical classrooms.

Online learning: This mode occurs entirely online, with learners accessing course materials, lectures, and assignments through digital platforms. Online learning can be synchronous, where learners participate in live lectures or discussions, or asynchronous, where learners can access materials and complete assignments on their schedule. This learning mode provides learners flexibility and convenience and allows for self-paced learning. A literature review on the factors influencing e-learning found that computer-mediated education, including online learning, can be effective when designed to meet learners' needs (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Instruction and tests are conducted in a fully online approach.

Blended learning: This mode of learning combines face-to-face and online learning elements. This learning mode can provide students with flexibility while allowing face-to-face interaction with instructors and peers. In a blended learning model, students attend some classes physically and others online; however, all assessments, including the listening test, are conducted in the physical classroom using the face-to-face mode.

Each learning mode has unique advantages and disadvantages, and the most effective mode for a given learner will depend on their learning style, preferences, and circumstances.

1.3.2 Teaching Listening Skills on the Different Modes of Learning

Teaching listening skills in the three modes requires a well-planned approach and implementation of various techniques to keep students engaged and focused while developing their listening abilities. Commonly teaching listening involves; pre-listening activities such as giving a brief introduction to the topic and asking students to brainstorm vocabulary or concepts related to it. This helps students get familiar with the topic and activate any prior knowledge. Next comes the listening comprehension task, which involves students listening to audio recordings and paying attention to specific details in the recording to answer the comprehension questions. Finally, ending the listening activities, this post listening activities such as small group discussion or engaging in a class-wide discussion to deliberate the answers to the questions. Even though all three different modes have the exact steps of teaching: pre, while and post-listening tasks, however, they differ in the delivery, control of the learning environment, and student engagement.

In a physical classroom, the teacher controls the learning environment. No technological issues, such as poor Internet connectivity, could disrupt the learning process. Students are

required to participate in group or class discussions; therefore, students are more engaged in the learning process. In physical classrooms, teachers could encourage interactive listening exercises like role plays and simulations, provide an example of good listening techniques, and give students immediate feedback on their listening abilities.

In an online learning environment, listening is taught through various multimedia tools, including video conferencing, audio recordings, podcasts, and videos. Online learning can also provide students with their teachers' feedback through a virtual learning platform, discussion boards such as WhatsApp or Telegram, and online quizzes. Additionally, synchronous and asynchronous conversations are initiated for small-group and whole-class discussions. However, in online classes, the teacher cannot observe the student's reactions and body language, and the students can be hesitant to participate in discussions all may not feel as engaged as in physical classes (Hassan et al., 2014).

While in a blended learning mode, listening is taught through face-to-face and online activities. It offers the benefits of both face-to-face interaction and online learning. Teachers assign online listening activities, such as podcasts or videos, for students to perform outside of class while they still can practise their listening skills in person through group discussion. Teachers provide feedback on students' listening skills through face-to-face and online interactions.

1.3.3 Past Studies on Different Learning Modes and Students' Achievement in Listening Tests

Many Studies have been done to investigate students' achievement based on different learning modes. According to (Wolf et al., 2019; Megat-abdul-rahim et al., 2021; Supriyadi et al., 2019), listening is essential in language and language learning because it is the key to speaking, and more than that, reading and writing. However, learning listening skills using different modes may produce varying test results.

According to Shanthi et al. (2021), students must have access to a reliable device and an internet connection in online platforms. Students who cannot access these resources may struggle to participate in online listening activities fully. In contrast, face-to-face instruction does not rely on technology and is equally accessible to all students. A study by Jiang et al. (2021) found that students who learnt listening skills in face-to-face classrooms perceived it as more effective than online learning. The same study also found that when students faced difficulty understanding what they heard, they readily gave up and stopped listening in an online learning mode compared to face-to-face. In an English listening course for college students, Yen et al. (2018) compared face-to-face, online, and blended modes three-way. They found that online classes were as good as physical classes at producing good results. The same study found that the blended mode had more significant potential for improving students' academic performance by integrating the merits of both face-to-face and online teaching. Another study by Yu et al. (2021) showed the same outcome: blended and face-to-face learning were effective educational methods and showed promising results in improving students' academic performance. The same study reported that face-to-face instruction does not rely on technology, is equally accessible to all students, and is less prone

to distractions while studying. Also, in a face-to-face setting, students can interact with their peers and the teacher more immediately and naturally; they can ask questions, discuss topics, and receive feedback in real time, which can benefit their listening comprehension and contribute to better achievement in listening test (Hassan et al., 2014).

On the other hand, studies have found that online instruction seems to be less succeeding in producing better academic results as this method can be prone to technical issues, internet disruptions, or distractions from other devices (Md Nen et al., 2022; Shanthi et al., 2021; Hassan et al., 2014). Without the structure of a classroom setting, students may be more prone to distraction during online listening activities.

