Developing a hybrid model for ESL learners in HEIs in the UAE

دولة في العالي التعليم مؤسسات في ثانية كلغة الإنجليزية اللغة لمتعلمي هجين نموذج تطوير المتحدة العربية الإمارات

by

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Abstract

The object of this study was to find out what the main factors are to consider when utilizing a hybrid model in Higher Education Institutions in the UAE. The advantages and disadvantages of the hybrid model were looked at as well as what could be done to ensure students success. The study took a mixed methods approach with surveys and interviews being conducted. Data was collected from forty-five participants and the quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which were then deduced and interpreted. The data revealed mixed opinions about teaching and learning with the hybrid model. The results from the qualitative research reflected and corresponded to the quantitative research. Despite the findings revealing the hybrid model to be an efficient flexible model its efficacy for undergraduates that are ESL learners is questioned. The study revealed motivation and student engagement to be the main issues.

Abstract in Arabic

العالي التعليم مؤسسات في هجين نموذج استخدام عند مراعاتها يجب التي الرئيسية العوامل معرفة هو الدراسة هذه من الهدف كان اتبعت .الطلاب نجاح لضمان فعله يمكن ما إلى بالإضافة الهجين النموذج وعيوب مزايا في النظر تم .المتحدة العربية الإمارات في الكمية البيانات تحليل وتم مشاركًا وأربعين خمسة من البيانات جمع تم .والمقابلات المسوحات إجراء مع مختلطًا نهجًا الدراسة والتعلم التدريس حول مختلطة آراء عن البيانات كشفت .ذلك بعد وتفسيرها استنتاجها تم التي الوصفية الإحصاءات باستخدام النموذج عن كشفت التي النتائج من الرغم على .الكمي البحث مع وتتوافق النوعي البحث نتائج تنعكس .الهجين النموذج باستخدام موضع ثانية كلغة الإنجليزية اللغة يتعلمون الذين الجامعيين للطلاب بالنسبة فعاليته فإن ، فعالاً مرنًا نموذجًا ليكون الهجين الرئيسية القضايا من الطلاب ومشاركة الدافع أن الدراسة وكشفت .تساؤل

Dedication

To my better half, Noriko, thank you for your continuous support and encouragement.

I couldn’t have done this without you!

To my family for always believing in me.

To my best friends for keeping me on the level.

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I would like to express a heartfelt gratitude to my Dissertation Supervisor, Dr. Tendai for his support and words of encouragement.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The development of new information and communication technologies (ICT) has had a profound influence on education systems worldwide over the last few decades.

ICT has become much cheaper and more accessible and the Internet has become more widespread and readily available through WIFI. The emergence and establishment of ICT in education has led to a paradigm shift that has impacted teaching and learning worldwide. New models have been created, new delivery methods employed, and new approaches have been developed in the teaching and learning industry. The Internet has become the preferred learning platform, where traditional methods are being replaced with the non-traditional. Pedagogy is more learner-centered and focus is on the learner's needs.

Blended learning was not necessarily a new concept in teaching and learning but coupled with technology and the capacity for online learning, new models began to emerge.

Following the emergence of the Blended Learning approach is what has come to be known as the Hybrid model, which has developed and come to prominence in recent years. With the advent of easily accessible and cheaper technology being developed, widespread access to the internet and wi-fi, and educators developing education technology software and hardware, new possibilities have emerged in education, one of these being the hybrid model.

Practical realities also contribute to and determine the approaches to teaching and learning and so it is with the Hybrid model becoming the latest to be widely adopted. The Covid-19 pandemic

forced many institutions to change rapidly and develop a new, more suitable, and appropriate model. It was decided for the benefit and safety of different stakeholders teaching and learning face-to-face should be limited and course content be delivered online.

A consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic there has been a rapid rise in the number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) around the world adopting a hybrid model for the delivery of undergraduate programs.

This research paper will look at one of the federal institution's adoption of a hybrid academic model in the UAE.

1.1 Background

One of the most popular federal institutions in the UAE was well under way to establishing a blended learning approach for teaching and learning even before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the courses associated with the bachelor degree programs were being delivered with fifty percent face to face teaching and fifty percent online learning. Students were expected to learn some of the course content asynchronously, using self-access, self-paced online resources before attending the more traditional on-campus face-to-face classes. Formative, practice assessments were set to be completed asynchronously after studying online content. Following this, summative assessments were taken on campus, synchronously using the assessment tool in the Blackboard LMS. This approach was inspired by the Blended Learning approach.

With the onset of the pandemic in early spring 2020, and following decrees from the UAE Ministry of Education, all classes were moved online for the health and safety of all stakeholders. This led to a new strategic development. Inspired by the success of the blended learning approach for general courses, senior managers and administrators looked at what could be done to ensure the successful implementation of a suitable model for teaching and learning during the pandemic. The challenge was undertaken by senior management, deans, department heads, administrators, and faculty. A period of experimentation resulted and faculty, staff and students began the transition to teaching and learning entirely online with administrative and technical support being established as well. It proved to be a relative success and led to the Hybrid Model Implementation Guidelines being developed that were based on the latest directives from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health, and with input from federal higher education institutions. These guidelines provided the institution with some clear directions on moving forward from the traditional model of delivery to a new hybrid model.

A plan had been put in place, which led to the establishment of the Hybrid- On-line/On-Campus (OLEC) Academic Delivery Mode.

This hybrid academic model is defined by the combination of online and on campus program delivery, where appropriate and applicable, to cover all aspects of the curriculum, both theoretical and practical.

The Ministry of Education guidelines stipulate that the online delivery component for any program be less than fifty percent. The online component for a given course does not have to be campus specific and can be delivered system wide. However, there is a cap of sixty for the total number of students that can be enrolled in the online component of a bachelor program course. Any system

wide course delivery employs a centralized distributive model directed by a primary system wide delivery leader supported by local course delivery tutors. Assessments can be either face-to-face or online or a combination of both. In addition, there are academic support and counselling services made available to students. The online delivery can be conducted by faculty on campus or online working from home (WFH) or teaching from home (TFH).

To summarize, one of the main federal HEIs in the UAE adopted a hybrid model that incorporated online learning as well as face to face learning. The online component of a course is up to fifty percent, which can be delivered by a campus either locally or nationwide. Assessments are conducted either online synchronously or face to face synchronously. Alongside the delivery of the program's course content are academic support and counselling services, which can be conducted both online or face to face. This hybrid academic model incorporates a wide range of modern approaches to teaching and learning.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

English is the lingua-franca of instruction in most HEIs in the UAE. To join a Bachelor's program in one of the federal institutions' students must gain a minimum of IELTS Band 5 or CEFR B1+. To do this, students can take an IELTS test or sit the EmSAT English exam.

IELTS, an acronym for the International English Language Testing System, is an internationally renowned test designed to measure English ability either for general or academic purposes. It was

developed by the British Council, IDP Education, and Cambridge Assessment English. Students can take this test privately at a number of test centres across the Emirates. This used to be the main test of English until the Ministry of Education developed the EmSAT. Figure 1 shows how IELTS bands and EmSAT scores lineup.

IELTS Academic Track	EmSAT
8	1925 - 2000
7.5	1800 - 1900
7	1675 - 1775
6.5	1550 - 1650
6	1400 - 1525
5.5	1250 - 1375
5	1100 - 1225
4.5	950 - 1075
4	825 - 925
*	< 800

Figure 1. EmSAT English & IELTS (Academic)

The EmSAT is a national standard test that has been developed by the UAE Ministry of Education. It is a test of English proficiency for high school students and is a college entry and placement test which is designed to assess whether or not a student has the required language skills to actively learn in an English-medium college or university, or engage in technical training where the medium of instruction is English.

This test is administered under secure conditions in certified test centers and scores are used by the receiving institutions for admission into their degree programs, or for placement into their foundation or bridging programs. The EmSAT applies the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) bands to measure the level of the students. Figure 2 shows how the EmSAT scores align with the CEFR bands.

EmSAT	CEFR
> 2000	C2
1625 – 1975	C1
1250 – 1600	B2
875 – 1225	B1
500 – 850	A2
125 – 475	A1

Figure 2. EmSAT English & CEFR

It is possible for some students to join the federal HEIs with conditional offers where they study prerequisite, in-house English courses in order to reach the required entry level before starting their chosen undergraduate program. From the Academic year 2020-21, to qualify for the conditional

offer, students must have attained an EmSAT score of no less than 850, equivalent to the cusp of CEFR B1.

Arabic is the official language of the UAE but English is used widely and spoken in shops, hotels, and businesses. The majority of the students grow up in an environment where they are exposed to a lot of English. They begin learning English in elementary schools and study right through to graduating high school with varying degrees of success. Despite Arabic being the first language for these students, the medium of instruction in HEIs is predominately in English, therefore they can be considered to be English as Second Language (ESL) learners.

The majority of the first-year undergraduate students are pre-intermediate and intermediate level students. The students who enter the college with conditional offers can also take fundamental courses in Math and Physics, as well as social science subjects. These general courses, which are taught in English, are credit courses that supplement the undergraduate major courses. However, to date there are no English for Academic Purpose (EAP) or English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses to help prepare the students for their major programs, just general English courses. The undergraduate courses are delivered by the newly established hybrid academic model. Some are entirely online, while some employ a blended learning approach with a mix of face-to-face and online elements. The course content is hosted on the Blackboard LMS, where the system is in English, the course content is in English, assessments are in English, and instructions are also communicated in English.

There is an assumption that all students understand what they are supposed to do, have the requisite technical skills, and have the level of English required to understand their course content.

The recent transition to a hybrid model, with the use of a blended learning approach, where varying degrees of content is learnt online, has had an impact on teaching and learning across the institution. Some faculty and students thrive with the new hybrid academic model, while others struggle to adapt, preferring the more traditional approaches.

Furthermore, as a number of faculty members are native Arabic speakers and their students first language is Arabic it is often the case that Arabic is employed for teaching and learning some of the course content in the bachelor programs. However, all assessments are conducted in English and there is often a disconnect between what is being taught, how it is being taught, and what is being tested. A large number of the students do not study English formally once they have begun their bachelor degree courses despite only having pre-intermediate or intermediate level English.

So, given that this HEI has developed its own unique version of a hybrid model it is essential to try a gain a deeper understanding of what is happening and what the effects are.

There is less traditional face to face teaching and learning. Therefore, there is less time spent in the classroom with traditional pedagogical practices. Whilst some faculty members are ready, willing, and able to adapt to an online or blended mode of delivery, some educators struggle.

Consequently, HEIs may be unaware of the most important factors to be considered when designing hybrid academic courses and their content for undergraduates that are essentially ESL students.

So, given that HEIs in the UAE are adopting a hybrid academic model, with differing components and attributes, is it vitally important to try to understand what the most important factors to be considered are when developing hybrid academic model courses, and to identify what the

advantages and disadvantages are of the said model, and what can be done to ensure student success when establishing a hybrid academic model.

1.3 Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to identify what the most important factors are that need to be considered when designing hybrid academic models of education for undergraduates that are ESL students. By looking at the advantages and disadvantages of hybrid models for ESL students it is possible to identify areas that could be developed that will ensure students have a better opportunity of being successful in their studies.

1.4 Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, three main questions have been posited. The first question has been set in order to identify the different factors that need to be taken into consideration during the process of developing hybrid model courses in the context of ESL undergraduates in HEIs in the UAE. That is, this study will look into what are these factors and what impact they have for ESL students at the undergraduate level.

The second question will be addressed by identifying the different advantages and disadvantages the hybrid model poses for these ESL undergraduates.

Finally, the third question has been set to try and identify what can be done to help students be more successful with this particular mode of study.

1.4.1 Research Question (1):

What are the most important factors to consider when developing hybrid courses for ESL undergraduates?

1.4.2 Research Questions (2):

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the hybrid model for ESL undergraduates?

1.4.3 Research Questions (3):

What can be done to ensure student success?

1.5 Relevance and Importance of the Study

By identifying the most important factors it is possible to inform the process of course development to ensure that certain aspects are considered when it comes to the design and implementation of this mode of study. It will help institutions to understand what should and should not be included in the creation of these courses. Overall, it will help HEIs in the region and may inform their education policies paying particular attention to the requirements of ESL students. The hybrid academic model can evolve by focusing on the advantages while addressing the disadvantages.

This will lead to the consideration of other factors that would help these particular students to fully benefit from this particular mode of learning.

Other researchers may find that this research is helpful as it could provide opportunities for further research or critical points that indicate more research on this topic is necessary. It could provide opportunities for researchers who teach in different fields such as engineering, computer information science, and business, where the undergraduates are studying predominately in a second language being taught by native and non-native English speakers whilst utilizing an English based delivery system that incorporates a LMS and online course content.

For HEIs or the wider education sector of the UAE, this study's conclusion could help with future planning.

The following section will look at what constitutes the hybrid model in education, what impact this has on teaching and learning, particularly with ESL learners in mind, and what the main theories are regarding teaching and learning with the hybrid academic model.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 What is the Hybrid Model?

The hybrid model can be difficult to define as it is interpreted in a variety of different ways by different researchers and scholars. It is difficult to find one all-encompassing definition but there are concurrent themes running through many scholars and researchers attempts to define it.

Aviran, E., et al (2020) define the hybrid model as an option for course delivery, which combines online activities with face-to-face classroom instruction. Continuing this theme, Lee, F. S., Wong, K. C., Cheung, W. K., & Lee, C. F. (2010) state the hybrid model blends face to face and online delivery, where a significant proportion of content is delivered online. Abdelrahman, N., & Irby, B. J. (2015) describe the hybrid model as a model of course design which combines traditional, face to face periods with online and out of class activities. The hybrid model is also referred to as Hybrid Learning and has been defined by Ketelhut, D. J., et al (2009) as one which incorporates both computer-mediated and face-to-face communication.

Yuen, L. Y., & Tsui, E. (2010) suggest it combines learning systems and human teaching activities alongside administrative resources which are employed to enhance student learning. Gaimaro, A., & Lomellini, A. (2019) define it is an educational modality in which both online and physical locations are used to aid learning. These definitions highlight that there are certain aspects and themes that are constant, these being, teaching and learning that combines the traditional, face to

face, and online. In its most basic sense, hybrid model learning occurs in both the classroom, or a similar environment, and online.

In this respect, hybrid learning and blended learning can be seen to overlap, which is why the terms are often used interchangeably. Indeed, Izquierdo-Álvarez, V., & Pinto-Llorente, A. M. (2021) state that it is a type of learning which combines both face-to-face and online lessons and that it is also referred to as blended learning. Hybrid learning and Blended Learning are one and the same for some scholars in the way they combine multiple approaches to teaching and learning. O'Byrne, B. (2010) suggests the hybrid model is another name for blended learning where the emphasis is on combining the features of face-to-face and online delivery. It is also seen as being located along the continuum of blended learning (Sieber, S., & Henrich, A., 2010). Furthermore, Hijón-Neira, R., et al (2010) state that blended learning combines several approaches to learning which can be accomplished by utilising 'blended' physical and virtual resources, such as face-to-face periods combined with materials that are technology based.

Furthermore, Keengwe, J. & Onchwari, G. (2015) distinguish Hybrid Learning as a methodological approach which defines a variety of practices and processes, while Blended Learning is defined as a process or practice. Therefore, hybrid learning can be deemed to be strategic, while blended learning is tactical. Chirino-Barceló, V., & Molina, A. (2011) describe hybrid learning as a learner centred process fostered by instructional design that combine digital technology and traditional face-to-face class-based activities which facilitate students' learning processes, where there is a degree of autonomy whereby students can choose the methods and materials that suit them in order to attain curriculum learning objectives. This is evident in Anton, J. L., et al (2018) claim it is about finding the right mix from the myriad possibilities in learning.

Both hybrid and blended learning are discussed in terms of approaches, processes, methods, and modality. The main features of which are traditional classroom based face-to-face teaching and learning coupled with online teaching and learning elements.

For the purpose of this paper when the hybrid model is discussed it will also refer to hybrid learning and blended learning. In addition, the terms blended learning and hybrid learning will be used interchangeably.

2.1.1 Research that highlights the advantages of Hybrid Model/Blended Learning

There are several reasons why a hybrid model should be implemented in HEIs. Several studies researching blended learning have demonstrated that the main benefits can be improved results, more participation, increased interaction, deeper learning, cost effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility, improved time management, increased student independence, and higher quality work.

Lee, K. C., & Chong, P. M. (2007) claimed that because of time and cost reductions and the fact that information can be accessed anytime, anywhere, it is a superior approach to the more traditional counterparts. Alebaikan & Troudi (2010) discovered that it affects teaching and learning positively. Dziuban et al. (2005) found that students engaged in this mode of learning outperformed others that were studying either entirely online or completely face-to-face.

Several studies established that if traditional courses were enhanced with online elements there was improved student participation and interaction (DeLacey & Leonard, 2002; Alebaikan & Troudi,

2010; Korr, Derwin, Greene, & Sokoloff, 2012). Garrison & Anderson (2003) found that students were able to develop better time management skills as well as become more independent.

Some studies showed that students produce a higher standard of work and attain higher grades (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002; Deghaidy, H. E., & Nouby, A. 2008).

Yet, despite a great deal of research into this mode of learning having positive outcomes, there is a common misconception that it is wholeheartedly supported and its use is advocated by everyone.

For all the studies conducted that have a positive view there are several that found the opposite is true when it comes to improved results, more participation, increased interaction, deeper learning, cost effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility, improved time management, increased student independence, and higher quality work.

2.1.2 Research that highlights the disadvantages of Hybrid Model /Blended Learning

The problems associated with the hybrid model can be subdivided into distinct categories. One of the main areas can be within institutions. One of the most difficult challenges that often needs to be overcome is the prevailing institutional culture (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010, Ramos et al., 2011). The effectiveness of the implementation of the hybrid model stems from how well it is embraced as many staff, faculty and instructors are traditionalists and resist the adoption of new approaches to teaching and learning. Changing the mindset and long-established habits of some educators can be difficult (Ramos et al, 2011). Some of the reasons stated in research as to why the hybrid model is met with resistance or indifference relate to the perceived increase in workload and time

commitment as well as the lack of technical skills required to teach these courses effectively (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Gedik et al., 2013; Heaney & Walker, 2012; Kenney & Newcombe, 2010; Korr et al., 2012;).

The hybrid model can be challenging both physically and cognitively to educators. It can be physically draining as more time is spent on a whole range of tasks such as corresponding with students electronically, developing course content and resources, uploading materials, and doing administrative work (Gedik et al., 2013; Kenney & Newcombe, 2010; Lotrecchiano et al., 2013). Some instructors struggle to use technology in the classroom and are unable to adapt their teaching to fit the hybrid model. Moreover, the lack of pedagogical and technological skills for some educators is an issue that needs to be overcome (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Gedik et al., 2013, Lotrecchiano et al., 2013.). Furthermore, balancing teaching in online learning environments with face-to-face instruction is a skill that many educators lack (Gedik et al., 2013; Lotrecchiano et al., 2013). Related to this is managing time and getting the balance right for teaching and learning online and in the classroom (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Gedik et al., 2012; Korr et al., 2012).

Another issue regarding the hybrid model is concerned with the students. Several studies have been conducted that have found the hybrid model can have a negative impact on students. This approach to teaching and learning sees students struggle due to a lack of intrinsic motivation, persistence, and self-discipline (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Heaney & Walker, 2012). Many students prefer to learn in the familiar environment of the classroom, face-to-face and they are reluctant to embrace newer strategies for learning so it is a struggle to get them to adapt (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Lotrecchiano et al., 2013). Despite the fact some studies have claimed the hybrid model increases student participation other studies have concluded that this is not always the case due to their poor

time management, heterogeneous backgrounds, attitude, and lack of study skills (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Kenney & Newcombe, 2010; Heaney & Walker, 2012; Lotrecchiano et al., 2013).

Another issue is technological, where the unreliability of technology is often put forward as a reason why people are not so willing to embrace the hybrid model wholeheartedly. Whilst many faculty members and students have the technological ability they get frustrated by the problems of reliability, speed, and connectivity (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Ramos et al., 2011; Heaney & Walker, 2012; Levin et al., 2013). Furthermore, a perceived lack of technical support has been seen as a frustrating factor for some educators (Lionarakis & Parademetriou, 2003; Ramos et al., 2011).

Having looked at some of the advantages and disadvantages of the hybrid model, it will also help to look at what are the different elements of the hybrid model.

2.1.3 The different elements of the Hybrid Model

There are a number of different elements to the hybrid model. Some teaching and learning is conducted in traditional brick and mortar settings aided by the use of technology in the classroom. Teachers are also expected to teach students online synchronously and remotely. Students are also expected to study course content online asynchronously, where the online portion of the courses can be studied anytime anywhere. Assessments can also be administered on campus or online.

