

The impact of hybrid learning in teaching English for Business Communication in Vocational Higher Education of Indonesia

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Abstract

Some studies have been undertaken to decide the impact of hybrid learning on outcomes in higher education settings, with findings indicating that hybrid learning increases student performance more than distant learning or normal face-to-face instruction. This paper focuses on the students' perspective on the impact of hybrid learning-based instruction in teaching English for Business Communication in Vocational Higher Education of Indonesia. This study is ex post facto research that aims to find the causes that allow changes in behavior, symptoms, or phenomena caused by an event, behavior, or things that cause changes in the independent variables which have occurred. This study employed a case study using students' reflection journals and online questionnaires to seventy-five students of Business English for Communication class of the Vocational Higher Education in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Data were analyzed descriptively. In analyzing the data, the researcher used thematic analysis and content analysis. Data analysis steps are data familiarization, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. This study showed that students perceived the hybrid learning improved students' technology competence, collaboration participation, and engagement, motivation, self-confidence. The impact of hybrid learning in teaching English for Business Communication can be categorized into three highly impacted, moderately impacted, and lowly impacted on students, attitude, skills and competence, and motivation. This study claims that the more positive students are toward hybrid learning education in the classroom, the higher their English for Business Communication performance. This research improves scholarly understanding of hybrid learning instruction in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education when teaching English for Business Communication.

Keywords:

Hybrid learning; hybrid teaching; Vocational Higher Education; Business Communication; English for Business.

1 INTRODUCTION

Many studies were conducted to assess the influence of hybrid learning on outcomes in higher education settings, with data indicating that hybrid learning improves learner performance more than distant learning or regular face-to-face instruction. However, most of this research focused on areas such as math, health, and science, with limited emphasis on learning outcomes for second language learners (Jee & O'Connor, 2014). Research showed that the Hybrid Learning implementation has significantly positively impacted the teaching and learning process. Besides, Handayani *et al.* (2020) argue that the benefits of Hybrid Learning have captivated the interest of many curriculum implementers, prompting them to adopt a Hybrid Learning delivery method for their institution.

The research presented here is intended to address the paucity of language learning research by considering the impact of Hybrid Learning on English for Business communication skills. Hybrid Learning has been defined in many ways and by different authors and is often associated with simply supplementing traditional classroom learning with self-study e-learning activities. All definitions, however, shared the essential concept of hybrid, which involves combining two elements: face-to-face instruction and online learning. In both academic and corporate settings, the phrase "hybrid learning" is becoming more popular. Hybrid Learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction (Bonk & Graham, 2005).

The three most commonly mentioned definitions of Hybrid Learning are documented in Bonk and Graham (2005) that Blended Learning combining instructional modalities (or delivery media), combining instructional methods and combining online and face-to-face instruction. Graham then concluded those three definitions of Hybrid Learning as systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction (Graham, 2013). The term "hybrid learning," often known as "blended learning," is increasingly widely used in corporate and higher education contexts (Klimova & Kacetl, 2015). The words "hybrid courses" and "blended courses" are sometimes interchanged, although hybrid courses vary in that their online components are meant to supplement face-to-face class time.

Littlejohn and Pegler (2007) perceived hybrid learning as integrating face-to-face teaching and learning methods with online approaches. Harmer (2012) defines hybrid learning as a strategy in which students receive information from materials such as a coursebook and then supplement it with additional materials and websites on the internet. Hybrid e-learning brings traditional learning and digital learning to accommodate the current technological era as Industrial Revolution 4.0. Syam *et al.* (Syam *et al.*, 2019). In the digital world, learning should include innovation and, among other things, use technology through hybrid learning methods. This revolutionary instructional approach has been widely applied around the world.

2 METHOD

This study is ex post facto research; it aims to find the causes that allow changes in behavior, symptoms, or phenomena caused by an event, behavior, or things that cause changes in the independent variables (Mills & Gay, 2015). This study

employed a virtual case study on Blended Learning-Based Instruction in English for Business in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education used an online questionnaire, virtual interview and observation, student's journal reflection, and documentation. The research was conducted at State Polytechnic of Ujung Pandang (PNUP), Business Administration Department located in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The research involved seventy-five students of Business Communication. The data was analyzed by thematic analysis, content analysis, and document analysis. This study exposed seventy-five Indonesian Vocational Higher Education students in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The research participants are second-year students who enrolled in English for Business Communication with demographic information are 68 or 91% of the respondents are female, and 7 or 12 % are male with a range of age 19-21 years old. Students' names were changed to students' journal reflection (SJR) upon data collection.