1.4 The Objectives of the Study and Research Questions

This study explores whether different learning modes, namely face-to-face, online, and blended modes, increased students' performance in listening tests.

This study aims to answer these research questions on the different modes of teaching with the students' listening performance.

The research questions are as follows:

1. Is there any significant difference in listening scores based on different teaching and learning modes?

2. Which teaching mode exhibits the highest and lowest listening score?

3. Is there any significant difference between faculties in the English listening score?

1.5 Conceptual Framework e Study and Research Questions

Effective listening is a key component of communicating, as it allows learners to gather the information necessary to understand others and, in this way, respond accordingly to what they have heard, convey their insights on a topic, and share their views. Raising awareness of how these skills are manifested from the different teaching and learning modes is crucial in selecting different modes available, namely, online, face-to-face and blended, for teaching listening skills.

There are merits and demerits when teaching listening skills using different modes, online, face-to-face, and blended. Students with different learning styles can benefit from the different teaching and learning modes. Students who lack self-regulation and need more coaching from their lecturers may prefer face-to-face interaction, where teachers can interact and communicate with learners face-to-face and give immediate feedback to learners, which helps learners correct their mistakes quickly (Supriyadi et al., 2019). This leads to better understanding and monitoring of student progress (Wolf et al., 2019). Online mode, however, offers more resources, including videos, presentations, and interactive materials, enabling students to have access to learning material and participate in discussions at their own pace and at times that are convenient for them. Furthermore, the blended mode combines offline-online modes, offering the benefits of face-to-face interaction and online learning.

As the cognitive learning theory prescribes, this study (refer to Figure 1) is rooted in students' ability to listen effectively to information. In cognitive learning theories, learning is described in terms of information processing. Theoretically, listening comprehension is considered an active activity. According to this theory, students focus on internal and external aspects and their relationship to previous knowledge. It also includes listeners, cognitive knowledge and process related to listening, aural text, and interaction between the two. According to Shanthi et al. (2021), developing effective listening skills by providing different teaching and learning modes needs carefully selected training materials and teaching styles. This study assumes that the student's achievement in listening comprehension can differ based on the different teaching and learning modes, namely online, face-to-face, and blended. Hence, the researcher explores students' listening comprehension performance in the different learning modes.

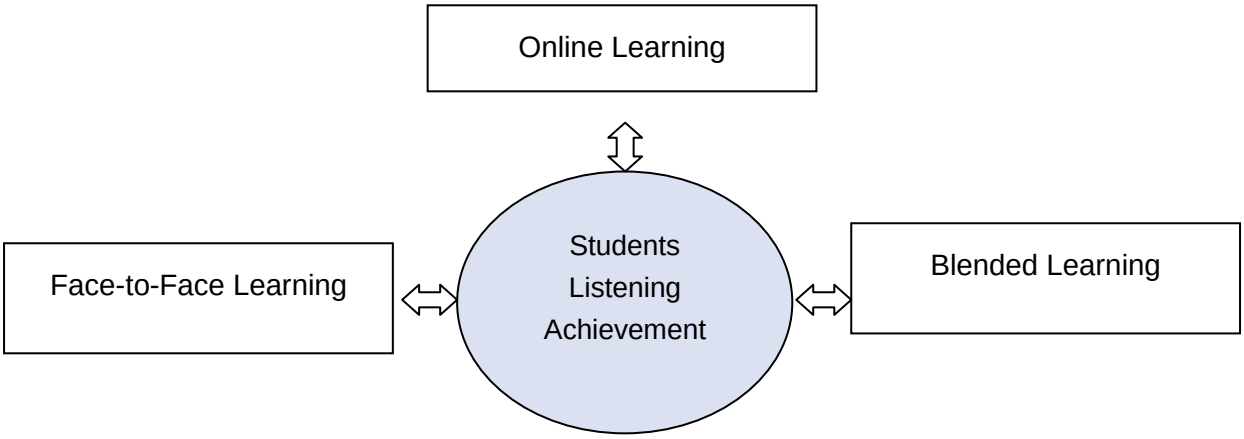

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

2. Method

This quantitative study investigates if the different learning modes, face-to-face, online, and blended modes, affect students' achievements in the listening score. A purposive sample of undergraduates from a local public university were the respondents for the study. Secondary data of respondents' listening test scores from 392 participants was used to answer the study's research questions. The participants were from three different faculties: the Faculty of Administration Science and Policy Studies (FSPPP), the Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Science (FSKM), and the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation (FSR). One hundred seventy-five participants are from FSPPP (44.6%), 102 participants are from FSKM (26.0%), and 115 participants are from FSR (29.3%).