2.1.4 Online Learning

One of the most important elements of the hybrid model is Online Learning (OL). OL refers to learning that is undertaken whilst a student is studying online. It can be done either dependently, independently, synchronously, or asynchronously. Students can work alone or collaboratively with their peers or teachers and they can do it remotely or face-to-face. It is a very flexible approach to teaching and learning.

2.1.5 A Brief History of Online Learning

OL is not a particularly new concept. Since the earliest days of computer technology people have been utilizing it for learning.

Developed by Suppes (1964) and attributed as being the first computer-based instruction system, Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations (PLATO) was pioneered. Even though it predated the Internet it enabled content to be shared through a series of connected computer terminals. PLATO continued to be developed and saw the establishment of the first online community where users could interact through activity on message boards, and screen sharing.

As technology developed so did Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) which saw different versions being created that were informed by different pedagogical approaches (Davies, G., 2013). As educators saw the benefits of CALL more research was conducted and investment increased which paved the way for more sophisticated systems being developed.

Nowadays, OL is usually conducted using education technology with specially designed software or through a LMS that hosts content and can be accessed anytime, anywhere. There are a variety of LMS which are used by institutions, notable examples are Canvas, Moodle, and Blackboard. They can be utilized for the deployment of course materials, setting tasks and activities, and assessments. They can also be used for administrative purposes as well, such as taking attendance and for assessment and grading.

With regard to the hybrid academic model both synchronous and asynchronous learning can occur with OL. Courses can be designed that encourage students to work independently and remotely as well as collaboratively, remotely. Online learning can also be conducted synchronously on campus. It is this flexibility that many educators and students like. Basically, OL enables anyone to study anywhere anytime with a plethora of resources.

Another more recent development that makes OL possible is with Cloud Computing.

2.1.6 Cloud Computing

Cloud computing is an integral part of the hybrid model. In recent years, tech giants such as Apple, Microsoft, Google, and Amazon have all invested in developing cloud-based services. This has led to the development of the iCloud, OneDrive, Google Drive and Amazon Web Services. This development has had a profound effect on higher education, because these services have enabled rapid change in the approach to teaching and learning in HEIs. Using the Cloud in education means

that institutions are longer required to rigidly stick to the traditional bricks and mortar, face-to-face approach to teaching and learning. Through the Cloud, teaching and learning can be conducted anytime, anywhere, and by anyone.

There are three main elements to Cloud-computing, Software as a Service (SaaS), Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), and Platform as a Service (PaaS) (Akande & Van Belle, 2014).

PaaS enables users to make use of IaaS and grants those users the ability to deploy applications in the Cloud. In HEIs, this is in the form of integrated software that can provide developers with a system to build, or incorporate, the applications required. In addition to this is SaaS, which provides users with open access to the applications. PaaS is the preserve of web developers, IaaS is the domain of Information Technology departments, while SaaS is principally set up for educators (Akande & Van Belle, 2014).

The federal HEIs in the UAE employing a hybrid model will have a pay-as-you-go-service run by an IT department, that administers an infrastructure which in turn hosts a platform that integrates a Learning Management System (LMS) used by staff, faculty, and students. It is through the LMS that applications, course content and assessments can be hosted and deployed.

For a Hybrid model to be successful, the different stakeholders at the different levels of PaaS, IaaS, and SaaS need to be aware of what is required to fully realize the potential of the system.

On a practical level, SaaS provides educators and students with the opportunity to use a wide variety of software and applications for teaching and learning. The software and applications can be used both synchronously and asynchronously, which enables the hybrid model approach.

Having a basic working knowledge of the hardware and software involved in the hybrid approach is becoming an essential skill for educators and students to have.

For a hybrid model to be effective, appropriate pedagogy is required. The following section will look at the different teaching and learning theories in education associated with the hybrid model.

2.2 The Hybrid Model and Teaching and Learning Theories

There are a great number of theories that have been developed to explain teaching and learning. This section look at the main. Theories and how they relate to the hybrid model.

2.2.1 Theoretical Framework

The hybrid academic model with its blended learning approach does not have its own pedagogy per se, instead it draws from the main theories that were developed and established in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

In the twentieth century three main schools of thought were developed. The behaviourist, cognitivist, and constructivist theories were put forward to explain teaching and learning and they have heavily influenced the educational process for decades.

2.2.2 Behaviourism

Evolving from a positivist worldview, Behaviourism is concerned with how people behave. In terms of education, Behaviourism examines student's behaviour whilst they are learning. Fundamentally, actions produce reactions and Behaviourism is concerned with how students respond to specific stimuli. Through observing how students respond it is possible to evaluate and quantify their behaviour. The noted scholar, famous for studies in Behaviorism, John B. Watson argued that the learning process can be studied in terms of stimulus and response and that consciousness and the mind are unimportant (Picciano, A. G., 2017). He claimed that behaviours are learnt and obtained via interaction with an environment.

Behaviourism continued to be a very influential theory of learning up to the middle of the twentieth century. One of the main proponents of this theory, B.F. Skinner (1957), hypothesized that when children copied and reproduced the language around them, they would receive 'positive reinforcement', often in the form of praise. Children, encouraged by this environment, would then continue to copy, and replicate language, practising sounds and patterns leading to the development of habits in which they use language correctly (Gredler, M. E. 2005). So, in the behaviourist tradition, learning stems from a combination of habit formation and conditioning.

Another aspect of behaviourism is the black box theory that states learning is to a certain extent unknowable and is about behaviour change. In education, teachers praise students to encourage them and establish a certain type of behaviour and conversely, they will discourage certain types of behaviour which can be disruptive and prevent the learning process. It is through classical or operant conditioning that a learner learns the desired behaviour (Gredler, M. E. 2005).

Skinner's work is said to have influenced Pat Suppes, who was one of the earliest pioneers in the development of computerized learning. His computer assisted instructional (CAI) models emphasized repetition and encouragement in order to foster positive learning activities (Picciano, A. G., 2017).

2.2.3 Cognitivism

Cognitivism is often said to have come about as a reaction to behaviourism. The emphasis on stimulus and response was rejected and it was posited that people are rational beings that need to be actively engaged in order to learn. The mind plays a vital role in learning, where different cognitive processes such as imagination and motivation are essential elements that help process the understanding of environmental stimuli and responses (Orlich, et al 2013). Cognitivism is often associated with the image of the mind as a computer waiting for input, where information is then processed and internalized (Gredler, M. E. 2005). Jean Piaget, a noted scholar in the field of cognitivism, theorized that children develop cognitive pathways from their experiences and will learn more from being active (Orlich, et al. 2013). Moreover, actively engaged students achieve deeper understanding, apply knowledge to solve problems, and synthesize information which is in turn committed to memory. When teachers employ cognitive strategies, they help guide the learner through the process of learning until the knowledge is acquired and understood.

2.2.4 Social Cognitive Theory

The renowned Stanford psychology professor Albert Bandura developed the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), illustrated in Figure 3, in the 1980s after first positing his Social Learning Theory (SLT) in the 1960s. At the heart of this theory is the belief that the knowledge individuals acquire comes from the observation, modelling, and imitation of the behaviours, attitudes, and reactions of other people (Bandura, 1999). The theory is often seen as one that bridges the gap between behaviourism and cognitivism because it accepts behaviourist notions but adds that learning could not occur unless there were some cognitive processes. Learning is said to occur when the learner interacts with others in a social environment, but also that the individual experiences a person has influences the learner's ability to adapt (Bandura, 1999).

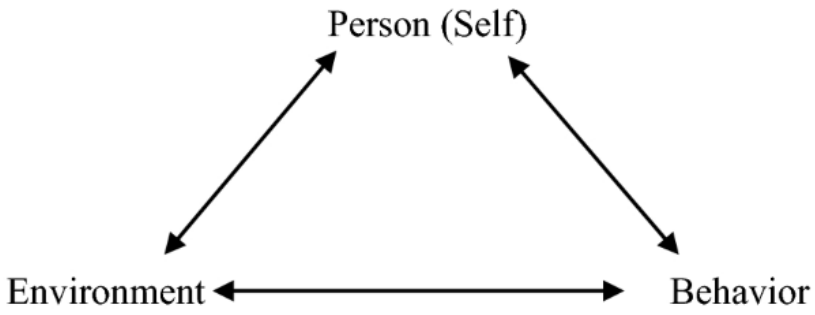


Figure 3: Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (1986)

2.2.5 Constructivism

Constructivists believe that knowledge is constructed from and built on experiences and prior learning. The constructivist theory states that learners are not simply empty vessels waiting to be filled with knowledge but instead are actively trying to develop understanding.

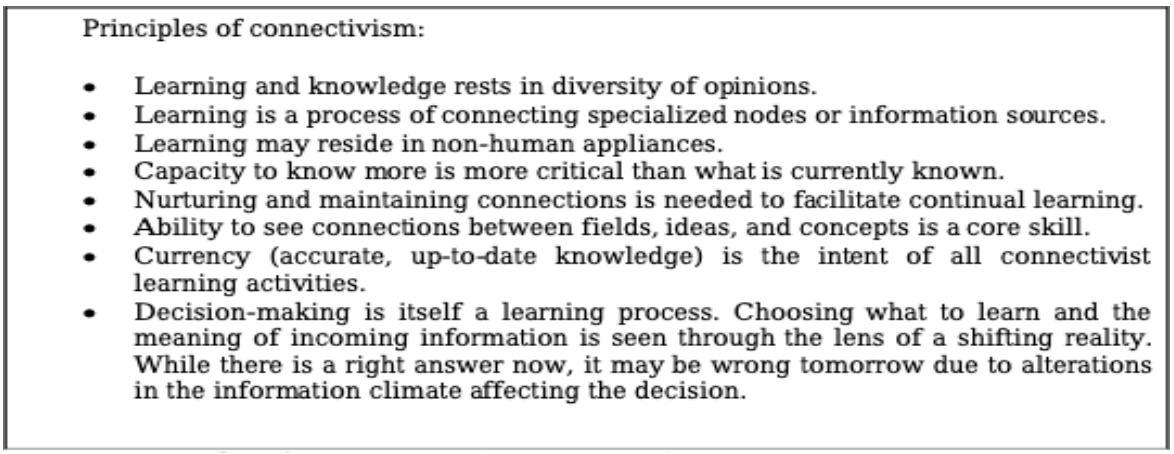
Learners construct their own meaning by selecting, making meaningful connections, and pursuing their own understanding. Central to this theory is social interaction which is essential for cognitive development. Vygotsky (1978) theorized that learning occurs in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in which a more experienced and knowledgeable person helps a learner navigate to a higher level (Orlich et al 2013). In education, activities are usually scaffolded so an educator or peer can help a learner negotiate the ZPD. Constructivists believe that learning should occur as a social activity and that knowledge can be gained through interaction, groupwork, and ultimately is socially constructed.

Behaviourism, congnitivism, and constructivism were developed during an era where technology was yet to have a profound effect on learning. With the onset of the digital age, the twenty first century saw another theory of learning gain traction.

2.2.6 Connectivism

Developed by George Seimens (2004) Connectivism is a theory borne out of the digital age that recognizes how technology has begun to influence society and the shifts in how information and knowledge is shared, spreads and changes are due to huge communication networks.

Ideas related to teaching and learning have evolved as the Internet has changed the process of learning from one that was individualistic and internalized to one that is group and community based Connectivism stresses the critical role that networks and connections play in the learning process.

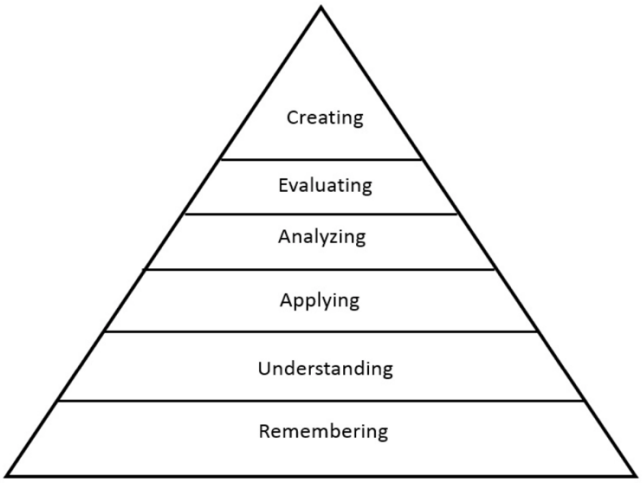

Principles of connectivism:

- Learning and knowledge rests in diversity of opinions.
- Learning is a process of connecting specialized nodes or information sources.
- Learning may reside in non-human appliances.
- Capacity to know more is more critical than what is currently known.
- Nurturing and maintaining connections is needed to facilitate continual learning.
- Ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concepts is a core skill.
- Currency (accurate, up-to-date knowledge) is the intent of all connectivist learning activities.
- Decision-making is itself a learning process. Choosing what to learn and the meaning of incoming information is seen through the lens of a shifting reality. While there is a right answer now, it may be wrong tomorrow due to alterations in the information climate affecting the decision.

Figure 4: Siemens Principles of Connectivism Siemens (2004)

Other notable theories and frameworks include Bloom's Taxonomy and Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction. Benjamin Bloom (1956) developed a taxonomy of learning that remains to this day essential reading for educationalists. His taxonomy of learning was concerned with intellect and

higher order thinking skills. He based his taxonomy on six key elements (see figure 5) and helped move the debate in theories of learning toward cognitivism.



- **Creating**: Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole, and reorganizing elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing.
- **Evaluating**: Making judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing.
- **Analyzing**: Breaking material into constituent parts, and determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose through differentiating, organizing, and attributing.
- **Applying**: Carrying out or using a procedure through executing or implementing.
- **Understanding**: Constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages through interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining.
- **Remembering**: Retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory.

Figure 5: Blooms Taxonomy

About twenty years after Bloom developed his taxonomy, Robert Gagne produced his Nine Events of Instruction taxonomy (see figure 6). According to Harasim (2012) this became the foundation

of cognitivist instructional design. The Nine Events relate to the design of instructional materials and their objectives and strategies.

1. **Gain attention:** Use media relevant to the topic.
2. **Describe the goal:** Provide clear objectives to the overall course goals.
3. **Stimulate prior knowledge:** Review previously presented material and concepts and connect them to the material to be addressed in the current module.
4. **Present the material to be learned**: Readings, presentations, demonstrations, multimedia, graphics, audio files, animations, etc.
5. **Provide guidance for learning:** Discussions to enable learners to actively reflect on new information in order to check their knowledge and understanding of content.
6. **Elicit performance:** Activity-based learning such as group research projects, discussion, homework, etc.
7. **Provide feedback:** Immediate, specific, and constructive feedback is provided to students.
8. **Assess performance:** Assessment activity such as a test, research project, essay, or presentation.
9. **Enhance retention and transfer:** Provide opportunities for additional guided practice or projects that might relate learning to other real-life activities.

Figure 6: Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction

All of these theories and frameworks have their advocates and critics, merits, and demerits, but they have all had a profound influence on the process of education. Yet, there is not one underlying theory that can be applied to the hybrid model, as the pedagogy is continually evolving, instead different aspects of the theories can be merged to develop an appropriate pedagogical approach.

As this particular hybrid model is being used to teach young adults whose first language is Arabic it is important to look at the teaching and learning theories associated with language learners as well especially in the context of English as Second Language learners.

For the purpose of this research paper, it is important to understand how first language acquisition theories have influenced second language acquisition theories and how they in turn might influence the teaching and learning approaches being employed in HEIs in the UAE.

2.3 Language Acquisition theories for ESL Learners

There are a number of established theories and hypotheses regarding how languages are learnt. The following section will look at some of the most influential ones.

2.3.1 Language Acquisition Theories

Behaviourism was applied to all types of learning in the 1950s and 60s. Behaviourists believe that language is learnt through habit formation, but this notion was challenged and new theories were posited.

One of the most influential figures in linguistics, Noam Chomsky, challenged the behaviorist theory and argued that all human languages are essentially connatural and children are biologically programmed to develop language much in the same way a child develops other functions biologically. Challenging the behaviourist explanation for the acquisition of language, Chomsky argued that the environment only contributes a little (Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. M. 2006). He went on to explain that children develop more knowledge of their language that goes beyond what they learn from the samples of language they are exposed to. Chomsky then hypothesized that we are born with an innate ability to understand the underlying principles of language and will develop

deeper awareness of how language works. He referred to this innate ability as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), which is believed to contain the fundamental principles for all languages. Through the LAD, the input of language enables people to determine what are correct and incorrect forms. This Universal Grammar, as he described it, prevents the development of incorrect hypotheses regarding the rules that govern a language system.

Moreover, it is argued that because everyone learns the language of their environment there must be a connatural biological mechanism that enables them to decipher even the most complex language systems despite there being limitations regarding input.

2.3.2 Critical Period Hypothesis

Chomsky's theories are regularly connected to the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), which states that humans and other animals are programmed genetically with an innate ability to acquire particular types of knowledge and skills at certain times in life. It is suggested that outside of these specific times or 'critical periods' it becomes more difficult and even impossible to acquire the abilities (Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. M. (2006)). In the context of language, the CPH implies that children, if deprived of or denied access to it, will not be able to acquire it. In fact, despite it being difficult to prove the CPH due to almost all children being exposed to language, there are a few cases that provide evidence supporting it (Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. M. (2006).

However, Cognitive and Developmental psychologists believe that there is too much emphasis placed on the connatural ability which culminates in the mastery of a language and not enough on the developmental aspects of language acquisition. Instead, they hypothesize that what children actually require is readily available in the language they hear repeatedly through thousands of hours of interactions.

Therefore, researchers in these fields have drawn attention to the relationship between children's acquisition of language and their cognitive development. Jean Piaget (1951), was one of the earliest proponents of this theory. He observed children's cognitive development as they developed understanding of the environment around them and how interacting with this environment led to language being used that represented the knowledge gained. Related to this is the work of Lev Vygotsky (1978), who believed that language is developed primarily from social interaction and that in a supportive, interactive environment a child would advance to a higher level. He posited the theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) a metaphorical place where more could be achieved by interacting with older children and adults than would be possible if done independently.

These first language acquisition theories have influenced second language acquisition theories. Some emphasize the learners' innate ability for the acquisition of language while others highlight the influence of the environment. In addition, some theories focus on the broader social context and the learners' aptitude.

2.3.3 Second Language Acquisition

Learner characteristics play an important role in the acquisition of a second language. All second language learners will have learnt at least one language already and this can have both positive and negative effects when it comes to second language acquisition. For example, having prior knowledge of how languages work could be an advantage, however, this knowledge may also interfere and cause a learner to assume or infer incorrect understanding of how the second language works. Cognitive maturity and metalinguistic awareness do however give the adult learner the advantage of being able to solve problems and discern meaning whilst engaging in conversations about a language (Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. M. (2006).

Another model of language acquisition that was borne out of the growing dissatisfaction with behaviourist language teaching methods, and was influenced by Chomsky, was Stephen Krashen's Monitor Model (1982), which was described by five hypotheses. The first hypothesis, the acquisition-learning hypothesis, suggests language is acquired through exposure, much in the same way children learn their first language. This is without paying conscious attention to the form of language. This is contrasted by the language that is learned consciously by paying attention to the rules and form of language. Next is the monitor hypothesis which claims the system developed from language acquired requires a learned system to function as a monitor or editor. The monitor will help correct and change language produced by the acquired system. The natural order hypothesis was formed by the premise that just as with first language acquisition second language acquisition develops in predictable patterns and sequences.

The next hypothesis, the input hypothesis, suggests that language that is acquired is through comprehensible input. It can be described as i+1, where 'i' is the already acquired language and '+1" is a metaphor that represents language that is a level above the acquired language.

However, despite being exposed to large amounts of comprehensible input, not all second language learners acquire language successfully and this is explained by Krashen's affective filter hypothesis which states there is an 'affective filter' that stops language learners from acquiring language despite it being comprehensible. This metaphorical barrier comes in the form of feelings, emotions, attitudes, and motives which effectively filter out the input and block it from being acquired.

These hypotheses have been challenged and criticised by scholars, particularly when describing acquisition versus learning. Acquisition was defined by Krashen and Terrel (1983) as developing from a subconscious process, such as the one children employ when they are learning their first language, whereas learning stemmed from formal teaching and brings about conscious knowledge of the language, yet it has been pointed out that this definition is too simplistic. Schmidt (1990) drew attention to the use of the term subconscious as being misleading in that it was not employed in the technical sense but probably was meant in the non-technical sense being closer in meaning to subliminal, much in the way that one is unable to explain how one knows and uses language forms correctly but is unaware of how they came to be learned.

Despite the criticism and debate, Krashen's ideas have influenced approaches to teaching and learning.

Related to Krashen's concept of comprehensible input is comprehensible output (Swain 1985) which suggests that learners need to practice and use all the language that has been acquired (Hedge, 2000).