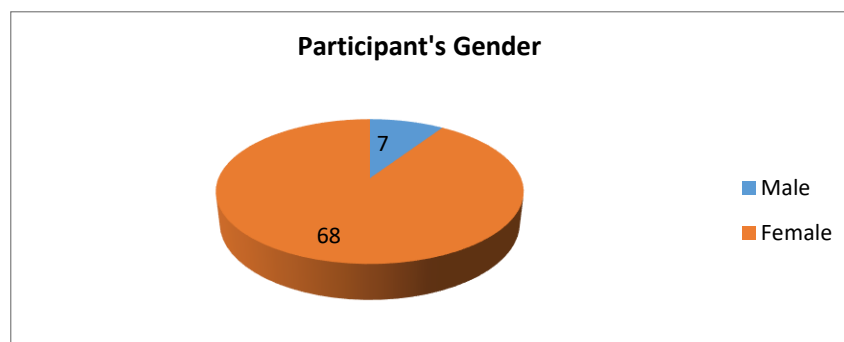


Figure 1. Respondent's gender

The instrument used in this chapter is an online questionnaire distributed to three classes English for Business Communication, attended by seventy-five students. The instrument contains 10 Likert Scale questions and one reflective journal to gather about students' responses to the impact of Hybrid Learning implementation in teaching English for Business Communication. This section concerns deep learning through engagement and student-centered approaches that involve students developing meaning and understanding in their learning in the implementation of Hybrid Learning. The research also addressed students' higher-order skills of analysis, synthesis, and creativity (Moyle & Wijngaards, 2012).

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In order to gain initial students' responses on the use of Hybrid Learning technologies, this research employed the theory "Perceived of Usefulness of Technology adapted from Davis Technology Acceptance Model. The data gained from the online questionnaire showed that students have positive attitudes on Hybrid Learning Implementation in English for Business Communication. The positive impacts of hybrid learning for students are hybrid learning improved; technology competence; collaboration; participation and engagement, motivation, self-confidence. Hybrid Learning also improved students' English for Business Communication. The positive impacts of Hybrid Learning on students were elaborated as follows.

3.1 Impact of Hybrid Learning on Students' Technology Competence

Hybrid learning helps the student to use new applications and improve student's understanding and awareness on technology. The online questionnaire found that fifty-three percent of students agreed that Hybrid Learning improved their technology adaptation skills, and thirty-nine percent agreed. Eight percent of the students were neutral. None of the students disagrees nor extremely disagrees. The student's reflective journal also supports the findings of the impact of Hybrid Learning. Students found that Hybrid Learning not only improved their English skills but also their ability to use technology. The extract of students' reflection journal can be seen below

"Hybrid Learning Improves my current technology and internet adaptability." (SRJ34)

"Hybrid Learning Improves the ability to use several applications that have never been used before." (SR38)

"I become more technology literate and motivated to deepen my understanding of the material explained by looking for additional explanations myself about the material via the internet." (SRJ40)

"With Hybrid Learning we can not only speak English but also we can use technology so that knowledge about technology is still up to date". (SRJ64)

"Hybrid Learning makes me more knowledgeable or" literate "about technology, to learn and acquire new things." (SRJ72)

Patmanthara and Hidayat (2018) emphasized that vocational students should be trained with digital literacy skills as future professional workers. Applying the Hybrid Learning paradigm, which blends traditional learning (face-to-face) with online learning, is one way to increase students' digital literacy skills. Digital literacy skills are the ability to construct a complex and structured knowledge base through activities such as browsing, analyzing facts and information, developing and distributing web content, interacting in chat rooms, and communicating in social media. Digital literacy is vital because it is the underlying impact that allows a student to utilize digital technology competently and purposefully at college, at the workplace, and in their daily activities. Developing students' digital literacy includes teaching them how to search successfully on the internet (Ng, 2015). According to Birbal *et al.* (2018), when students

and teachers realize that a Hybrid Learning environment can enhance their learning performance and efficiency while allowing them to engage more easily with their classmates and teachers, they may accept Hybrid Learning be satisfied with it.