The data used in the study is secondary data, where students' listening scores were collected from Academic Affairs Division. The scores were extracted from internal records from e-Result Exam System (e-RES). From the data collected (refer to Table 1), the scores were chosen from three different teaching modes: face-to-face (September 2019 – February 2020), online (Mac, 2020 – July 2020), and blended (October 2022-February 2023). Due to the

Covid-19 pandemic, students were confined to online learning from March 2020 until July 2022. Before the pandemic, students were learning English courses using the face-to-face mode. The students returned to campus for the October 2022 – February 2023 semester and were taught using the blended learning mode.

Faculties	Teaching Modes	Semester
FSPPP	Face-to-Face	September 2019 – February 2020
	Online	March 2020 – July 2020
	Blended	October 2022-February 2023
FSKM	Face-to-Face	September 2019 – February 2020
	Online	March 2020 – July 2020
	Blended	October 2022-February 2023
FSR	Face-to-Face	September 2019 – February 2020
	Online	March 2020 – July 2020
	Blended	October 2022-February 2023

Figure 2. Faculties, Teaching Modes, and Semester

The listening marks were part of the assessment for an English Proficiency course. The data taken from face-to-face mode consists of 120 participants (30.6%), while online 101 participants (25.8%), and blended 171 participants (43.6%). The total mark from the assessment is 20%.

To examine the relationship between students' listening scores with different teaching modes and faculties, statistical analysis was performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20. The study used one-way ANOVA to identify the difference between the students' listening scores and teaching modes and faculties. A multiple comparison analysis was used as a post hoc test by Games-Howell. A post hoc test was done to identify which groups (or faculties) differ from each other regarding the students' listening scores. This test is also called a multiple comparison test.

The study assumes no difference in the students' listening scores on the different teaching modes. The normality of the data is normal as this study relies on the central limit theorem since the sample size is considered large, which is more than 30 participants. The Variance Homogeneity of the assumption is not equal. Therefore, this study used the Welch Test, an alternative to the Levene Test. It is called a "Robust Test" because it is robust to violating the homogeneity assumption, as Levene's Test indicates.

3. Results

Table 1 shows a descriptive statistic of the listening score mark for the total sample (overall) and according to faculties. The average listening mark was 15.69, with a standard deviation of 2.650. The minimum and maximum scores were 6 and 20, respectively. The total mark for the listening assessment was 20. While according to the faculties, the mean range was 14.62 to 16.61. The highest listening performance mean was FSKM (M = 16.61, SD = 2.805), followed by FSPPP (M = 15.86, SD = 2.320) and FSR (M = 14.62, SD = 2.631).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Listening Performance

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Overall	392	6	20	15.69	2.650
FSPPP	175	9	20	15.86	2.320
FSKM	102	6	20	16.61	2.805
FSR	115	7	20	14.62	2.631

Since the descriptive statistics in Table 1 only summarized the characteristics of the data set, the inferential statistic was performed to determine whether the data was generalizable to the population. To examine the differences between teaching modes and listening performance, an inferential test by one-way ANOVA was performed.

To answer the first research question, "Is there any significant difference in listening scores based on different teaching modes?", the figures in Table 2 showed that there was a significant difference between teaching modes and listening performance (F (2, 389) = 28.728, p = 0.00). Table 3 reported the robustness test of equality of means by Welch. The results were significant (Fwelch(2, 303.094) = 28.181, p = 0.000); the null hypothesis of a test always predicts no effect or no relationship between variables. Hence the findings of this study reject the null hypothesis of equal population means because the results in Table 3 indicate that the listening performance among the learners from different faculties was not equal across all teaching modes, verifying the findings of the ANOVA test.

Table 2. Analysis of Variance for Listening Performance with Teaching Modes

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	353.289	2	176.645	28.728	.000
Within Groups	2391.919	389	6.149		
Total	2745.209	391			

Table 3: Robust Tests of Equality of Means for Listening Performance with Teaching Method

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	28.181	2	303.094	.000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

The post hoc test answered the second research question, "Which teaching mode exhibits the highest and lowest listening score?" which teaching modes differ concerning listening scores? Since the homogeneity of variances was violated, the multiple comparisons in Table 4 were based on Games-Howell. There were significant differences between face-to-face and blended teaching modes (the mean of the listening performance for face-to-face was 2.03 points higher than blended). The other faculties whose mean performance differed significantly were online and blended learning (the average mark in online was 1.751 points higher than blended). There was no significant performance difference between face-to-face and online. These results indicated that the blended learning method exhibited the lowest listening performance while the face-to-face method produced the highest test score for the listening test.