In the contemporary classroom, groupwork and pair work is encouraged because it is perceived that interaction encourages learners to produce language that is more appropriate and accurate. By working together and collaborating learners can negotiate meaning and make their output more comprehensible as they are obliged to produce language in order to make themselves understood. Pica and Doughty (1985) conducted some research that found that students produced more language when participating in groupwork, and they were exposed to more input as well, however, it was found that a few individuals would dominate the groupwork. This suggests that the tasks should be set up so that there is more negotiation of meaning. This has led to educators valuing the role of collaborative work where the onus is put on the learners themselves with less reliance on the teacher. However, educators also need to consider the individual needs of learners as this methodology may run counter to the previous educational ethos which they have experienced as it implies a certain level of risk-taking is required. Different cultures have different classroom culture as the teaching methodology is often borne out of the country's culture. (Hedge, 2000). Sometimes the emphasis is on rote learning while in other cultures critical thinking and the development of metacognitive skills is paramount.

This leads to the role of error. When the approach and methodology is based on the premise that language learning stems from a creative construction process then errors are inevitable and should be viewed as a positive part of the process. This runs counter to the beliefs of behaviourists who

thought errors should be prevented through extensive drilling, repetition, and modelling. (Hedge 2000).

Closely related to this is the sociocultural perspective, which unlike the psychological theories that perceive speaking and thinking as independent processes, considers speaking and thinking as being tightly interwoven. When somebody interacts and converses with another person within their ZPD learning is thought to occur. It is possible to consider the ZPD to be similar to Krashen's i+1, yet Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. M. (2006) claim that the two concepts should not be lumped together as they are based on different bases of how development occurs. The ZPD is a metaphorical site where learners collaborate with an interlocutor to construct understanding and knowledge, whilst in Krashen's i+1 hypothesis of comprehensible input, input comes externally and is just beyond the current developmental level of the learner.

Behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism are the most prominent teaching and learning theories that have influenced education. Other notable theories and frameworks inspired by these theories have been employed to aid in the process of teaching and learning. They have also been applied and used to explain how languages are learnt. These theories have influenced the methodology used to teach English in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

2.4 English Language Teaching Methodology

In the twentieth century, language teaching achieved recognition and gained stature as a profession. In the first half of the twentieth century, the foundations were laid for contemporary language teaching. Scholars, linguists, and psychologists began developing procedures and principles that

led to the development and design of teaching materials and methodology. A number of theories and approaches of what was considered effective and theoretically sound was tried and tested (Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. 2001).

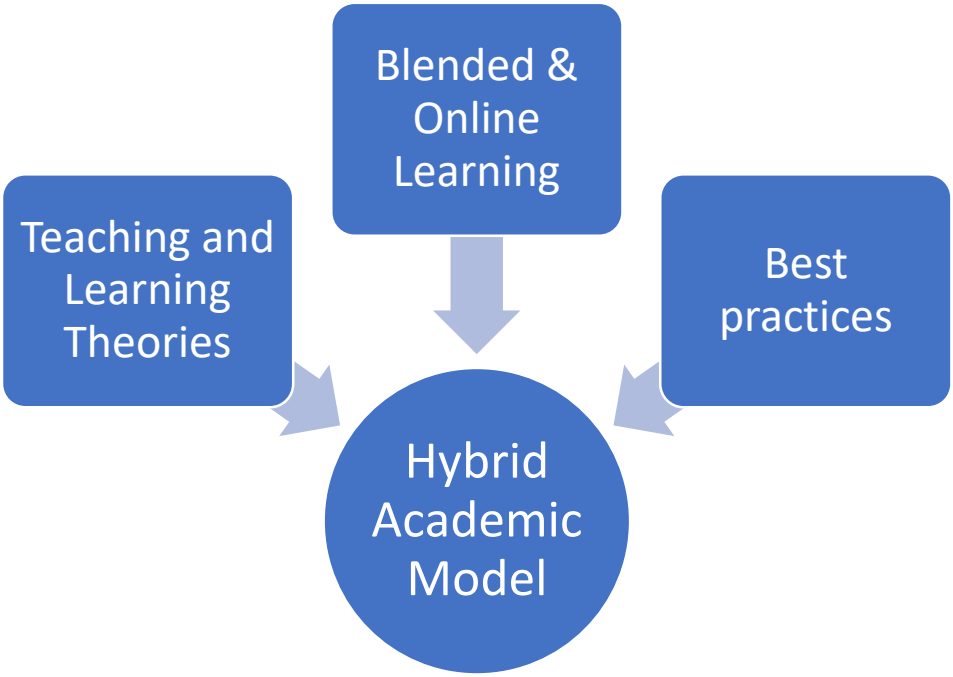
There was frequent change and innovation throughout the twentieth century and each method was developed with the belief that it was better and more effective than the previously established one. The first paradigm to gain traction was grammar-based teaching methodology. Built on the Classical method it came to be known as the Grammar-translation method, which focused on the grammar rules as a foundation of translation (Brown, H. D. 2014). It has remained remarkably robust as an option and has over the decade's withstood attempts at language teaching methodological reform, which is surprising given its inability to enhance a student's communicative competence (Brown, H. D. 2014). Following this, the Direct Method gained popularity. To this day the Direct Method is practiced at Berlitz. It was developed Maximillian Berlitz and its underlying principle is using the target language but without emphasis on grammatical rules as they would come to be understood later. After this a variety of different methods and approaches came to prominence. Notably these were the Audiolingual and Situational methods, which were in turn superseded by the Communicative Approach. Other notable methods were the Silent Way, the Natural Approach, Total Physical Response, Content-based Approach and Task-based learning, with each having their own merits and demerits.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, linguists and language teachers had begun to move away from the 'methods era' into a 'post-methods' era which saw the emergence of alternative methods of understanding the nature of language. In the last decade of the twentieth century a new approach was developing, one that was influenced by technology. Educators began using computers and

software for computer enhanced learning and CALL. Software, CD ROMs, and programs were produced to enhance language learning. Then the twenty-first century saw the development of the latest approaches to teaching and learning.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study is focused on the hybrid model and its different elements, the different teaching and learning theories that can be applied to the traditional and online aspects of courses, and what are the best practices to ensure its success.



One of the largest HEIs in the UAE has adopted a hybrid academic model, which incorporates elements of blended learning, online learning and the more traditional face-to-face on campus learning. All of the students are ESL learners, the majority of whom have low-intermediate or intermediate level English. They are expected to study for their undergraduate degrees in English

using the hybrid model, but many do not necessarily have the requisite skills to ensure success. This study is being conducted to try and ascertain what should be done so the hybrid academic model is developed and implemented in a successful way for all students.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The research undertaken in this particular study is to develop a better understanding of a hybrid academic model in a federal HEI in the UAE.

In this chapter, I will describe the research methods, the sample and participants, the data collection instruments, the data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, validity, reliability, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Methods

When conducting research there are myriad possibilities. What is undertaken in the study can influence which methods are employed. When conducting quantitative research there are a number of options to choose from. It can be either conclusive or exploratory. Conclusive quantitative research can be subdivided into descriptive and causal. Examples of descriptive research are case studies, observation, and surveys. For the purpose of this study, it was decided that a survey would be used to gather the quantitative data. There are different types of qualitative research such as interviews, ethnography, case studies, documents, and diary accounts. The qualitative research method used in this paper is interviewing. Interviews can be conducted in a variety of ways, and for the purpose of this research it was decided that group interviews should be the chosen style.

This research is pragmatic in design and adopts a mixed methods approach. Data collection methods can be prejudiced and have their limitations, so by employing more than one method it is possible to increase the validity of the data collected (Cohen et al., 2005). stated that using mixed methods ensures the data collected is valid because it does not rely solely on one method. Additionally, using a mixed methods approach can be considered advantageous because both methods can complement each other and allow for more data and information to be collected (Cohen et al., 2005).

There will be a survey for the quantitative approach and a semi-structured group interview for the qualitative approach. I personally believe this is the most suitable approach because a combination of surveys and semi-structured group interviews provides the opportunity for an in-depth exploration and numerical measurement of the advantages, disadvantages and improvements that could be made regarding the hybrid academic model.

3.2.1 Sample

In this study the population is the faculty members working at the largest public-sector HEI in the UAE, particularly those working in the General Academic Requirements Division (GARD). GARD can be divided into four sub-divisions; Arabic and Emirati Studies (AES), General Studies (GS), English Communications (EC), and Academic Success Programs (ASP). All faculty members who participated in this study belong to the GARD division and work in one or more of the sub-divisions. In this study, faculty members from GS, EC, and ASP were canvassed to

ascertain their opinions as they all have experience of teaching English or teaching the courses in English. Faculty members from the AES division were not included because their medium of instruction is in Arabic. Fifty-seven faculty members were invited to take part in the survey, of which forty-five responded, therefore the sample size is forty-five. Of the forty-five respondents, twenty-eight are working in English Communications, and seventeen in General Studies, where three are Math teachers. All the faculty members have Master's degrees, with eight having completed their doctorates. Twenty-seven are female, and eighteen are male, with seventeen in their thirties, seventeen in their forties, and eleven in their fifties. Thirty-one count English as their first language, while fourteen count English as their second language.

All of the participants have experience of teaching English as a second or foreign language, with the exception of the three Math teachers although they do teach in English, and all of them have taught using a blended learning approach and now are required to teach using the hybrid academic model.

In addition, four of the members from GARD who completed the survey also participated in the group interview; one from ASP, two from EC, and one from GS.

All of these participants have a lot of teaching experience and since the outbreak of Covid-19,

they transitioned to teaching entirely online teaching and then moved toward teaching using the hybrid academic model.

3.2.2 Data Collection Instruments

The study was undertaken with a mixed-methods approach; therefore, a survey, which is quantitative and a semi-structured group interview, which is qualitative, were employed as the instruments for collecting the data.

3.2.3 Survey

Surveys are easy to administer and can be carried out remotely over a period of time. There are a number of options for researchers to choose from when deciding which survey instrument to use. For the purpose of this study, it was decided that Microsoft Forms was the best option. All faculty members at the federal institution where the study was conducted have access to this software, so the survey could be made and sent out by email and once the surveys had been submitted the results would be automatically sent to the sender making it a very efficient way of gathering quantitative data. Once the survey data had been collected the results were exported in Excel to be analyzed.

Chang and Vowels (2013) noted that some of the advantages of using online surveys are that they are both time and cost effective and convenient in that they allow respondents to answer in their own time and at their own pace. According to Dorneyei (2007) surveys, if administered appropriately can be one of the most effective applied scientific instruments for academic research.

The survey was designed using the Likert scale, which is named after its inventor, Rensis Likert, who devised the approach in 1932. The Likert Scale can be used to measure agreement, frequency, importance, likelihood, and quality. It can be advantageous in research as it does not simply ask

for a yes or no answer, instead it asks for a degree of opinion. The responses can be coded so that quantitative data can be obtained. The data from a Likert scale can be analysed and summarized using the median or mode. Due to the fact that the intervals between values should not be deemed equal, the mean is usually considered inappropriate (McLeod, S. A. 2019), so even though the mean has been calculated for this data set other aspects of the data has been analyzed.

As they can be completed anonymously, surveys can reduce social desirability bias. Yet, as with all surveys, the issue of social desirability can be an issue which in turn affects its validity.

This survey used a Likert scale with the five options; Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. There were three questions in total. The first had twenty statements related to what are the advantages and benefits of the hybrid model in education. These statements were based on the researchers experiences and what other studies and research has found. The second question had twenty statements related to how the hybrid model could be adapted to ensure more success. It was decided that the statements would not be grouped together into themes that might induce bias, so instead statements related to similar themes were dispersed.

3.2.4 Interview

In order to gain a deeper understanding of what some faculty believe with regard to the hybrid model it was decided that interviews should be conducted. There are three types of interviews used to conduct research; structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. For the purpose of this study, it was decided that semi-structured group interviews would be conducted. The questions were semi-structured so as to provide the interviewees with opportunities to share their opinions and the

interviewer could ask follow up questions to try and gain deeper meaning or insight. The interviews would complement the surveys as they would enable the researcher to ask different types of questions that would highlight different ideas and opinions. Like the surveys, the Group interview was conducted online.

Due to restrictions put in place because of the Covid-19 pandemic it was decided that the interview should be conducted entirely online using Zoom. A Zoom meeting was arranged and four participants were interviewed as a group. The resulting interview was recorded and transcribed.

3.2.6 Data Collection Procedures

In order to conduct research at this particular federal institution permission was requested from the senior management. After checking the proposal, the survey, and the interview questions, the director of the campus, where the research was conducted, granted permission.

By using the college's internal faculty emailing system the participants were contacted and asked to take part in a survey. This was done through a mail merge with a link to the survey attached.

Faculty members could open the link, agree to proceed with the survey and submit their responses using Microsoft Forms, part of the Office Suite they all have accounts for.

The researcher was able to see when surveys had been submitted and monitor them until a valid sample size was achieved.

The group interview had to done in a Zoom meeting room due to Covid-19 health and safety guidelines. The Zoom meeting was set up and recorded. The time taken for the group interview

was just under fifty minutes. Three participants were WFH and two were on campus in offices. Once the meeting had concluded the recording was downloaded and then transcribed.

3.2.7 Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive statistics can include a variety of measures and enable a researcher to summarize and organize the data set characteristics of a sample of a population. There are three main types of descriptive statistics: distribution, which is concerned with each value's frequency; central tendency, that is concerned with the value's averages; and variability, which is concerned with how spread out the values are. The most common method used to calculate the average is the mean. To find out what lies in the middle of a data set the median is calculated. To discover what is the most frequent response of a data set the mode can be calculated. Standard deviation is used to calculate the average variability of the dataset.

The higher the number is, indicates the dataset is more variable. By making these calculations it is possible to deduce meaning. The deductions can indicate patterns and conclusions can be made.

For the purpose of this research frequencies, percentages, mean, median and mode were calculated for the results of the survey. The responses for the statements using the Likert Scale were converted into descriptive statistics by coding so descriptive statistics could be used to analyse the quantitative data. The descriptive statistics for the quantitative analysis were created by numerically coding the Likert scale, where Strongly Agree is 5, Agree is 4, Neutral is 3, Disagree is 2, and Strongly disagree is 1. By calculating the mean, I wanted to see what the majority of the respondents thought and also to see if there were any outliers. I calculated the median in order to find exactly what the response was that was in the middle of the data. This would then help me to compare it with the

mean. Calculating the mode enabled me to discover what the typical response was for any of the variables. Calculating the standard deviation for each of the responses meant I could see what the variability is for each of the statement's responses.

As the survey was conducted using Microsoft Forms the data from the responses could be exported to Excel. The results of the survey were downloaded using Excel, and using a variety of formulas and tools, the data was analysed and put into tables and charts. First, the count for each response was made, then those counts were converted to percentages. Then calculations were made for the mean, median, mode and standard deviation to produce statistics for analysis.

By creating tables and charts, visual representations of the data can be produced making the analysis easier to understand. To aid the analysis of the data, a stacked bar chart was created that showed all of the responses for Survey Question 1 and its twenty statements. Pie charts were then made to show the distribution of the responses.

3.2.8 Validity and Reliability

It is important to assess the quality of research and in order to do so, validity and reliability are often used. As highlighted earlier, using more than one method of data collection can increase the validity of the research. For a survey to demonstrate validity, ultimately the results must prove to be useful. Social desirability can compromise the validity of a survey as people may answer with what they perceive to be the desired answer and not their honest opinion. Simply put, respondents may lie to cast themselves in a positive light.

3.2.9 Ethical Considerations

It is important when conducting research to be mindful of any ethical considerations. For any research to be considered legitimate the researcher should look into any ethical issues that may arise from conducting their research. When carrying out the research there is a moral responsibility to protect the respondents and participants and a correct code of conduct should be adhered to.

Researchers are obliged to respect the rights and privacy of any respondent or participant. The interviewees were informed of their rights before the interview was conducted. Consent of the participants and respondents should be obtained prior to conducting research. At no point should they be deceived and their privacy and confidentiality should be respected. Responses should be kept anonymous unless expressed full consent is given. In addition, the right to withdraw should be granted to all who take part. The survey included a statement with an option to agree and proceed or disagree and quit.

At the beginning of the research process, it is important to get informed consent. Informed consent is one of the basic tenets in research (Best, 2012; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

The research proposal was sent to an ethics committee for it to be scrutinized to see if it was low, medium, or high risk. As the participants are all adult professionals working in higher education it was deemed to be low-risk.

Chapter 4

4. Data Results and Findings

In this section the results and the findings will be discussed by incorporating a deductive approach or deductive reasoning which enables the researcher to explain causal relationships, measure concepts quantitatively, and generalize the research findings.

First, for the Survey Questions, a quick summary will be made based on the overall pattern to emerge. Then a more detailed analysis and interpretation of the individual statements will be made. Observations and deductions will be included in the analysis of the results. There will also be a summary of the main findings.

Survey Question 1

This section will look at the results of responses given for question one in the survey, which contains twenty statements of conclusions that have been drawn about the hybrid model.

A quick look at Figure 7, a stacked bar chart, shows a variable spread across the options.

In fact, for all twenty statements, the mode, which is the most common response given for each of the statements differs between two, three, or four (see Figure 8). This indicates that for the variables, in this case the statements, there was a significant variety of opinion.

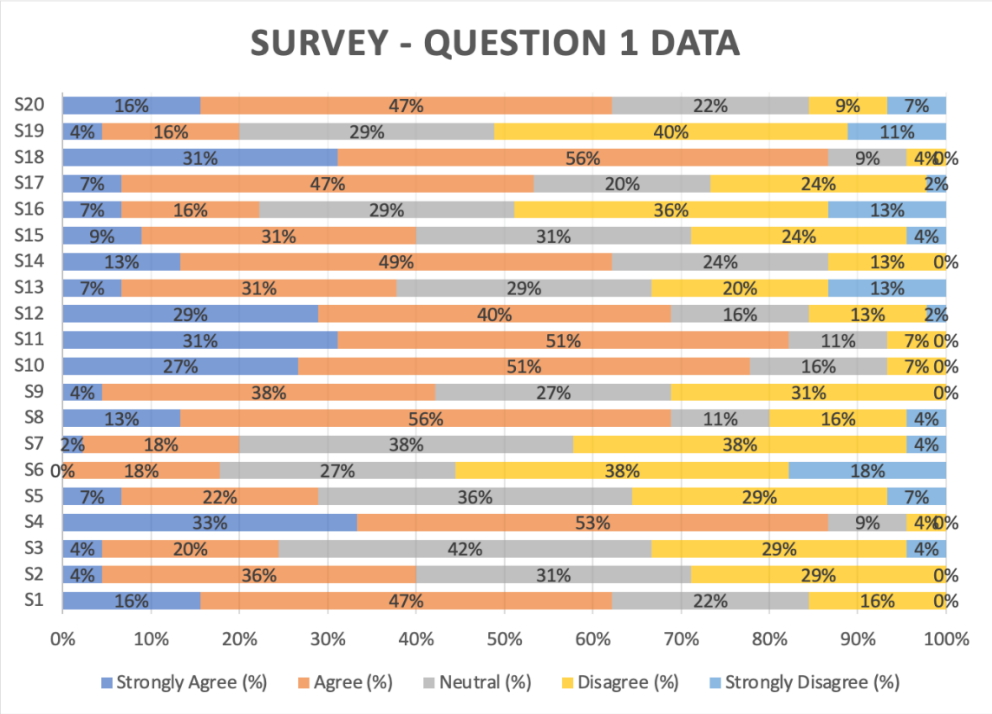


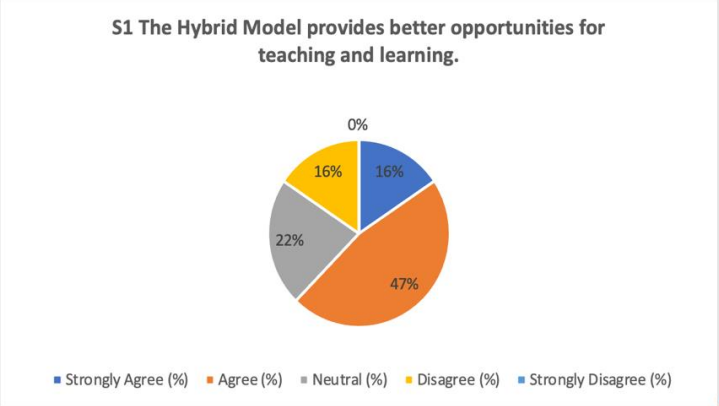
Figure 7 Survey Question 1 Data – Stacked Bar Chart

Statement	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
S1	3.62	4.00	4.00	0.94
S2	3.16	3.00	4.00	0.90
S3	2.91	3.00	3.00	0.92
S4	4.16	4.00	4.00	0.77
S5	2.93	3.00	3.00	1.03
S6	2.44	2.00	2.00	0.99
S7	2.76	3.00	2.00	0.88
S8	3.58	4.00	4.00	1.06
S9	3.16	3.00	4.00	0.93
S10	3.98	4.00	4.00	0.84
S11	4.07	4.00	4.00	0.84
S12	3.80	4.00	4.00	1.08
S13	2.98	3.00	4.00	1.16
S14	3.62	4.00	4.00	0.89
S15	3.16	3.00	4.00	1.04
S16	2.67	3.00	2.00	1.11
S17	3.31	4.00	4.00	1.00
S18	4.13	4.00	4.00	0.76
S19	2.62	2.00	2.00	1.03
S20	3.56	4.00	4.00	1.08

Figure 8 Survey Question 1 Data - Statistics

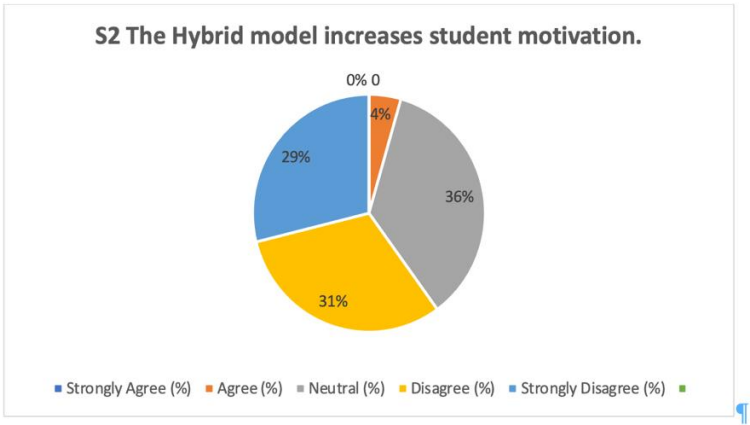
4.1.1 Interpreting the data

In this section, the responses for the statements have been put into Pie charts and the descriptive statistics added. Each one has been summarized and interpreted.