3.2 The Impact of Hybrid Learning on Students' Collaboration Skill

The students in this research particularly valued that Hybrid Learning gave them the opportunities for peer collaboration, sharing of ideas or interacting with others, and helping each other when using technologies. The ability to collaborate well with others, appreciate each member's value, and be accountable for the group's work is referred to as collaboration competence. The result showed that fifteen percent students extremely agreed, sixty-one percent students agreed, twelve percent disagreed and neutral, none of the students extremely disagreed,

This finding illustrates the students' satisfaction with BL as it improves English language skills and helps them make English learning collaborative, interactive, and interesting. In addition, this reflects the interaction in Hybrid Learning improves their collaborative skill to work with other students respective and responsible in group work. This showed that students recognized the importance of hybrid learning in fostering collaborative and high-quality learning experiences. So and Brush (2008) defines collaborative learning as an instructional strategy in which a small group of learners engage and share their knowledge and abilities to achieve a specified learning goal. Students engaged in more interactions because of collaborative learning activities, and their perceived sense of connection with other students expanded. Vrasidas and McIsaac (1999) suggested that students were more engaged in the course when required to participate in discussions and work on projects. As a result of the greater structure, more discussion and interaction occurred. Heggart and Yoo (2018) urged that teachers think about using effective platforms to increase collaboration, particularly among students. Students are required to collaborate to provide relevant learning experiences for students, such as discussing subjects and completing projects.

In terms of creativity, the research indicated that students perceived those technologies in their learning developed their creativity. The data showed that twenty-eight percent of students strongly agreed, sixty-six percent agreed, five percent students disagreed, and none of the students extremely disagreed. This finding is supported by the student's reflective journal in which the students stated that the use of technology in Hybrid Learning improves their creativities.

Utilizing technology in Hybrid Learning is indirectly make me able to develop my own creativity (SRJ10)

"Hybrid Learning helps me to be more creative, to be more serious in mastering vocabulary, and in this Blended Learning process I feel comfortable studying because I am relaxed but still serious." (SRJ18)

"With Hybrid Learning, we are free to create according to the learning material provided." (SRJ72)

The research indicated that students perceived that the use of technologies in their learning developed their creativity. The students had more chances to explore their creativity related to the use of Hybrid Learning in English for Business Communication as follows: Self-made project (filming or video-taking, recording or sound production, editing or multimedia creation), Group-made project (filming or video-taking, recording or sound production, editing or multimedia creation), Task-based activity (composing, narrating, drawing, figuring, blogging, etc.), Imaging (photo-taking, picture story, etc.), class project or workshop on a particular topic. There have been numerous arguments in favor of adding project work into second and foreign language classrooms. For starters, the process that leads to the outcome of project work allows students to grow confidence and independence. Students also have higher self-esteem and more positive attitudes regarding learning (Fried-Booth, 2013; Stoller, 2006).

3.3 Learning to the students' Autonomous Learning

Hybrid Learning requires the presence of classrooms that encourage innovative, independent, dynamic, and student-centered learning. Students can now learn anywhere and anytime, even on their smartphones and portable computers, rather than relying on classrooms. The data gathered from the online questionnaire showed that forty five percent students strongly agreed, forty one percent students agreed, thirteen students were neutral, and none of the students disagreed and strongly disagreed about the impact of Hybrid Learning on students' autonomous learning. The figures above were supported by the finding from students' journal reflections are shown below.

"Hybrid Learning allows me to study independently. It feels more flexible. Easy to re-access the materials provided by the lecturer." (SR52)

"I can further deepen my understanding of the material described by searching for additional explanations of the material myself via the internet." (SRJ40)

The finding indicates that students are familiar with gathering useful information and material because today, most students use smartphones, personal computers, and tablet computers at home. Besides, students are more eager to learn, and they can stay focused longer while in class. Various study materials available online can prevent students from feeling bored and monotonous. The learning process of students becomes more efficient and independent. By browsing the internet at home, students develop their speed in learning languages and use added teaching platforms that help them to revise and consolidate.

"Hybrid Learning allows me to find out various materials myself from the internet that indirectly add to my independent insight." (SRJ39)

"The materials can be stored, the explanations from lecturers can be recorded so that if we miss the notes, we can play it back. There is also explanatory material on YouTube that can be seen at any time." (SRJ59)

According to Lungu (2013), students learn faster and better with Hybrid Learning, which allows them to learn at their own pace based on their interests and needs, while Kırkgöz Dikilitaş (2018) revealed that teachers have more time to do what they do best, which is to leverage the classroom's rich resources to create engaging lessons. Hybrid learning strategies, which combine independent and student-centered learning (autonomous learning) with teacher supervision, have been shown to promote and motivate students in reaching their English learning goals (Basri et al., 2020).