Table 4: Multiple Comparisons of Listening Performance with Teaching Method

(I) TM	(J) TM	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Face-to-face	Online	.279	.340	.691	-.52	1.08
	Blended	2.030*	.266	.000	1.40	2.66
Online	Face-to-face	-.279	.340	.691	-1.08	.52
	Blended	1.751*	.345	.000	.94	2.57
Blended	Face-to-face	-2.030*	.266	.000	-2.66	-1.40
	Online	-1.751*	.345	.000	-2.57	-.94

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

To answer the third research question, "Is there any significant difference between faculties in the English listening score?" the one-way ANOVA was conducted between listening performance and faculties. As seen in Table 5, the ANOVA presented a significant p-value indicating a significant difference between faculties toward listening performance ($F(2, 389) = 17.313$, $p = 0.000$). The results were consistent with the robustness test of equality of means by Welch ($Fwelch(2, 314.333) = 16.385$, $p = 0.000$).

Table 5: Analysis of Variance for Listening Performance with Faculties

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	224.381	2	112.191	17.313	.000
Within Groups	2520.827	389	6.480		
Total	2745.209	391			

Table 6: Robust Tests of Equality of Means for Listening Performance with Faculties

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	16.385	2	314.333	.000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

The post hoc test by Games-Howell identified the pairwise differences between the faculties. The findings showed a significant difference between FSPPP and FSR, where the mean performance for FSPPP was 1.245 higher than FSR, as portrayed in Table 7. Another significant pair difference was between FSKM and FSR. The mean listening performance for FSKM was 1.995 points higher than FSR. Based on the results, it could be concluded that FSR achieved the lowest listening performance as compared to the other two faculties, regardless of which teaching approaches were implemented.

Table 7: Multiple Comparisons of Listening Performance with Faculties

					95% Confidence Interval	
(I) TM	(J) TM	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
FSPPP	FSR	1.245*	.302	.000	.53	1.96
	FSKM	-.750	.329	.061	-1.53	.03
FSR	FSPPP	-1.245*	.302	.000	-1.96	-.53
	FSKM	-1.995*	.371	.000	-2.87	-1.12
FSKM	FSPPP	.750	.329	.061	-.03	1.53
	FSR	1.995*	.371	.000	1.12	2.87

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

4. Discussion

This study examined the students' listening performance during the English proficiency course's face-to-face, online and blended teaching modes. The results showed that the mean of the listening performance for face-to-face was 2.03 points higher than blended, while the average score for online was 1.751. Therefore, the blended learning approach has the lowest listening performance compared to the other two. This finding contrasts with Yu et al. (2021), who found that learners using the blended learning mode showed promising results in improving academic performance compared to students learning using the online mode. The present study's findings indicate that the face-to-face mode seems to be the dominant mode for producing better listening test results, in line with Yu et al. (2021). Jiang et al. (2021) also found that students who learnt listening skills in face-to-face classrooms perceived it as more effective than online learning.

According to Md Nen et al. (2022), even though online learning courses are more easily accessible, not all students will benefit from them; the findings of this study concur with that. The findings of the study also suggest that even though blended mode has both the features of online and offline and could be appropriate for many learners, but as suggested by Carrillo and Flores (2020), if students are not engaged in online learning and the falter learning in that mode for many reasons such as technical issues; poor internet connectivity, outdated software or hardware can hinder learning in a blended mode. As such, they may be unable to effectively comprehend offline learning in the physical classroom.

Next, the study also aimed to study students' listening performance among three different faculties on the campus. The results show that students from the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation (FSR) achieved the lowest listening performance as compared to the other two faculties, which are the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies (FSPPP) and the Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Science (FSKM) regardless of the teaching modes implemented on them. There was a significant difference between FSPPP and FSR, where the mean performance for FSPPP was 1.245 higher than FSR. Another significant pair difference was between FSKM and FSR. The mean listening performance for FSKM was 1.995 points higher than FSR. According to Shanthi and Zuraida (2020), students' infrequent use of the English language at school and home is the most significant contributor to poor understanding of English. In correlation, FSR students need to be given more exercises and exposure to the use of the English language to help them to achieve good listening performance in the future.

4.1 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study had several limitations. One of the limitations was that the data was collected from only one campus and limited to only three courses. Thus, the results cannot be applied to other campuses and learning institutions. Second, it was conducted strictly in a public university; hence, conducting similar research in a private university would bring different views and perspectives from the respondents on the students' listening performance. Therefore, more studies on different views of the components in the subject are recommended as the results may vary accordingly. Also, the findings of this study suggested

that even though teaching listening using blended mode gives the best of both the online and face-to-face method, if students are not engaged in the online learning part, they may not be able to follow the offline or face-to-face learning part effectively. This assumption needs further investigation by including more private and public universities and examining if a similar outcome may prevail.

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