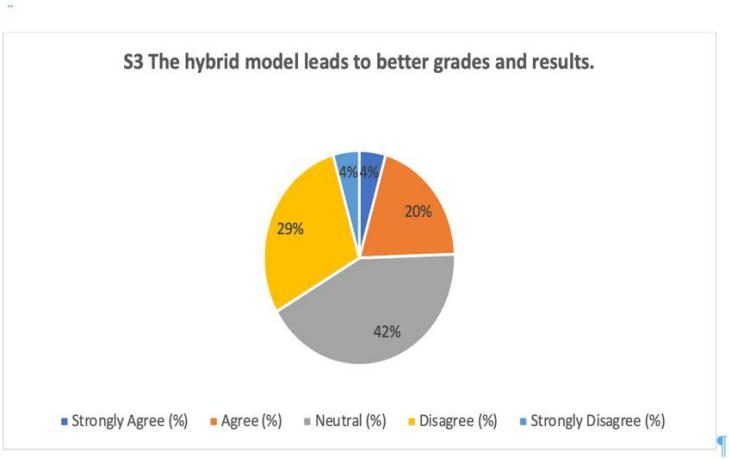
For the first statement the mean is 3.63, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.94.

The majority of the respondents are in agreement that the hybrid model provides better opportunities for teaching and learning, however there are some that disagree. It can be deduced though that most people do perceive the hybrid model can be utilized to increase teaching and learning opportunities.



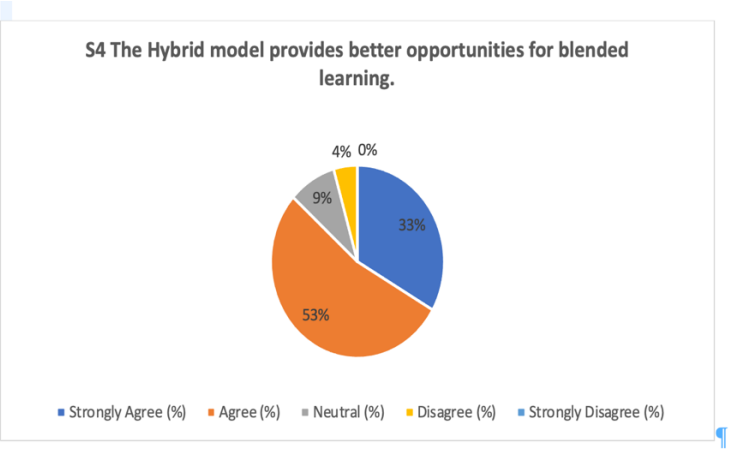
For the second statement the mean is 3.16, the median is 3, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.90.

These results indicate that while about a third are not sure, almost two-thirds of the respondents do not believe the hybrid model increases student motivation. The responses demonstrate that in this context students are not motivated by the hybrid model.



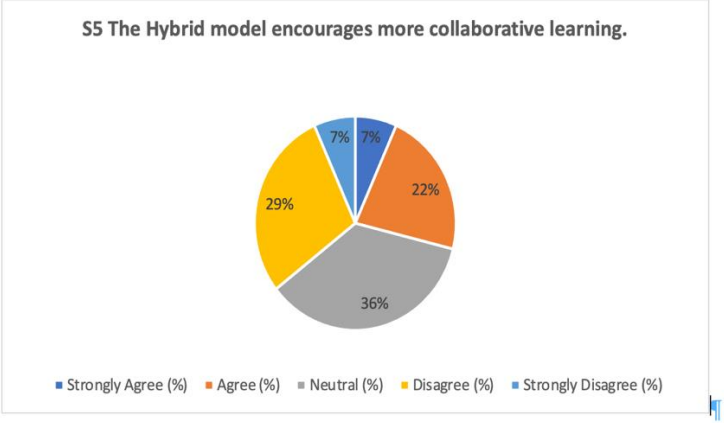
For the third statement the mean is 2.91, the median is 3, the mode is 3. There is a standard deviation of 0.92.

There is a strong indication from these results that the hybrid model produces mixed grades and results. Whilst nearly half are unsure, there is a fairly even split between those that agree and those that disagree with the statement. This is interesting as it demonstrates people have different experiences when it comes to the grades and results the students achieve.



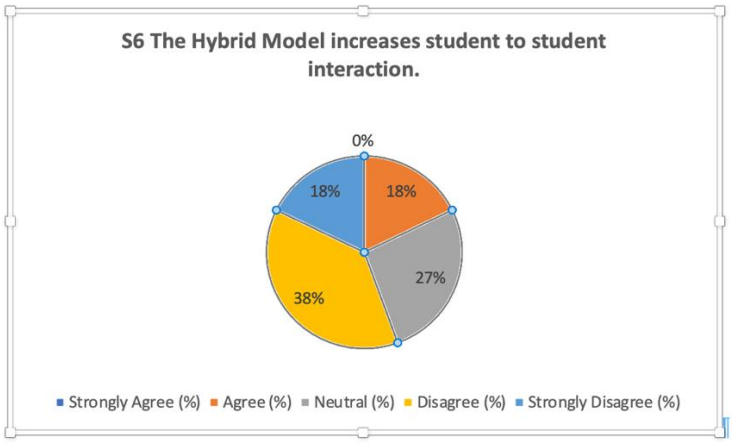
For the fourth statement the mean is 2.91, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.92.

There is a sizeable majority of respondents who believe that the hybrid model provides better opportunities for blended learning. It could be deduced that the perception of the hybrid model is that it can be utilised for a blended learning approach.



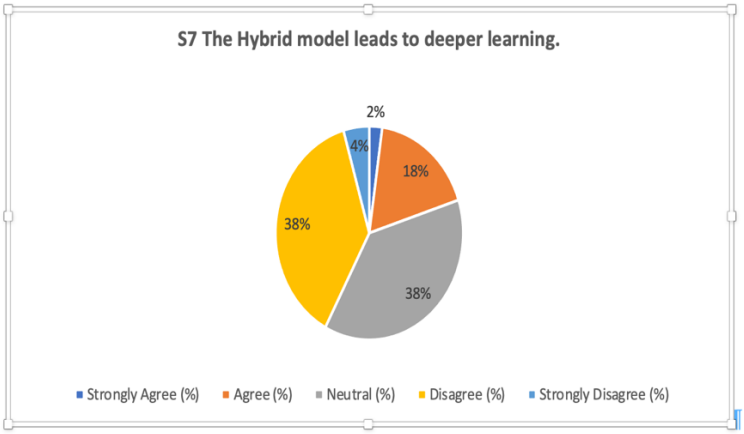
For the fifth statement the mean is 2.93, the median is 3, the mode is 3. There is a standard deviation of 0.92.

These results denote a fairly even split between those who agree, are unsure, or disagree with the sentiment that the hybrid model encourages more collaborative learning. This could be an indication of the respondent's experience with the type of learning that can be incorporated when teaching using a hybrid model. It may also indicate there is sometimes difficulty using this learning strategy.



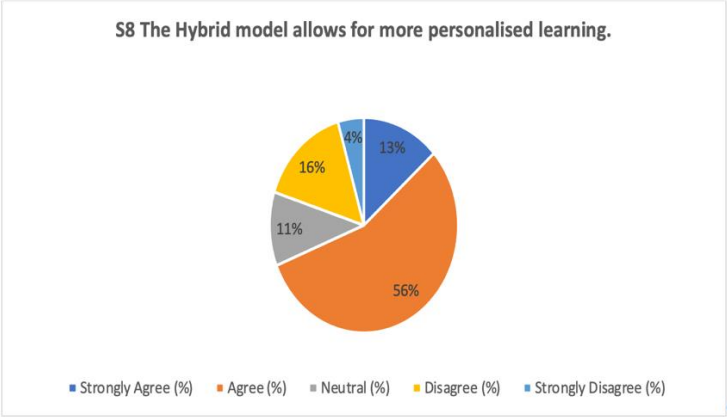
For the sixth statement the mean is 2.44, the median is 2, the mode is 2. There is a standard deviation of 0.99.

These results demonstrate that when it comes to student-to-student interaction the vast majority disagree or are unsure that the hybrid model increases it. It could be surmised that the experience of the respondents is one where student to student interaction does not actually increase through the hybrid model.



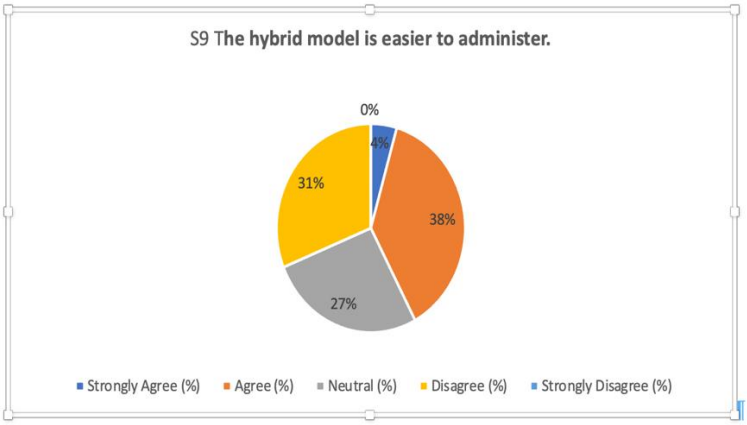
For the seventh statement the mean is 2.76, the median is 3, the mode is 2. There is a standard deviation of 0.88.

These results demonstrated opinion is quite divided, on the issue of deeper learning occurring with the hybrid model. The responses are quite varied. A large number remained neutral suggesting it is not something they are sure of. It also demonstrates that the respondents are unable to determine if this nis true or not as it is difficult to measure.



For the eighth statement the mean is 3.58, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.06.

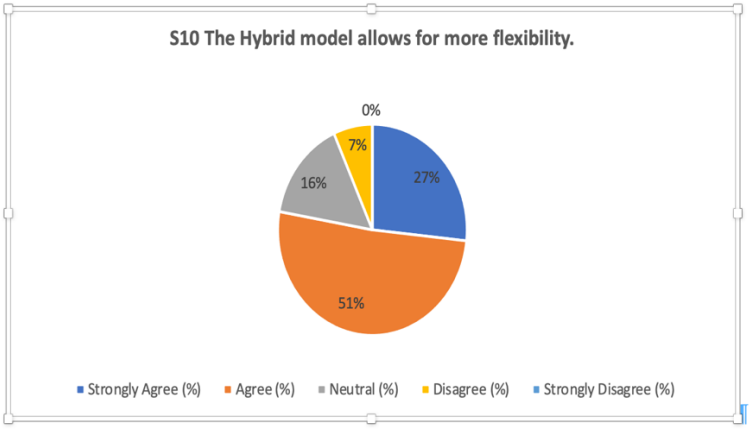
Over two thirds of the respondents are of the opinion that the hybrid model allows for more personalized learning. This indicates that many have seen how more personalized learning can be integrated into the hybrid model. However, some do disagree so opinion is divided. It can be surmised that there are opportunities for more personalized learning.



For the nineth statement the mean is 3.16, the median is 3, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.93.

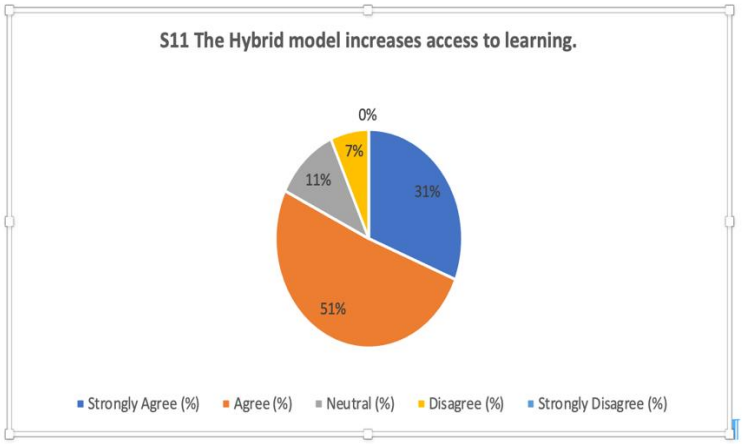
Opinion is greatly divided on the issue of the hybrid model being easy to administer. This could be a reflection of the respondent's personal experience when using the hybrid model.

It could be deduced that the administration of a hybrid model is something that needs to be addressed as many remained neutral or disagreed with the sentiment.



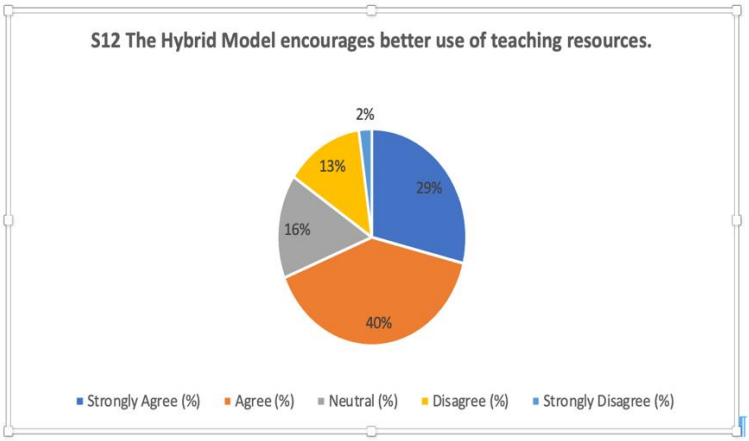
For the tenth statement the mean is 3.98, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.84.

These results demonstrate the vast majority of the respondents clearly believe the hybrid model allows for more flexibility. It can be deduced that through their experiences or perception that they see opportunities for flexibility.



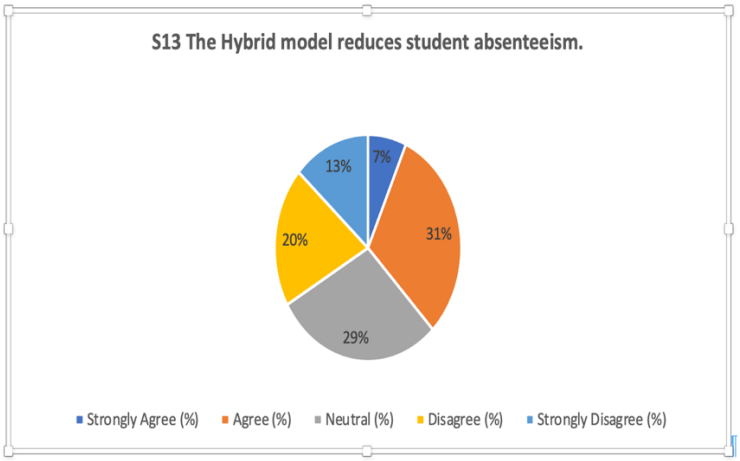
For the eleventh statement the mean is 4.07, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.84.

On the issue of increased access to learning with the hybrid model there is a large majority who believe it does. This indicates that the respondents either have experience of this being the case or perceive it as such or both. It could be assumed that increased access to learning is one of the main benefits of the hybrid model.



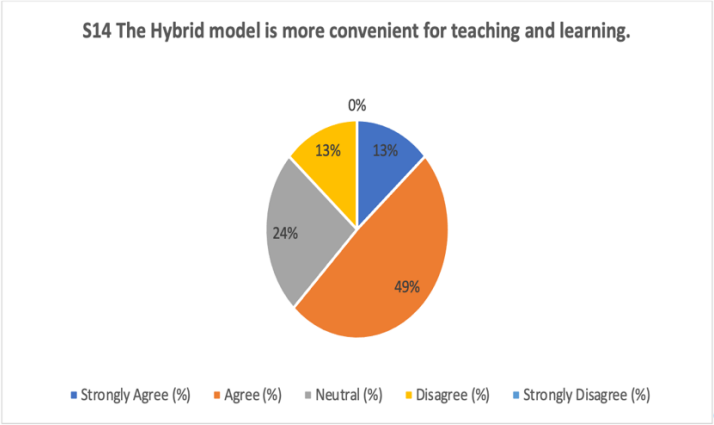
For the twelfth statement the mean is 3.80, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.08.

With regards to the hybrid model encouraging better use of teaching resources most of the respondents are of the opinion that it does. Yet, there are some who disagree indicating that opinion is somewhat divided on this point. It could come down to the respondent's experience or perception where for some teaching resources can be used more effectively.



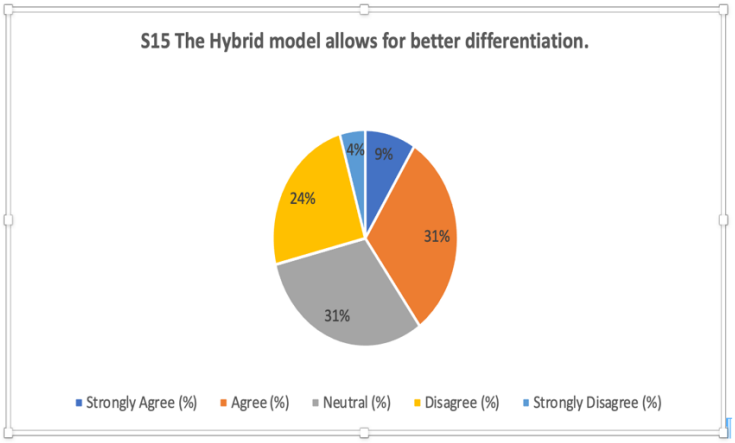
For the thirteenth statement the mean is 2.98, the median is 3, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.16.

Opinion is clearly divided on the issue of absenteeism and whether or not the hybrid model reduces it. It could be deduced that from the respondents own experience some have seen increases while others have seen decreases.



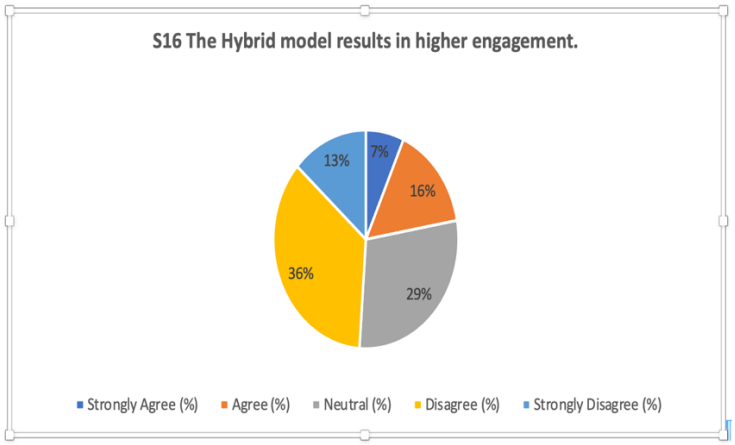
For the fourteenth statement the mean is 3.62, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.89.

Whilst there is a minority who disagree with the notion that the hybrid model is more convenient for teaching and learning there is a large majority who are of the opinion that it is. A significant number remained neutral on this point, but opinion is divided. The opinions could be based on the practical or the personal as to why it is or is not considered convenient.



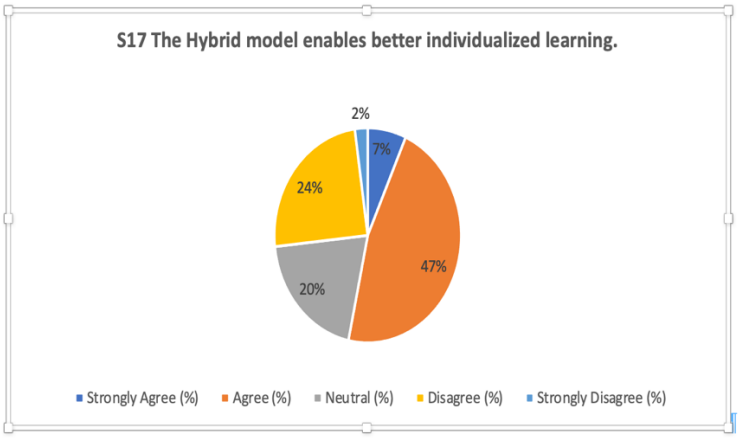
For the fifteenth statement the mean is 3.16, the median is 3, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.04.

On the point of better differentiation being achieved with the hybrid model, there is a fairly even split in the responses. A small majority opined that it does allow for better differentiation, whilst many remained neutral, and the rest disagreed. This could indicate that in some ways differentiation is being factored in but some feel the hybrid model is not appropriate to enable it.



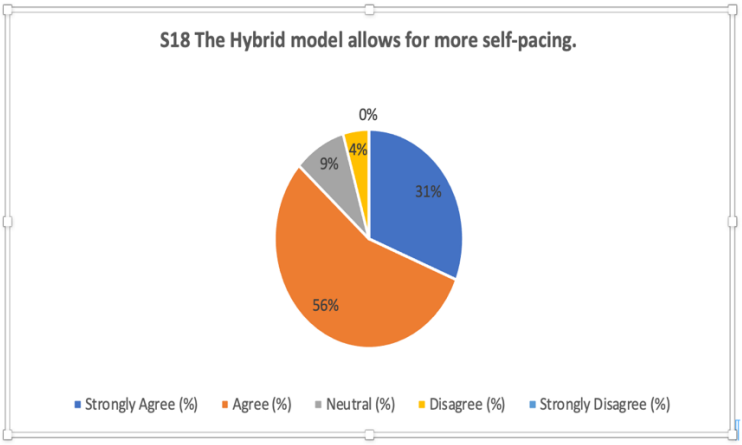
For the sixteenth statement the mean is 2.67, the median is 3, the mode is 2. There is a standard deviation of 1.11.

Almost half of respondents who stated their opinion agreed that the hybrid model results in higher engagement, however about a quarter disagreed, while about a third remained neutral. This could be a reflection of the respondents own experience when teaching using the hybrid model. Some faculty members find there is higher engagement, while others might experience the opposite.



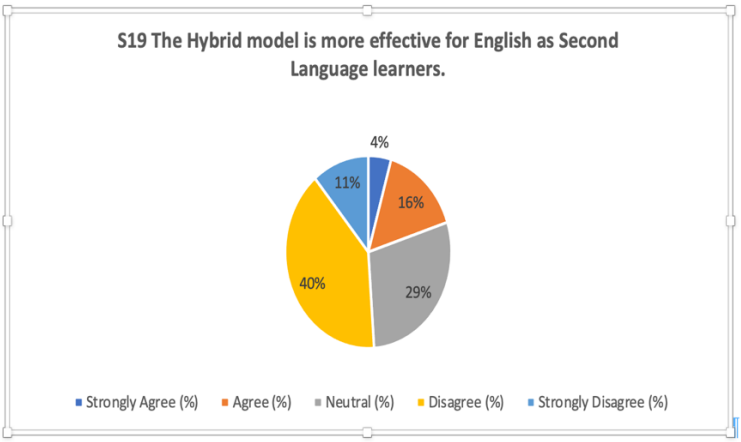
For the seventeenth statement the mean is 3.31, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.00.

These results indicate that more than half of the respondents opine that better individualized learning can be achieved by the hybrid model. However, over a quarter think otherwise. There is an obvious split here and it may reflect that some have not seen examples of better individualized learning in effect.



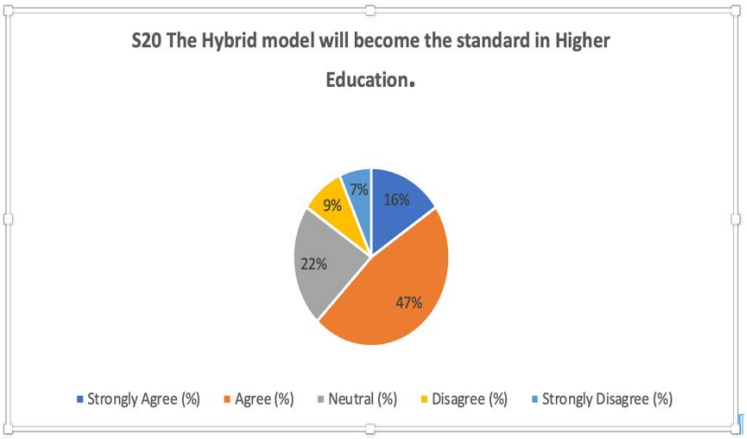
For the eighteenth statement the mean is 4.13, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.76.

From these results it is clear to see the vast majority of the respondents believe that more self-pacing can be enabled with the hybrid model. It is a strong indication that self-pacing is one of the key factors of the hybrid model.



For the nineteenth statement the mean is 2.62, the median is 2, the mode is 2. There is a standard deviation of 1.03.

These results indicate that opinion is quite varied when considering if the hybrid model is more effective for ESL learners. About half do not think it is more effective, while a fifth opine that it is, and just under a third remained neutral. Given that the majority of the respondents have experience in teaching ESL learners this shows opinion really is divided as to the efficacy of the hybrid model for ESL learners.



For the twentieth statement the mean is 3.56, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.08.

From these results it is clear the majority of the respondents see the hybrid model as being established as the main choice for teaching and learning in HEIs from now and more institutions are likely to embrace this mode of course delivery.

4.2 Survey Question 2

This section will look at the results of question two in the survey that relate to the how the hybrid model can be improved for ESL learners.

A quick look at Figure 2, a stacked bar chart, shows a strong preference for both Strongly Agree and Agree. In fact, for all twenty statements, the mode is either four or five indicating the answer chosen the most is either agree or strongly agree.

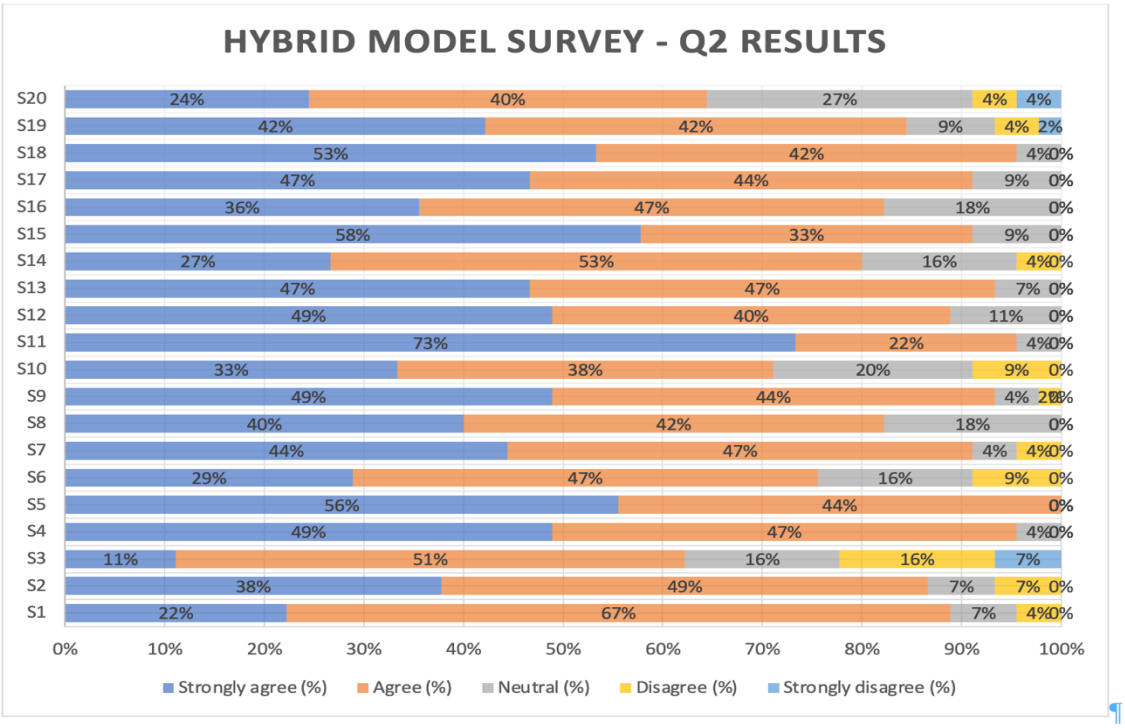


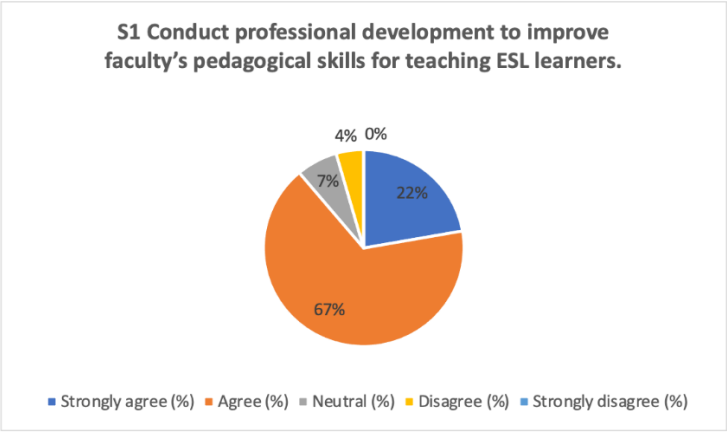
Figure 9 Survey Question 2 – Stacked Bar Chart

Statement	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
S1	4.07	4.00	4.00	0.70
S2	4.18	4.00	4.00	0.84
S3	3.44	4.00	4.00	1.11
S4	4.44	4.00	5.00	0.59
S5	4.56	5.00	5.00	0.50
S6	3.96	4.00	4.00	0.91
S7	4.31	4.00	4.00	0.76
S8	4.22	4.00	4.00	0.73
S9	4.40	4.00	5.00	0.69
S10	3.96	4.00	4.00	0.96
S11	4.69	5.00	5.00	0.56
S12	4.38	4.00	5.00	0.69
S13	4.40	4.00	4.00	0.62
S14	4.02	4.00	4.00	0.78
S15	4.49	5.00	5.00	0.66
S16	4.18	4.00	4.00	0.71
S17	4.38	4.00	5.00	0.65
S18	4.49	5.00	5.00	0.59
S19	4.18	4.00	5.00	0.94
S20	3.76	4.00	4.00	1.02

Figure 10 Survey Question 1 Data - Statistics

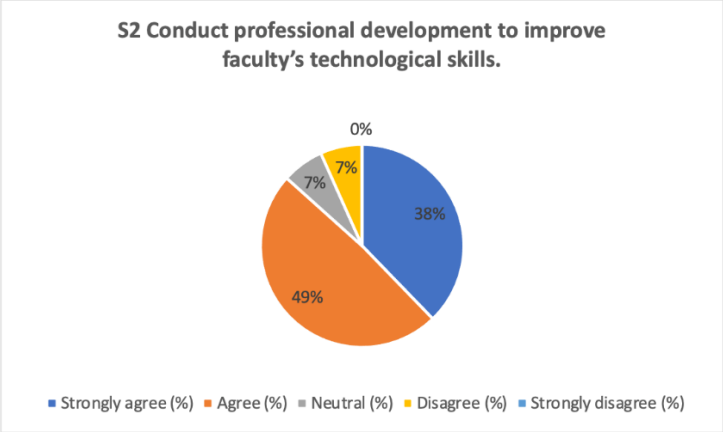
4.2.1 Interpreting the data

In this section, the responses for the statements have been put into Pie charts and the descriptive statistics added. Each one has been summarized and interpreted.



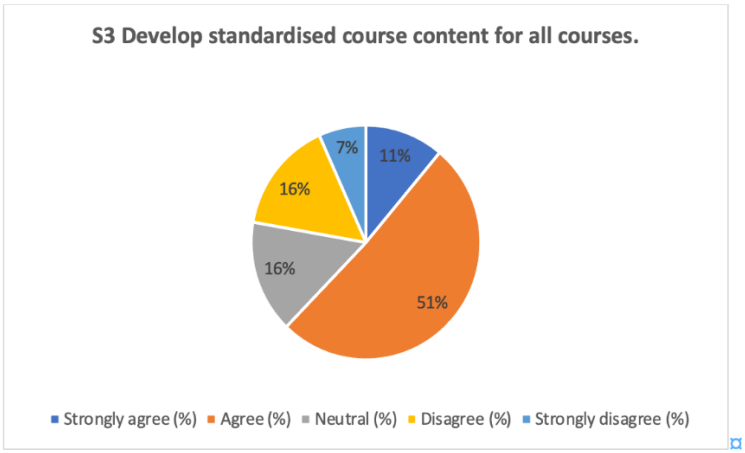
For the first statement the mean is 4.07, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.70.

This indicates that the majority of the respondents are of the opinion that in order to improve faculty's pedagogical skills for teaching ESL learners that professional development should be conducted.



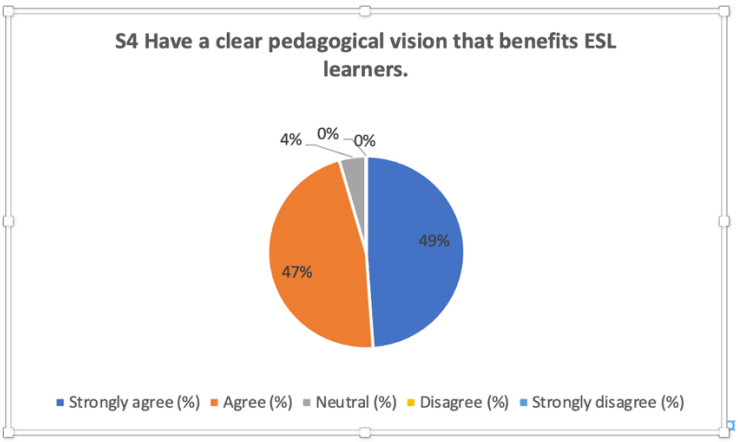
For the second statement the mean is 4.18, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.84.

This shows that a large majority of faculty believe that professional development should be conducted to improve faculty's technological skills. What is interesting here is that even though there is a strong desire amongst faculty for developing both pedagogical and technical skills the desire is slightly stronger for the professional development of pedagogical skills for ESL.



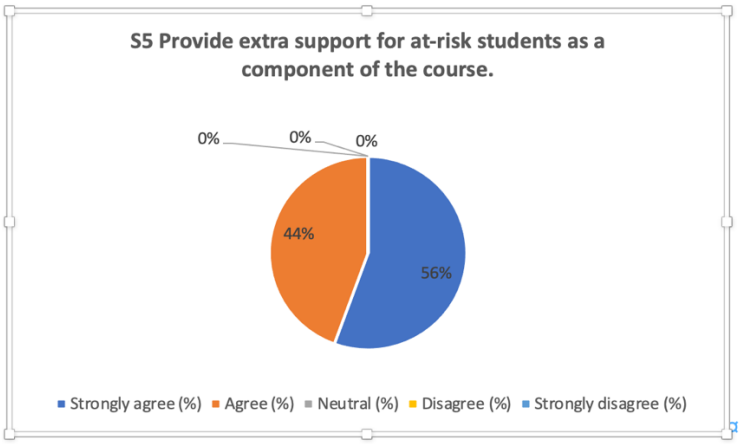
For the third statement the mean is 3.44, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.11.

With regard to developing standardised course content for all courses there is a wider variety of opinion which suggests that whilst the majority do want standardised course content many do not believe this is vitally important or a potential improvement to the hybrid model.



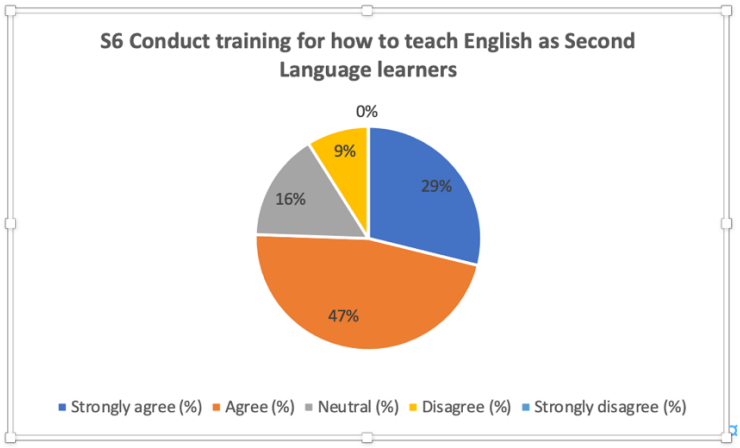
For the fourth statement the mean is 4.44, the median is 4, the mode is 5. There is a standard deviation of 0.59.

Related to the second statement with regard to pedagogy, the vast majority of the respondents indicate an overwhelming desire to have a clear pedagogical vision that is particularly beneficial to ESL learners. This indicates faculty members want a developed methodology and approach outlined. It could also be inferred that currently there isn't one and is an area that needs to be looked into.



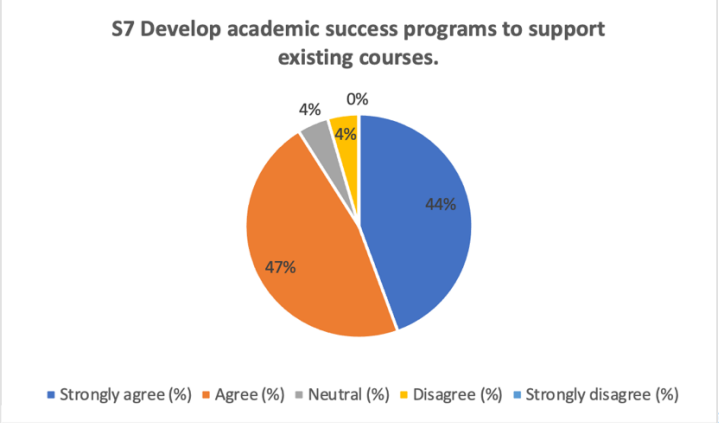
For the fifth statement the mean is 4.55, the median is 5, the mode is 5. There is a standard deviation of 0.50.

Every respondent believes there should be extra support provided for at-risk students and it should be built into the course. This indicates there are at-risk students who need extra support who need provision in the course.



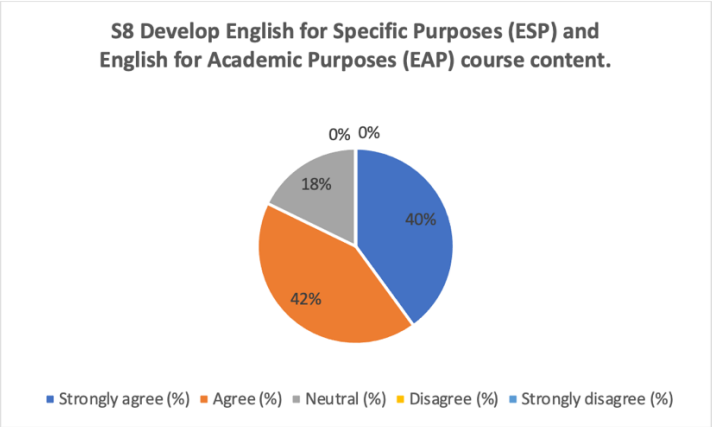
For the sixth statement the mean is 3.96, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.91.

Despite the majority of respondents thinking training should be conducted as to how teach ESL learners, a quarter don't believe it is necessary. It could be deduced that many of the sample of this survey think training is required to increase awareness of the pedagogical methods needed to teach ESL learners.



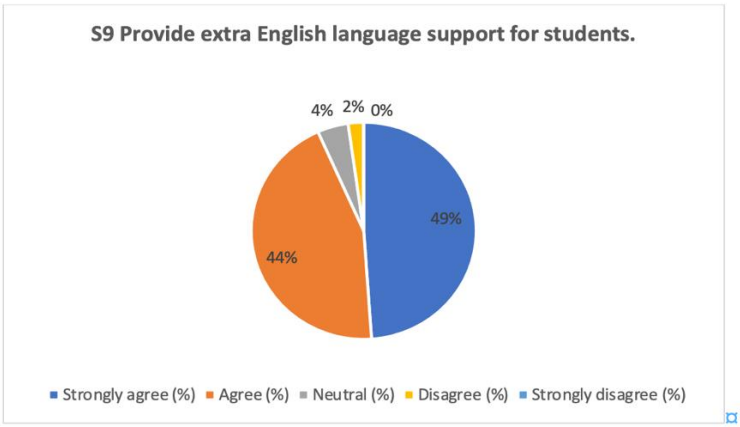
For the seventh statement the mean is 4.31, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.76.

It is widely accepted that academic success programs should be developed that would support existing courses. This suggests that more support for students needs to be established. This also relates to the fifth statement where support for at-risk students is seen as necessary.



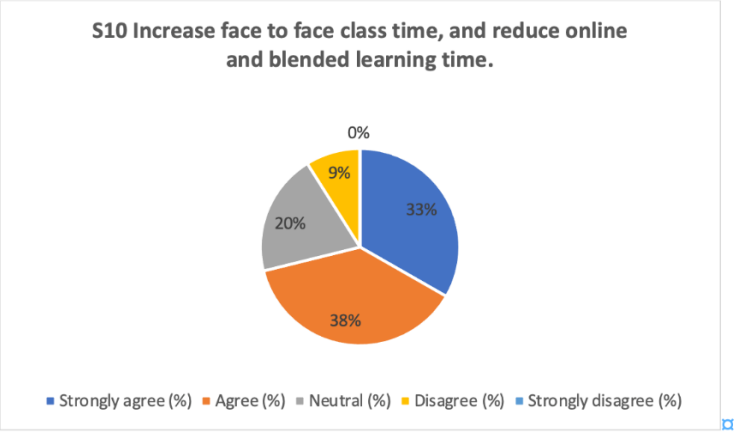
For the eighth statement the mean is 4.22, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.73.

It is notable that there is overwhelming support for ESP and EAP courses. This highlights a strong desire amongst faculty for this type of content to be developed and indicates that it needs to be added to current courses.



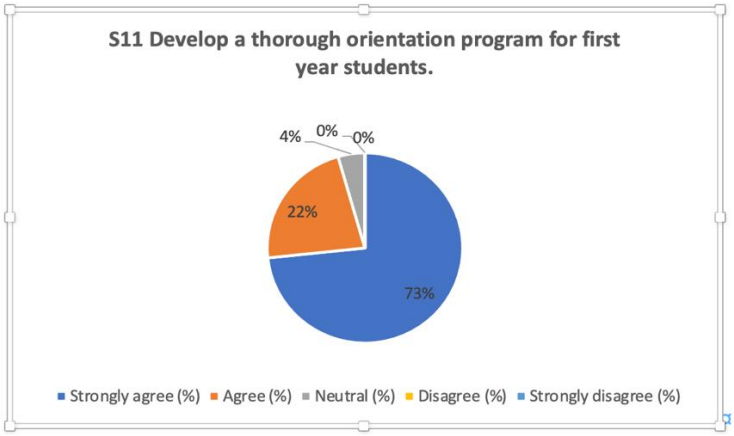
For the nineth statement the mean is 4.40, the median is 4, the mode is 5. There is a standard deviation of 0.69.

The respondents demonstrated a strong proclivity for students getting extra English language support, indicating it is something required and could be something lacking in the current environment. It could also indicate the students English levels need to be higher.



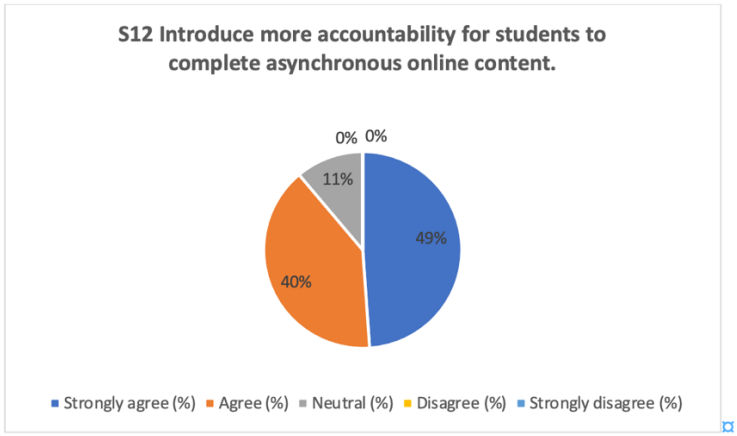
For the tenth statement the mean is 3.96, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.96.

There is more variance in the response for the tenth statement, but there is still a clear indication that it would be more desirable to increase face-to-face class time, from which we can deduce a willingness to teach more in a traditional setting. It also suggests a preference to realign the balance of the blend.



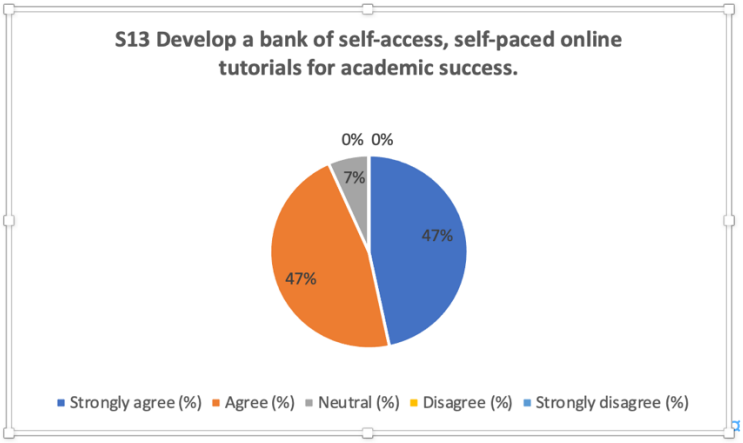
For the eleventh statement the mean is 4.69, the median is 5, the mode is 5. There is a standard deviation of 0.56.

The respondents here have demonstrated they are clearly in agreement to develop a comprehensive orientation program, which indicates it could be something lacking for the students and is a development that would benefit them.



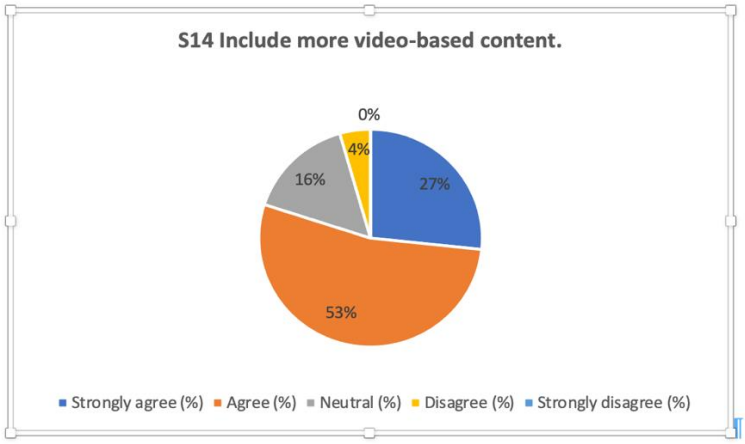
For the twelfth statement the mean is 4.38, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.69.

From these results it is clear that the respondents want students to be held more accountable to complete online content in their own time. It suggests at the moment there isn't a system of accountability in place and is an aspect of the hybrid model that needs to be looked at.



For the thirteenth statement the mean is 4.40, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.62.

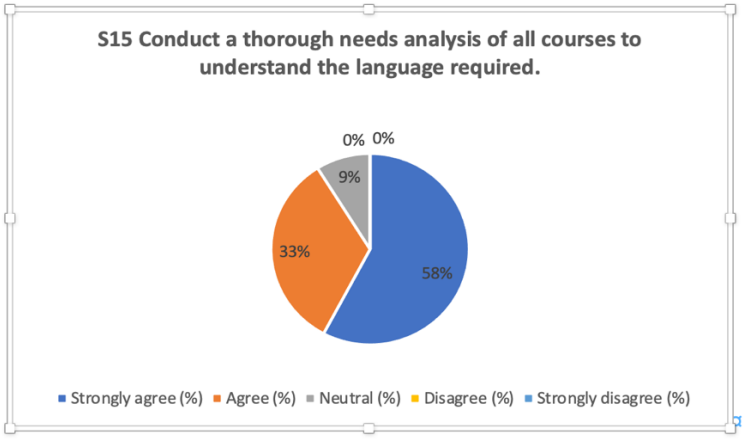
These results provide evidence the respondents believe it would be beneficial if anytime, anywhere resources were developed for the students that may help them be successful academically.



For the fourteenth statement the mean is 4.02, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.78.

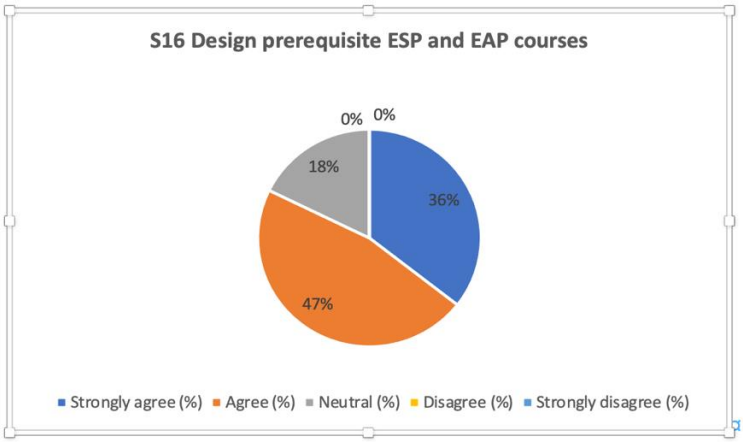
With regard to including more video-based content, a clear majority of the respondents wish to add it. It suggests that there may not be enough video-based content in the current courses.

Although interestingly there is a small minority who don't believe more video-based content should be included and some who don't mind either way.



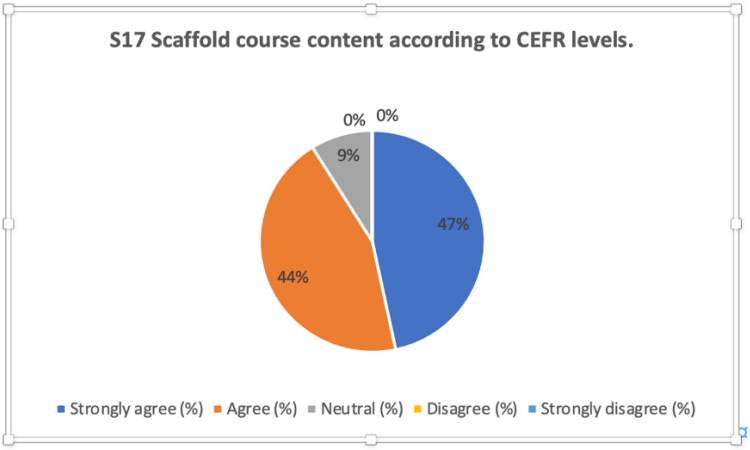
For the fifteenth statement the mean is 4.49, the median is 5, the mode is 5. There is a standard deviation of 0.66.

Interestingly none of the respondents disagreed with the idea of conducting a thorough needs analysis. This indicates that it would be helpful to understand what language is required for all courses. It could also be deduced that the needs analysis could tie in with the strong desire for ESP and EAP content.



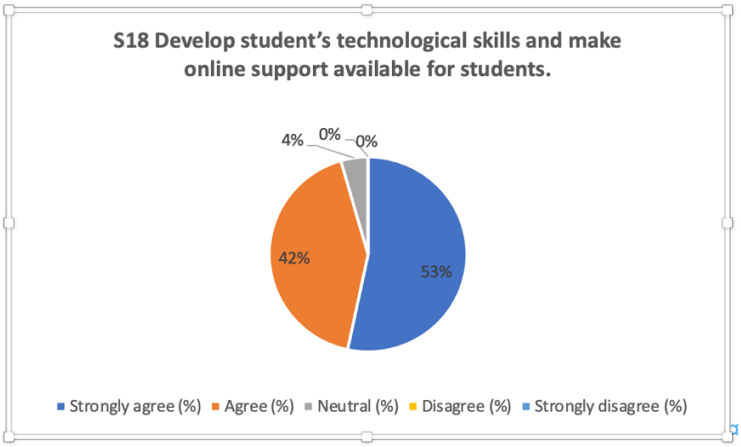
For the sixteenth statement the mean is 4.18, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.71.

There is a strong proclivity for prerequisite ESP and EAP courses being developed as none of the respondents disagreed with this suggestion. With regards to ESP and EAP there is a clear pattern towards its inclusion.



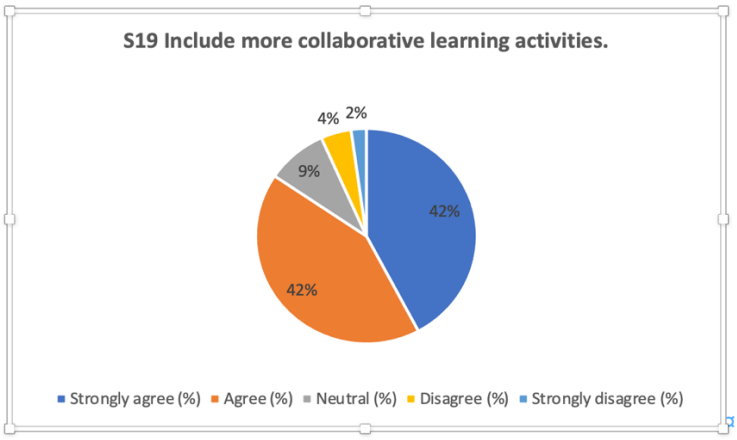
For the seventeenth statement the mean is 4.38, the median is 5, the mode is 5. There is a standard deviation of 0.65.

From these results it is clear that the respondents would like to see course content scaffolded according to CEFR levels. It might indicate that this is not necessarily the case currently.



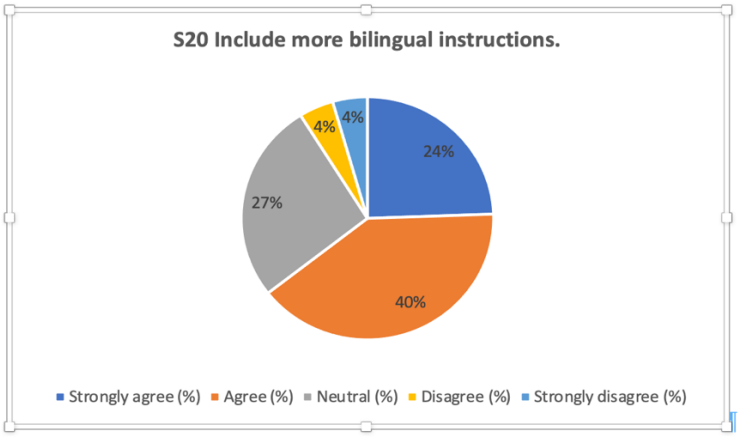
For the eighteenth statement the mean is 4.49, the median is 5, the mode is 5. There is a standard deviation of 0.59.

These results demonstrate a strong proclivity toward students developing their technological skills whilst providing them with access to more technical support online. It can be deduced that the overwhelming majority deem this to be a must and that student's technological skills are lacking.



For the nineteenth statement the mean is 4.18, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 0.94.

Very few of the respondents disagreed with the opinion that more collaborative learning activities should be included. From these results it can be deduced that the respondents would like to see a constructivist pedagogical approach.



For the nineteenth statement the mean is 3.76, the median is 4, the mode is 4. There is a standard deviation of 1.02.

The responses here indicate that while there is a strong desire to include more bilingual instructions there are a few dissenting opinions and many who are unsure. It also suggests that there are already some bilingual instructions and some more could prove beneficial.

The next section will look at the Semi-structured Group Interview.

4.3 Semi-structured Group Interview

The group interview consisted of main questions as well as potential follow up questions to elicit responses. For a full transcript of the Group Interview, please see Appendix?

For the purpose of this study the most pertinent and salient points will be highlighted and discussed. The interviewee who made the point is indicated by their initial. For reasons of clarity the main points are put in quotations. Deductive reasoning shall be used to interpret the answers given by the interviewees.

What are the advantages of the Hybrid model in Higher Education?

> J… "at its best… it's a combination of online and the face-to-face instruction to sort of optimize achievement of learning objectives, and by kind of plying right methodology and technology for the right particular learning points, the right person. Hopefully, kind of, at the right time."
>
> R… "it's used as a tool by management to sort of optimize resources." "It takes less resources, fewer resources."
>
> D… "There's the obvious advantage, obviously now in the COVID pandemic that it prevents the spread of disease, and also depends on the students. It can work better, but you have to have motivated students, and good online teachers."

The interviewees highlight advantages such as optimization of learning objectives and indicate the concept of anytime, anywhere, and that it is efficient as it requires fewer resources. Additionally, if students are motivated it can be a better model.

What are the disadvantages of the Hybrid model in Higher Education?

> N… "it's not going to be effective for all learners." "If students are not intrinsically motivated, it's too easy for them to get off task and become demotivated and become totally distracted with whatever else." "A motivated student is going to benefit the

most. So, if you don't have that kind of foundation, then that opens a whole raft of problems with it being less effective at best and having a negative impact at worst."

For the disadvantages it was mentioned that it is not suitable for all students, only motivated ones, and can actually be detrimental to some, having a negative impact.

Do the advantages of the hybrid model outweigh the disadvantages?

D. "the disadvantages outweigh the advantages if you can't get around the fact students aren't motivated or engaged."

Again, mentioned here is the importance of motivation.

How can the hybrid model be used for effective teaching and learning?

J. "I think feedback becomes even more important, compared to in the classroom environments." "…following up more diligently with marking a lot more things because I think you're not getting the interaction in the class and the rapport, the collaboration with the class and the teacher, then they really need to be getting consistent feedback."

N. “I think to be effective you have to be monitoring, they have to be monitored all the time certainly with so many of our students.”

In order for effective teaching and learning to be realized it was mentioned that feedback becomes more important. Monitoring was also mentioned as a key element required.

What are some important factors to consider when using the hybrid model for teaching English as Second Language students?

D. “…the issues of communication, we use a whole spectrum of strategy but usually we're in class to get the message across but we don't have our voice and body language, and all of these things we used to teach them in a one-to-one face-to-face interaction.” “…even the sort of the classroom management stuff.” “So, I think that ties into it, from communication to instruction to concentrated questions, your classroom management all these things need to take into account the inherent spanners using a hybrid system where you don't have proper interaction.”

N. “Also, I think when you're, when you're teaching English, it's different because it is skills based rather than content based.” “We're trying to get them to practice skills and obviously as D said, when you're not in the classroom with them, it's, it's not the same.”

The main ideas here were concerned with restricted communication, both verbal and physical, as well as the issue of classroom management becoming more challenging. Additionally, the challenge of teaching skills as opposed to content was raised.

In your opinion, what are the main challenges of using the hybrid model in higher education in the UAE?

D: “Student motivation.”

R: “Basic understanding of what a hybrid model actually is.

D: “A Lack of investments in what is the hybrid model.”

The main challenges mentioned were motivation, a lack of understanding of the hybrid model and underinvestment.

How can the challenges of the hybrid model be overcome?

N: “Investment of time, understanding, investments of money.”

R: “…some kind of course that students go through either during the semester or before the semester or as an orientation almost that's focusing on learning and teaching them what they have to do, teaching them how to work in groups, teaching them how to interact and use the software...”

D: “…there's a massive amount of inertia that you need to overcome…it needs to be something at a fundamental level to address their, well, their inabilities to get into that whole idea of being part of an academic discourse community. Being an active student.”

R: “I think it's nothing to do even with the hybrid model or face-to-face or whatever. It's... You know, everyone here has been teaching Foundations or English Communications a long time. And what you're trying to do is undo 12 years of bad education.”

J: I think I've found a few strategies; I don't know. I mean, obviously these are not, um, these are not foolproof, but for me the things that have helped are lots of feedback from me. Lots of communication during class and out of class, a lot of it.” And so, communication, and having a personal approach. Using gamification. Using the tools that we have to motivate them…work with some students where students have got the cognitive ability and some motivation.”

The interviewees drew attention to more investment of time and money, better orientation, or preparation, increasing student engagement, and developing study, and technological skills.

Which teaching and learning theories are apparent in the hybrid model?

N: “I know what should be apparent, but what is actually apparent? And I know this from my own experience is behaviorism.” “Whereas, it should be connectivism and constructivism.” “Connectivism where we're using the technology to, to, to help their

learning, rather than just giving answers. I think it's too easy to slip into behaviorism in an online situation."

R: 'they don't know how to be constructivist. It's that thing that, yeah, the smartest one in a class will get all the answers and just share it, and help them. And they think that's fine that's working in a group."

J: "there may be some kind of constructivist methodology that can be used. I try to use it. I believe that's where we should be going. Again, the students are not open to, how to learn. If somebody else was then teaching them how to learn. It's really hard to build up the constructivist approach."

The responses indicate that ideally constructivist and connectivist teaching and learning theories should be utilised, and it is often the case that behaviourist methods are used.

Are language teaching approaches and methods incorporated? Is the fact the students are English as Second Language learners considered?

R: "No. I think we go right back to what N mentioned at the start, I think it fits well with motivated students who are trying to learn content. I don't think it's the best way to learn a language…the fact that we're purely teaching the language and then we're going to test them in language skills, it's really not considered, it's not thought out. I mean, D said we try to do those things. You know, to consider language teaching

methodologies, but they're not generally applied or...The people deciding we're using this model really haven't thought about it because they don't know what they are."

Not much thought is given to the fact the students are ESL learners according to the interviewees and that the hybrid isn't the most appropriate way to teach these students.

How does the hybrid model affect teaching and learning?

N: "Negatively."

R: I think, you know, we're all taking online classes where and I don't know what it's like at the Men's college at the moment but you know my class is it's a ghost town. You know, so we're giving them things to some of them they are doing it. It's just very negative. I think our students, particularly with learning a language, you've got to get them... If you get in a situation where there's a relationship and they want to communicate with you, you've got a chance to actually try and learn some English.

N: "When we're teaching English, they're not interested in English. We are a means to an end. They're health science students, they're engineering students. They're not English students. They just have to learn English in order to learn the subject they're interested in, and I think this may have a bearing."

R: "I think this comes down to how we are regarded in the institution. You know, English has stopped being important. And I think we, we struggle to get them up to this

level, EmSAT 1100 whatever that is, so they can get on with their programs and they go into their programs that are largely taught in Arabic."

Some of the perception is that the hybrid model has a negative impact on teaching and learning and that the students learning English are not motivated to learn the language.

What difficulties do the students face with the hybrid model?

R: "I mean, from everything we've mentioned, I think, it all comes down to their motivation."

J: "…it doesn't really help them…they don't quite understand the time constraints of the online learning… I think for them, organizing their learning is quite a major issue, and for special needs students, It's really hard. There's a limited amount we can do for students who don't really understand how to use the technology properly, who don't understand instructions."

Above all, motivation is mentioned as being the main issue. Also, time management was highlighted as a problem. Additionally, a lack of technical skills hinders some students.

What could be done to support the students?

> R: Orientation I think, it is that going right back to teaching them how to learn, teaching them how to learn online. Maybe it also, it almost needs to be... probably ideally it would be done face-to-face so you can go around and say, "No, click there." Rather than trying to do it remotely. That I think would be the biggest support."

Orientation and preparation were highlighted as areas that could support the students.

To summarize, the main points highlighted are that the hybrid model is seen as being efficient and optimizes resources. It requires students to be motivated. The students need feedback and monitoring. Classroom management becomes more challenging. More time and money needs to be invested. The issues of student engagement, preparation, time management and skills need to be addressed. These points garnered from the interviews correspond with the findings from the survey, particularly with regard to students and motivation and lower engagement. They also correspond with the view that the hybrid model is efficient and offers more flexibility.

5. Conclusions

The hybrid model incorporates hybrid learning, also known as blended learning, where traditional learning is combined with Internet based online approaches. A variety of media and tools are utilized in online learning environments which are combined with a number of different approaches

to teaching and learning regardless of the technology being used. Teaching and learning can be conducted synchronously or asynchronously face-to-face or remotely.

The hybrid academic model has been established in one of the largest federal HEIs in the UAE but the findings of this research suggest that opinion is divided amongst faculty on many of the aspects of hybrid model teaching and learning.

The hybrid academic model is a very flexible system. Anyone can study anytime, anywhere.

Many students lack the intrinsic motivation to succeed with the hybrid model.

Many students would benefit from more face-to-face classroom input.

Faculty should be using social constructivist teaching techniques encouraging more collaboration but instead are relying on behaviourist methodology.

The LMS has a myriad of tools to aid the OL process.

The Cloud provides fantastic opportunities for live, collaborative activities. Certain software and applications are better than others for monitoring and tracking students work when classes are being taught online but remotely.

6. Recommendations

Many students do not see the value in studying English despite the fact they need to and in effect even in their program courses what they are learning is content but it is English. The language they need to acquire and learn in order to pass their courses is of a higher level than they are currently at and need to spend more time studying English. In this case, for their major courses it would be wise for them to study ESP and ESP courses.

The students are ESL learners but are not being taught using language teaching methodology.

Language acquisition theories should be used to help inform the development of the pedagogical approach.

A different pedagogical approach needs to be employed for the online and face-to-face elements of the hybrid model. Perhaps by taking different aspects of all the established teaching and learning theories and blending them together it is possible to establish a pedagogical approach for the hybrid model.

Constant professional development should be conducted to keep teachers and students up to speed with the latest technology. All faculty, staff and students should be trained to understand the basics of the technology they are required to use.

Faculty would benefit from applying the TPACK model. As technology has become an important part of teaching and learning both in and beyond the classroom, educators are being encouraged to

incorporate the use of education technology in their daily work, but many face difficulties doing so.

The TPACK framework can be used as guide for the effective integration of education technology. Developed by Mishra and Kohler (2006), who were researchers at Michigan State University at the time, the TPACK framework has become one of the main theories regarding education technology and its integration (Kurt, S, 2018). Every situation is unique due to different factors, such as demographics, culture, and level and this will influence if the implementation of education technology is effective. For it to be effective, the dynamic, transactional relationship of pedagogy, content, and technology needs to be acknowledged. It is not possible to develop a one-size-fits-all combination of content, pedagogy and technology that can be applied across all HEIs due to each context being unique, where the demographics are different, the programs on offer differ, and the faculty and staff have different levels of experience.

This is one of the reasons why the TPACK framework's adaptability enables an institution to create their own model that suits their needs.

More research needs to be conducted into the hybrid academic model and the issues of motivation and student engagement in federal HEIs in the UAE.

Preparing students for this mode of study is essential to ensure they can be successful learners. Students should also be taught the study skills required and also develop the technological skills necessary to thrive with this style of learning.

Whilst the hybrid academic model is seen as being efficient and flexible it is questionable that in its current form it is effective for many of the students attending one of the largest HEIs in the UAE.

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8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1

Hybrid Model - Group Interview Questions and Prompts

For my dissertation, I am looking at what are the advantages and disadvantages of using the hybrid model and what improvements could be made when incorporating the hybrid model in Higher Education Institutions in the UAE, and what would help students be more successful.

What is the hybrid model in higher education?

Can you describe it?

Can you elaborate?

What are the advantages of the hybrid model in Higher Education?

What are the disadvantages of the hybrid model in Higher Education?

Can you give some examples?

Do the advantages of the hybrid model outweigh the disadvantages?

If so, how?

If not, then why not?

How can the hybrid model be used for effective teaching and learning?

Can you give some examples?

What are some important factors to consider when using the hybrid model for teaching English as Second Language students?

Can you give some examples?

In your opinion, what are the main challenges of using the hybrid model in higher education in the UAE?

Do these challenges apply in other places?

Why or Why not?

How can the challenges of the hybrid model be overcome?

What would help?

What would improve the hybrid model in Higher Education Institutions in the UAE?

Can you elaborate?

Which teaching and learning theories are apparent in the hybrid model?

Behaviourism? Cognitivism? Constructivism? Connectivism?

What are some examples of teaching and learning methodology used in the hybrid model?

Are language teaching approaches and methods incorporated?

Is the fact the students are English as Second Language learners considered?

How does it affect teaching and learning?

From your experience how do the students feel about the hybrid model?

What difficulties do the students face?

What could be done to support the students?

Are there any final points you would like to add?

8.2 Appendix 2

Group Interview – Semi-structured - Transcript

Tim (00:02):

For my dissertation, I'm looking at what are the advantages and disadvantages of using the hybrid model, and what improvements could be made, when incorporating the hybrid model, in higher education institutions in the UAE, would help student be more successful. So, leading with the first question, what is the hybrid model in higher education?

R (00:27):

I'll start, shall I? It's a polite way of, um, for saying it's a mixed-up model. Fixing, face-to-face with online teaching, and I think, like, many hybrids, they put two things together and didn't really know what was going to come out. That's my sort of take on it at the moment.

Tim (00:50):

Okay, can anyone else describe hybrid model in higher education?

N (00:56):

I, um, I used to think that the hybrid model meant, um, one class is face-to-face, some class is online. Many institutions seem to have decided now that hybrid meant that you do both at the same time. So, you're teaching online, and you're teaching face-to-face at the same time. Which isn't

what hybrid was originally meant to be. Particularly in schools. It's also happening, I think, it's also happening in our colleges, but that's what happening in the schools at the moment.

R (01:31):

I think it's become a sort of phrase that they use to make it sound really cool. It's just, it's kind of like, we have to get on with it, and so like I know that Nick was saying, in the schools. Luckily, we haven't really had this happen to us, well we have a couple of times. You know, you have 10 students in class, another 10 online, and you're sort of sat there, talking to a laptop like a madman in a class full of people. So.

D (01:56):

It was happening in the programs in the college, certainly before, I don't know if it still is.

N (02:02):

Oh, I've had a couple of lessons like that. Students have to come in but for whatever reason they are unable to so they come in online. So, you've got the collaborate session open and you end up with online and face-to-face simultaneously just like N said which is lots of fun.

Tim (02:19):

Okay. Uh, so what are the advantages of hybrid model in higher education?

N (02:31):

Are we talking in a traditional sense, where they, they are separate, they're separated?

Tim (02:37):

Yes, in the traditional sense, but you know you've got blended learning, online learning. You've got an element of face-to-face which is traditional, perhaps. If we think about it in that context of the hybrid model then what are the advantages of it?

J (02:56):

For me time, it's, I mean, at its best which not sure that my classes generally are, it's (laughs) a combination of online and the face-to-face instruction to sort of optimize achievement of learning objectives, and by kind of plying right methodology and technology for the right particular learning points, the right person. Hopefully, kind of, at the right time. I think that's its best ideally. Um, whether it actually does effectively teach the content and meet the learning needs of students, all of the time. I'm not entirely convinced that it does. At its best, I think that's what the aim of it is.

R (03:54):

I think the reality is that it's used as a tool by management to sort of optimize resources that we see what's happening in General Studies, and they put in 60, 50 in a class, and they are like wahoo that's great, now we only need one teacher, we don't need four teachers, or what have you. I think again, it's going back to my mixed-up model. It's just being used, being misused, I think it's oh convenient to say, "Right, we can put 60 in a classroom and we call it the hybrid model and everything thinks we're wonderful," when the only reason they've done that is they can hire fewer people. It takes less resources, fewer resources.

D (04:31):

There's the obvious advantage, obviously now in the COVID pandemic that it prevents the spread of disease, and also depends on the students. It can work better, but you have to have motivated

students, and good online teachers. There’s a difference between teaching online and teaching in the classroom.

Tim (04:58):

They're all excellent points. Thank you. I think you touched on some good points there. What would be some disadvantages of the hybrid model.

N (05:10):

Well, it's not going to be effective for all learners. And because some students, especially our students benefit from face-to-face interaction. Having somebody look over their shoulder or egging them on, keeping them on task. If students are not intrinsically motivated, it's too easy for them to get off task and become demotivated and become totally distracted with whatever else. I mean, in an ideal world, online learning and more blended learning and hybrid model, it's giving back agency to the students. Motivating the students. A motivated student is going to benefit the most. So, if you don't have that kind of foundation, then that opens a whole raft of problems with it being less effective at best and having a negative impact at worst.

Tim (06:08):

That's great. Thank you. So, do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

N (06:15):

Maybe. (laughing)

R

I think it depends very much who you're teaching. I think if you had a group of third- or fourth-year health science students or something who are all motivated and what have you, I think the advantages are probably there. If you've got 25 boys from Dhaid in Sharjah who've already failed once, it's not a great thing. I mean the difference is like in my class for example, I've got a student in there who was with me face-to-face briefly. And we sort of you know we know each other. She's the only one who participates. Others, you know, I might get a chat message if I'm lucky. They won't turn the cameras on, they won't turn microphones on. Not even when I say that, "You're gonna fail the speaking test." It doesn't make any difference to them. It's not real. They log on, and that's it. They don't do anything else. So, you know, six times a week I teach one student.

D (07:19):

I think you raised an important point there which is that, the disadvantages outweigh the advantages if you can't get around the fact students aren't motivated or engaged. What you're saying there is that you've got a student who studies because you've got a face-to-face interaction, because you've got a rapport. I mean you got to be aware of these pitfalls and try and find a way around them, 'cause if you don't, then yeah, these are the disadvantages and there's not much point doing it. But if you can circumvent those problems then you've got a chance of doing something very effective in a perfect world.

Tim (08:06):

Okay, thank you very much. So, how can the hybrid model be used for effective teaching and learning?

J (08:13):

I think feedback becomes even more important, compared to in the classroom environments. If you're getting so much feedback from the teacher walking around giving, talking to other students, coming by monitoring your work in the classroom environment, checking answers. For me feedback has become like a crucial part of my teaching like rigorously monitoring students writing exercises, whatever they're doing, and giving them notes. Sort of following up more diligently with marking a lot more things because I think you're not getting the interaction in the class and the rapport, the collaboration with the class and the teacher, then they really need to be getting consistent feedback. And I mean, BookWidgets and Collaborate and stuff like that are fantastic for doing that, and also like using breakup groups. I mean for the individual breakout groups and talking to them about the writing, and things like that. I do... I think I do a lot more individual teaching using the online mode. Whereas I might do a bit more classroom teaching if I'm face-to-face with the students. So, you can, you can, I mean like, you can make it work. I think for some students who are able to adapt, and kind of have the cognitive ability to take onboard the feedback, and can self-study at least a little bit. And there are some advantages and some ways that you can teach quite effectively. I'm not sure that in many cases that is, that is true. I think a lot of them can't cope with the technical issues, and they miss the intellectual, social stimulation, struggle with following instructions but... Sorry, I'm belabouring the point.

Tim (10:18):

Oh, it's great. Perfectly valid points. Thank you. That's great.

N (10:23):

Can I follow up on what J said? I think to be effective you have to be monitoring, they have to be monitored all the time certainly with so many of our students. And J had mentioned BookWidgets.

If you use BookWidgets Live, when I started doing that and it completely changed my online teaching, because suddenly I was on them. I knew who was working, I knew who wasn't. Unless you're using software like that, I don't think it's effective. There's no point in giving them PDFs and say do this.

R (10:54):

Yeah, that's very true. I think anything where you can actually see... I mean, BookWidgets Live is obviously the best one for it. The problem I've now got for example, even using Blackboard quizzes. You can see if it's in progress or not. There'll be two or three of them not doing it. And if they're not actually listening to me they're not... They've logged in and buggered off basically. So it still doesn't matter. I can say that you're not doing anything. And you know, I'm marking them absent and what have you. But it's not, it's not having the same effect as if I was in class with them. You've got that sort of cult of personality going on, and you can... Because, I don't know, you can, you can force them into doing something, not physically, but just by being together in the same room. If I walk up from the computer now you can say what you want to and do what you want. It comes down to the students at the end of the day, I think.

Tim (11:51):

Okay, thank you. So what are some important factors to consider when using the hybrid model for teaching English to second language learners?

D (12:08):

Uh, I think we, I mean, the issues of communication, we use a whole spectrum of strategy but usually we're in class to get the message across but we don't have our voice and body language, and all of these things we used to teach them in a one-to-one face-to-face interaction. We don't have the luxury of that. You need to be conscious of that as a pitfall. And, you know, also even the sort of the classroom management stuff, being able to see who's got their head up or down, who's buried behind their laptop playing games or watching soap operas? If that's the case then you can get onto them. So, I think that ties into it, from communication to instruction to concentrated questions, your classroom management all these things need to take into account the inherent spanners using a hybrid system where you don't have proper interaction coming from the fact, they don't have the luxury of having English as their first language there is no repeating yourself like the way you can in the classroom. You can say something seven different times seven in seven different ways to make sure that message gets across.

D

But you know it's hard enough for a native speaker to write an email, to try and use a different register in an email. But you might, I've had, situations where I feel I've written something and I've done something. I've written something ironically or it's sarcastic but comes back and people totally missed the point or they missed my intention when they happen to meet face-to-face as well. But this is something you need to be, I think aware of. All these things, awareness is the key.

N (13:52):

Also, I think when you're, when you're teaching English, it's different because it is skills based rather than content based, if you know what I mean. It's the difference, it's a different sort of thing. We're not just, we're not just telling them, "You need to know this for your test. We're trying to get

them to practice skills and obviously as D said, when you're not in the classroom with them, it's, it's not the same.

R (14:20):

Yeah, I think, you know, as N just said there, it's not content based. You're not teaching them right, remember these formulas, you know, remember these facts, you know, the heart pumps blood around the body or whatever it is. You're trying to get them, you know, for example, to practice speaking, you've put them in breakout groups and they won't put their microphones on. Now I mean it's I think it's perhaps more; I don't know but it's, it's a real problem with the female students who are coming from a culture that very much sort of hides their identity you know. You know that they don't put their photos on social media, they don't put their personal self out there, and then we're expecting them to turn their cameras on turn their microphones on and talk to a Western man.

That's, that's a struggle. I don't really think that's, that's not been properly thought through. And again when we first went... Over a year ago when we first went into lockdown, because we had six or seven weeks with the group they knew each other. They weren't as shy about turning their cameras on or talking to each other. But the students I've got now they don't know each other. So there's a lot of shyness going on there, you know. You put them in groups, everything like... You know, imagine you've never seen my face, you've just seen me type the occasional answer in a chat box, and then you put us in an online chat room and expect us to talk together. That's a big challenge I think.

N (15:43):

Although we say they don't know each other but they're all members of a WhatsApp group and are able to share answers immediately, which probably should be an answer to another question.

J (15:54):

For me it's like trying to teach somebody to drive and showing them a video of somebody driving along the road. I mean, effectively, you're trying to teach a skill, without somebody really being in the environment where they need to practice that skill, I think. I mean especially the speaking, absolutely. I mean, I've been really beating my guys up and they are putting their microphones on in the breakout rooms now more of them, not all of them. Like, you know, I basically have to threaten them with all sorts of things (laughing) Idol threats, mind you. But, but they are. But I mean basically yeah it's like trying to have your driving lesson from your front room and wonder why your driving skills are not improving that well. I mean I don't know whether that's a good enough analogy or not, but that's kind of how I feel. It all feels kind of artificial. I mean maybe the virtual learning environments, maybe you know these amazing things that they may be able to do when they actually put themselves into environment as a character, that might actually help to make them really feel that they are there and doing what they would do in the classroom or... But for me at the moment, I'm not convinced especially since we've done a lot less face-to- face this term. I mean, you can't really call it... I don't think we can call what we're doing right now hybrid. Correct me if I'm wrong.

R (17:34):

You make a good point there J about the environment, unless it comes up in your later questions, but when I think about it, I'll say something. It's also you know that we're probably all in a quiet place, Dylan's the only one at work, while the rest of us are working from home, in you know sort

of quiet places or whatever but often the girls... The boys I mentioned as well, when they actually turn their microphones on, it's mayhem where they are. You can hear chickens, parrots, kids, there's fights, there's people shouting. It's not a learning environment. They are sat with something perched on their lap in the living room with 20 other people around. That's another, that's another thing you know, how can they be concentrating in there? How can you expect them to listen to what you're saying and interact?

D (18:22):

And driving as well. I've had that so many times. And, and they take their mobile device with them and then they're in a waiting room in a hospital for an appointment, and they're trying to do a lesson. Like you said, the environment is key.

R (18:39):

A girl did the speaking test from the airport last year. Sat there with a hoodie on, and started whispering into the thing, and I could see people walking past with their suitcases and things. (laughs)

Tim (18:50):

That a lovely example. That's great. Okay, let's go to the next question then. So, in your opinion, what are the main challenges of using the hybrid model in higher education in the UAE?

D (19:06):

Student motivation.

R

Basic understanding of what a hybrid model actually is. It's a utility for them to put more students into classes and have, or use fewer resources, and then for them to go off and talk about it on LinkedIn and say what a wonderful thing it is. I don't know, maybe have a hologram and give yourself a prize or something like that.

D (19:39):

A Lack of investments in what, what, is the hybrid model, I guess that's what R saying.

Tim (19:44):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay,

J (19:46):

Yeah, sorry, N. Go on.

N (19:50):

Financially and timewise, as to what it is.

J (19:55):

And using the latest version of Blackboard or whatever the particular issue is right now. (laughs) You're not investing in an updated learning management system platform. That's one of issues, right? Yeah, absolutely, yeah. You've got to put the investment in if you're going to make it effective, haven't you?

Tim (20:18):

Okay. So, do these challenges apply in other places? Is it unique to the UAE do you think? The region. Are these issues prevalent in other places?

N (20:32):

Yes, but maybe to a greater or lesser extent. Definitely lesser I would say.

R (20:39):

I think any education system that manages itself as a business or thinks it manages itself as a business, is gonna then exploit something like hybrid learning to utilize resources. That's the way they'll look at it, and they forget about teaching and learning. I think we have very unique challenges with the type of students that we have. That's not to say those challenges don't exist elsewhere. We, I think have fewer issues... We do have the issue, you know, where there are students who don't have state of the art laptops or strong internet at home and things like that, whereas, you know, in the UK they've spoken a lot about, you know, in the poorer areas, you've got kids who just don't have laptops. You know, there isn't internet at home. I mean, how are they supposed to participate? So you've got that sort of access and total inequality that comes through. It does happen here, I think to a lesser extent.

J (21:30):

And the self-paced kind of learning, I mean, you know us as masters and doctorate students we know it's not easy as seasoned professionals and adults. But for kids of this age, I mean, my kids are an absolute disaster on their online learning. Just like, listen to the first three minutes just say hi to their friends and then go off and play Minecraft again. I mean, so I'm sure our students are not that different from, from that. And expecting a mature self-paced kind of attitude and self-monitoring, particularly in an environment where I feel students haven't really been taught to foster academic responsibility.

They haven't really, or any kind of in general like don't really understand the consequences of their own academics, their behavior for learning actions. So, does that make any sense? I mean, those are the way that the education system doesn't really foster autonomy here as far as I can see and up to K-12, is a major issue when they try to do, when they try to learn in this way.

Tim (22:47):

That's great, thank you. So how can these challenges of the hybrid model be overcome?

N (22:59):

Investment of time, understanding, investments of money.

R (23:11):

I think you almost need, and it's not just for online learning, it will benefit everything, you need, like, some kind of course that students go through either during the semester or before the semester or as an orientation almost that's focusing on learning and teaching them what they have to do, teaching them how to work in groups, teaching them how to interact and use the software... You know, that type of thing. The problem with a lot of it is, that'd be very sort of labor intensive because you have to do it in very small groups, almost one to one. And it's teaching them like, J was saying, you know, they haven't got it from high school.

R (23:45):

They think they're just going to sit there and you're going to babble on and to be fair, that's most of their major classes is the PowerPoint. I can teach you in Arabic. Now there's a test. And that's, you know, we're not doing that, we're trying to develop it's again what N was saying, you know, we're not saying, "Remember this is in the test." And we're actually trying to develop a skill. Yeah, I'm

not really sure what the answer is, but I think, you know, teaching them to be learners, would go a long way.

D (24:20):

I mean, there's a massive amount of inertia that you need to overcome. I think this is, this is not just something that's come about with online learning, or hybrid. This has been... I think it's probably being a bit exacerbated by the fact that they've all got these sorts of, so many kinds of distractions. But yeah, I think, I think what, what R's saying there is right, you need to, it needs to be something at a fundamental level to address their, well, their inabilities to get into that whole idea of being part of an academic discourse community. Being an active student.

R (25:03):

I think it's nothing to do even with the hybrid model or face-to-face or whatever. It's... You know, everyone here has been teaching Foundations or English Communications a long time. And what you're trying to do is undo 12 years of bad education.

D (25:18):

And motivated students.

R (25:20):

It's, you know, I mean how many students do we have there who just copy something off the internet for each essay?

N (25:25):

Yeah.

D (25:25):

Yeah, and they think that's okay because they've done it all the way through school and no one's ever called them out for it.

D (25:31):

And there've been schools where teachers have openly given them answers to the exam before the exam. There's an institutional shortcoming here, these guys, I've had students come to me and say, "Well, you know, I got a good mark in English." "It's funny, because you don't seem to be very good English." "I got it because my teacher gave me all the answers." “He'd always give us the answers.”

D (25:57):

Well, I've worked in high schools here. I've worked in high schools and I've seen some stuff that was unbelievable. This was a good high school, and we are talking about high stakes exams at the end of the academic year, students complaining about content and having teachers, the head invigilator went and contacted subject teachers, have them come in and help the students in the exam.

D (26:23):

And this is what they expect. You know, "This is this is your job, you're an instructor and your job is to get me to pass, however that happens." And it's a lot to overcome. In the same exam, I think myself personally I found about five students with cheat sheets they brought in, and I took them to my line manager and the head invigilator but they just shrugged.

R (26:47):

I think the culture within the college has changed. You know, it used to be the, you know, if you, if you cheated and you were caught, you were out. And you were out of all federal universities for life. Whereas now you might an F for that course, you might only get an F for that exam. You might get nothing happen to you.

R (27:09):

And it's almost the feeling I've got sitting on a couple of academic honesty committees is that it's now a case of, "Oh you're unlucky to get caught." Rather than before, really wouldn't be, "Right, you know, we're gonna severely punish you over this." It's now, it's kind of like, "Well, bad luck." I think, as well the fact that now we have our students are taking other courses as well. They're not just ours, and we don't know what's happening in those other courses. But as we are saying, "Okay, you have to be here, you have to participate, you have to, you know, take the test yourself." Is that happening in the other courses?

D (27:49):

If it's happening elsewhere that they're allowed to do whatever they want, it just reinforces it and you're the bad guy because you're insisting on doing it properly as far as we're concerned, and the wrong way as far as they're concerned.

J (28:06):

I'd like to add to that, I think I've found a few strategies, I don't know. I mean, obviously these are not, um, these are not foolproof, but for me the things that have helped are lots of feedback from me. Lots of communication during class and out of class, a lot of it. For some reason students prefer to email me at nine o'clock in the evening, rather than ask a question in class, which I don't answer

at nine o'clock in the evening. Categorically, the next morning. And so, communication, and having a personal approach, getting mired in that quick help, possibly if I can if you're struggling with a particular topic. Using gamification. Using the tools that we have to motivate them. These are the kinds of things that I have found help to alleviate these challenges, to some extent with a limited number of students. It's very much... It really depends on a case-by-case basis, but, you know, these are strategies that seem to give the students a better chance of participating and succeeding. But I really have to keep on top of them. Like somebody else was saying earlier, you know, "Why are you not logged into the BookWidget Live. Why haven't you finished number two? Do number two now and cracking the whip continuously and work with some students where students have got the cognitive ability and some motivation, in a lot of cases, as we've said it's not straightforward.

Tim (29:41):

That's fantastic. That actually leads me to the next question which is, which teaching and learning theories are apparent in the hybrid model?

N (29:55):

I know what should be apparent, but what is actually apparent? And I know this from my own experience is behaviorism. It's so easy just to give answers rather than, like, get the student to work it out themselves. I mean when I, when, when we first started teaching online, my wife who is involved in education would overhear me teaching, and afterwards she'd say to me, "You're just telling them the answer," because they were doing writing and I was saying "it's not is, it's are" or things like this because it's easy, and you slip into that trap. Whereas, it should be connectivism and constructivism.

Connectivism where we're using the technology to, to, to help their learning, rather than just giving answers. I think it's too easy to slip into behaviorism in an online situation.

R (30:57):

I think what, yeah, and I totally agree there, I think what it is, is that we've sort of very easily slipped into sort of a CALL situation, you know, like, you know, when we were teaching face-to-face, before we had laptops or iPads were very often, it'd be okay, "Once a week, we'll go over to the library or the language lab or whatever and you're going to do lots and lots of Tense Buster," which you know is just very behaviorist... It's like, you know, you know what they do?

They'll go for a, first show answers, they get 0% the first time, 100% the second time. You know that... you know, we very much I think giving them lots of software with lots of, you know clicky things. You know, it's just click, click, click until everything goes green. And it's, you know, can I have a reward, it's probably behaviorist, and shouldn't be.

Tim (31:50):

Anybody care to elaborate on that? What about constructivism? I mean, people talk about working in breakout groups, social constructivism to learn, collaborative learning. Is this an issue or is it relevant, does it happen? Is it impossible?

N (32:15):

It should happen, and it is possible but I don't think it does. I mean, I found that with breakout groups, they'll, they'll, maybe be working whilst I'm there, but I know they are not when I get to the next group. And when they're doing an exercise one student gets all the answers correct and the

rest of the students are doing nothing, then all of a sudden all of them have got them correct because they've just told each other the answers.

R (32:43):

So they don't know how to be constructivist. It's that thing that, yeah, the smartest one in a class will get all the answers and just share it, and help them. And they think that's fine that's working in a group. It's like we work in a group, we'd say, right, D, you give us the answers, the rest of us will sit here and do nothing. And they'd be cool with that. And we'd all be cool with it.

J (33:08):

Sometimes what I'm doing, and through a series of BookWidgets and groupwork activities it would seem that they are actually incorporating, you know, from the basic model, say for example for the problem solution essay, to now incorporating elements of complex sentences and linking words and things like that and I'm trying to get them to cooperate and are editing their work two or three times. And that's the best-case scenario, yes, there may be some kind of constructivist methodology that can be used. I try to use it. I believe that's where we should be going. Again, the students are not open to, how to learn. If somebody else was then teaching them how to learn. It's really hard to build up the constructivist approach. And they don't understand what they're doing. They understand why they're doing it that way. Why would we make it so much more difficult when they could just get their answers from someone else. Yeah, they just don't see the value in actually building up those learning blocks of each topic, you know.

R (34:27):

Yeah, I always thought, here often it's, you know, whenever you give the students an exercise, for the majority of them they don't look at it and think, "Okay, how can I do this?" Which is what you or I might do. They look at it as basically, "Okay, where can I get the answers? Who can give me the answers to this?" I just want to know if it is ABC, you know, they don't actually want to engage with it. They don't see the value of that.

That's really not the whole approach to it. I think that's because, you know, we're coming out of a different education system, you know. I know with me I want to find out... If I am really interested in something I want to find the answer to it. That's just how I work, you know. And I don't want you to tell me, because I want to sort of show how smart I am in this. I want to engage myself with it.

But the majority of them sit there on their phone, and they're just waiting for someone to send them the answers. That's fine.

Tim (35:19):

All excellent points, thank you so much. So, are any language teaching approaches and methods incorporated given the fact that they are English as second language learners, is this considered in this hybrid model?

D (35:47):

By whom? We consider it.

Tim (35:54):

But in general, talking about the hybrid model and this approach is the fact that our students are English as second language learners considered?

R (36:03):

No. I think we go right back to what N mentioned at the start, I think it fits well with motivated students who are trying to learn content. I don't think it's the best way to learn a language. I think if we were focusing like on CLIL. Now, like if you were trying to learn Japanese by studying Japanese history in Japanese, that's a different matter. But the fact that we're purely teaching the language and then we're going to test them in language skills, it's really not considered, it's not thought out. I mean, D said we try to do those things. You know, to consider language teaching methodologies, but they're not generally applied or...The people deciding we're using this model really haven't thought about it because they don't know what they are.

Tim (36:50):

So how does that affect teaching and learning?

N (36:56):

Negatively.

Tim (36:59):

Great, okay. Can you elaborate?

R (37:06):

I think, you know, we're all taking online classes where and I don't know what it's like at the Men's college at the moment but you know my class is it's a ghost town. You know, so we're giving them things to some of them they are doing it. It's just very negative. I think our students, particularly with learning a language, you've got to get them... If you get in a situation where there's a relationship and they want to communicate with you, you've got a chance to actually try and learn

some English. But as it is at the moment, I'm fairly negative about the whole thing. It could be the time of the semester, maybe I've had enough.

D (37:44):

Doing this in middle of Ramadan might not be the most unbiased way to reflect on it.

N (37:51):

Yeah. It just occurred to me that is probably not an answer to this question but overall it might be important. When we're teaching it, R said, they're not interested, or he has to be... If he's interested in something, then he'll work out the answers. When we're teaching English, they're not interested in English. We are a means to an end. They're health science students, they're engineering students. They're not English students. They just have to learn English in order to learn the subject they're interested in, and I think this may have a bearing. I don't know.

R (38:35):

I think this comes down to how we are regarded in the institution. You know, English has stopped being important. And I think we, we struggle to get them up to this level, EmSAT 1100 whatever that is, so they can get on with their programs and they go into their programs that are largely taught in Arabic. So, it's a bit futile really. (laughs).

Tim (38:56):

So, I'm just getting conscious of the time, just the last a couple of questions and then I'll start with the wrap up. So from your experience, how do the students feel about the hybrid model?

N (39:18):

They love it because they can cheat and they can pass exams, and they don't have to come to college. And they hate it because they don't see their friends. It's a mix. They don't care about the fact that we're not teaching in the classroom. The things they miss are the social aspects, and the things they like, oh it's easier. And they don't have to get out of bed.

R (39:42):

Particularly the girls, if you can get them to turn the camera on you might see their hands, they might show you their hands on a duvet because they're still in bed. Even at two o'clock in the afternoon, usually.

J (39:54):

Actually, you don't want the guys to turn their cameras on because like, a lot of them are still on their pillow as well, so it's like, "You know what, just turn it off. Really. Yeah, it's fine." Yeah, yeah, I think, I think, um, they do miss the social interaction, but generally, when we were trying to get them to come in, it was like, "Do I have to come in?" I mean, I do think a lot of that was to do with the hassle of the PCR tests before they got the vaccine and all that kind of stuff.

And some of the guys were like, "No, Miss this like our highlight of our week to come and see our mates." I mean they weren't interested at all in what I was doing in the classroom of course. And they like, they liked coming in and sitting downstairs in Starbucks, kind of just having like a chat with me. But when I tried to get them on a task, it was like, "Yeah, I don't want to do this really. I'll just open my laptop. I think, and really the students find it an easier way. My son is trying his best to get out of any of his online and onsite lesson as well, which is probably similar to the way

that our students are thinking about it. "Why do I have to go so I can just sit in my classroom and even after teacher closes his screen, I can be back on my PS5 you know."

So, generally I think students of the ilk that we teach are quite happy to take it as a shortcut, especially with the online assessments, except for the odd few who actually miss the college experience.

Tim (41:24):

That's interesting.

R (41:27):

I'm surprised that they've stuck to FWAs on campus. I mean I've heard rumors that they were going to do all the assessments online but they seem to be sticking to this on campus thing. And I'm expecting they're gonna have lots of complaints. Students will be thinking I was able to take my Arabic exam online and I got a really good grade. And there was an article in the national I think somewhere in it, it said, "Student learning online has improved grades," as a positive thing. It didn't mention anywhere why it's improved grades. Which we all know.

Yeah, I mean I think yes, as everyone said here, I think some of them miss the social, particularly the girls because they don't have as much freedom, but they don’t miss sitting in a class. Maybe one out of 50 or something might. They are the students who will do well anyway. For the vast majority of them it is easier.

Tim (42:22):

Great. Thank you. So, particularly for the students, what are the difficulties the students face with this hybrid model?

R (42:31):

I mean, from everything we've mentioned, I think, it all comes down to their motivation. But also just the fact that students... I mean it's the same for my kids, it'll be the same for J, you were mentioning your boys. A computer for them is not something you work on, it's something you play on. It's something you watch YouTube on, you do your gaming on. Chat to your mates. It's not something we have serious interactions when you do work. So I think that... It's that kind of portal. And there's so much distraction on there.

R (43:06):

I mean, I know myself, I often have four or five tabs open, and I'm meant to be in a management meeting but I'm doing something else, going on Facebook or something. They're the same, it's because there's so much there, it's very hard to stay focused. There's no real need for them to stay focused, at least when you're face-to-face is like, "If I don't at least pretend I'm paying attention the teacher's gonna shout at me. He might take my phone off me. He might come over and bother me in some way. But when I'm online, I can just ignore him."

N (43:40):

For the record, I only have Zoom open. (laughs).

D (43:42):

Me too. I'm on my laptop.

J (43:52):

I mean Tim, the thing about the lecture recordings, I mean, a lot of people are like, "Oh it's great, you know, when you're teaching like this you can watch the recording after the class again and

study" What I'm finding is, you know, some students if they feel they really need to catch something that I did they'll watch all of the videos at once rather than make that interactive class part of their sort of daily routine.

You know, it doesn't really help them. And as we've mentioned already, for us kind of trying to deal with things like students saying they are busy and can I do this after the lesson. I'm like, "Well no, this is actually what we're doing now so I can help you." So, I think for them, they don't quite understand the time constraints of the online learning. For them it all burns into the rest of their day. "And why should I actually do this activity now? Even though she wants me to finish before the end of the class so she can give feedback on it, rather than just later whenever...

So, I think for them, organizing their learning is quite a major issue, and for special needs students, It's really hard. They are the group left behind, left to struggle. There's a limited amount we can do for students who don't really understand how to use the technology properly, who don't understand instructions. I'm color coding everything. The exercise is the first one in the folder. Every day is number one, one, one. These are the students who have been left behind in my opinion.

Tim (45:30):

That leads to the next question, which is, what could be done to support the students?

R (45:39):

Orientation I think, it is that going right back to teaching them how to learn, teaching them how to learn online. Maybe it also, it almost needs to be... probably ideally it would be done face-to-face so you can go around and say, "No, click there." Rather than trying to do it remotely. That I think would be the biggest support, but there isn't the will to do that, you know, there isn't the, well, the

time. The way the semesters set up, you know, you couldn't spend two to four weeks, which is probably what it would take, just teaching them how to study.

N (46:13):

If you think about how we started over a year ago teaching the online classes where it was like, "By the way, as of tomorrow, we're going to do an experiment. You're going to teach online, experiment over the next two or three days, and then we're going to go back to face-to-face, and everyone knew that we weren't going to go back to face-to-face. And we were just thrown into it. So there was no chance for orientation for the students. There was no chance for teacher training. We did the teacher training on how to use Blackboard Collaborate a week after, two weeks after we'd started the online learning. I think it was seen as a success because we'd adapted so quickly. But we hadn't adapted. We'd just thrown something together and now that's still acceptable. We're still doing that because it was just seen as a success at the time.

R (47:07):

There's that lack of criticality. You know, it's the whole like, you know... And, and again, you got reports saying, you know, online learning is a great success, because the results are better, and no one's willing to sort of say right, "Well, most of the teachers don't know what they're doing. The students are all cheating." No, it's that no one's willing to sort of stand up and say, "That's, that's the fact." You know, it's just, "Everything's wonderful, you're all wonderful, students are wonderful. Isn't it wonderful. What a wonderful place." But I think we all know what the truth is.

Tim (47:43):

That's brilliant. Thank you. I know you are all really, really busy, so I'll wrap up now.

8.3 Appendix 3

Hybrid Model Survey

The survey will take approximately 6 minutes to complete.

This is a survey about the hybrid model in higher education and ESL learners.

* Required

* This form will record your name, please fill your name.

Consent Form

1. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide you no longer wish to participate you may withdraw at any time. Your privacy will be respected. No personal identifying information will be collected. All data will be stored in a password protected electronic format.
   Clicking on the "agree" button indicates that you have read the above information and voluntarily agree to participate. If you do not wish to participate in the survey, please decline by clicking on the "disagree" button. *

   ○ Agree

   ○ Disagree

The Hybrid Model in Higher Education

According to some research, the following conclusions have been drawn regarding the Hybrid model. From your experience, I would like to know what you think.

2. Please select the most appropriate response.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The Hybrid Model provides better opportunities for teaching and learning.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model increases student motivation.	○	○	○	○	○
The hybrid model leads to better grades and results.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model provides better opportunities for blended learning.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model encourages more collaborative learning.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid Model increases student to student interaction.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model leads to deeper learning.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model allows for more personalised learning.	○	○	○	○	○
The hybrid model is easier to administer.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model allows for more flexibility.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model increases access to learning.	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The Hybrid Model encourages better use of teaching resources.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model reduces student absenteeism.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model is more convenient for teaching and learning.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model allows for better differentiation.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model results in higher engagement.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model enables better individualized learning.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model allows for more self-pacing.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model is more effective for English as Second Language learners.	○	○	○	○	○
The Hybrid model will become the standard in Higher Education.	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about how to improve the hybrid model for ESL learners.

3. Please select the most appropriate response.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Conduct professional development to improve faculty's pedagogical skills for teaching ESL learners.	○	○	○	○	○
Conduct professional development to improve faculty's technological skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Develop standardised course content for all courses.	○	○	○	○	○
Have a clear pedagogical vision that benefits ESL learners.	○	○	○	○	○
Provide extra support for at-risk students as a component of the course.	○	○	○	○	○
Conduct training for how to teach English as Second Language learners.	○	○	○	○	○
Develop academic success programs to support existing courses.	○	○	○	○	○
Develop English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course content.	○	○	○	○	○
Provide extra English language support for students.	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Increase face to face class time, and reduce online and blended learning time.	○	○	○	○	○
Develop a thorough orientation program for first year students.	○	○	○	○	○
Introduce more accountability for students to complete asynchronous online content.	○	○	○	○	○
Develop a bank of self-access, self-paced online tutorials for academic success.	○	○	○	○	○
Include more video-based content.	○	○	○	○	○
Conduct a thorough needs analysis of all courses to understand the language required.	○	○	○	○	○
Design prerequisite ESP and EAP courses	○	○	○	○	○
Scaffold course content according to CEFR levels.	○	○	○	○	○
Develop student's technological skills and make online support available for students.	○	○	○	○	○
Include more collaborative learning activities.	○	○	○	○	○
Include more bilingual instructions.	○	○	○	○	○

This question is optional.

4. If there are any comments you would like to add regarding the hybrid model and ESL learners, please answer in the box below.