3.4 The Impact of Hybrid Learning on the Students' Motivation and Engagement

Students also found that Hybrid Learning is motivating. The data from the online questionnaire showed that nineteen percent of students strongly agreed, sixty percent agreed, thirteen percent were neutral, eight percent disagreed, and none extremely disagreed that Hybrid Learning impacts their motivation. Initially, the student found that Blended Learning was difficult and needed extra work to adapt it, but later, the student felt that with Blended Learning, students experienced a new and a different learning environment, which was motivating. Hybrid Learning also facilitates the students learning.

"With a combination of online and face-to-face learning, we felt a new atmosphere and enthusiasm for learning even though at first there were many obstacles and we needed to adjust. Easier task execution" (SR25)

Other students wrote on the reflection journal that the lectured used an interesting Hybrid Learning in the class to feel motivated and more interested in learning.

"Lecturers provide us with interesting Hybrid Learning so that it makes us very excited and interested in learning." (SR17)

The study also found that students perceived that Hybrid Learning improves students' participation and engagement in terms of participation and engagement. The online questionnaire showed that twenty-four percent of students strongly agreed that Hybrid Learning improves students' participation and engagement, sixty three percent students agreed, eight percent of students were neutral, four percent of students disagreed, and none strongly disagreed.

Hybrid Learning can improve student engagement and accomplishment, but it is crucial to provide online content that encourages critical thinking, considers students' learning styles, and allows for flexible teacher intervention to handle technological issues (Martinsen, 2017). Student motivation and engagement with technology include published research in which students articulate views indicating that they find learning with technology interesting, enjoyable, and motivating. Student motivation and engagement to learn involve moving students beyond surface learning towards deeper learning approaches through developing interest and understanding meaning through knowledge integration (Moyle & Wijngaards, 2012).

A study done by Syarif and Sofyan (2015) indicated a substantial difference in learning motivation and achievement between students who use face-to-face learning and those who use the Hybrid Learning model. The usage of the Hybrid Learning model results in a considerable improvement in learning motivation and achievement. The students' positive attitudes about hybrid learning allow them to become more enthusiastic and active in the learning process. This can often motivate students to become more responsible and willing to get involved in their learning. Ferguson (2012), with similar findings, revealed that hybrid learning blends online digital media with traditional classroom pedagogies. Chandra and Briskey (2012) discovered that students in secondary math and science had a clear sense of learning utilizing the approach, leading to increased academic achievement and improved student engagement. Moreover, According to Swarat *et al.* (2012), active students' engagement in learning is a key aspect in education that is facilitated by technology.

3.5 Impact of Hybrid Learning to improve English for Business Communication

This study supports that student who viewed Hybrid Learning improved English proficiency in Business Communication. When the students are asked about the impact of Hybrid Learning in improving their English for Business Communication, twenty-one percent of students extremely agreed that Hybrid Learning could improve their English for Business Communication, sixty-seven percent of students agreed, and three percent were neutral. The rest of ten percent of respondents disagreed, none of the students strongly disagreed.

The ability of students to listen and talk and acquire other abilities like reading and academic writing is an important component of hybrid learning in the classroom. Skills may be thought of as highly specialized complexes of habitual behavior that have been learned. An individual's ability to communicate through language to speak, understand spoken symbols, write, and read is one example of learned habitual behavior, called skills. In communication behavior, an essential skill is an individual's ability to deal with abstract symbols, to be able to decode the signs, and manipulate the meaning symbolically (Yarbrough, 1968). When the students were asked about the impact of Hybrid Learning on the student's English skill, the data from the online questionnaire showed that the most student about forty-nine percent hit listening skills the, it was followed by twenty percent of respondents believed that Hybrid Learning might improve their Speaking skills. Twenty percent of students hit Reading skills while writing skill was the lowest item hit by eleven percent.

3.6 The Impact of Hybrid Learning on Students' Understanding of Particular Topics

Eleven topics should be completed in English for Business Communication course such as Business Travel", "Making Itinerary", "Meeting with Company Visitors", "Company Tour", "Company Organization", "Product Description", "Daily Routines", "Company Future Trend", "Price Negotiation", "Entertaining Guest", and "Making and Handling Complaint in Placing Order". The students are asked to rank or to put the topic in which was highly improved, moderately improved, or lowly improved as the impact of Hybrid Learning. The result of the online questionnaire can be seen from the bar chart below.

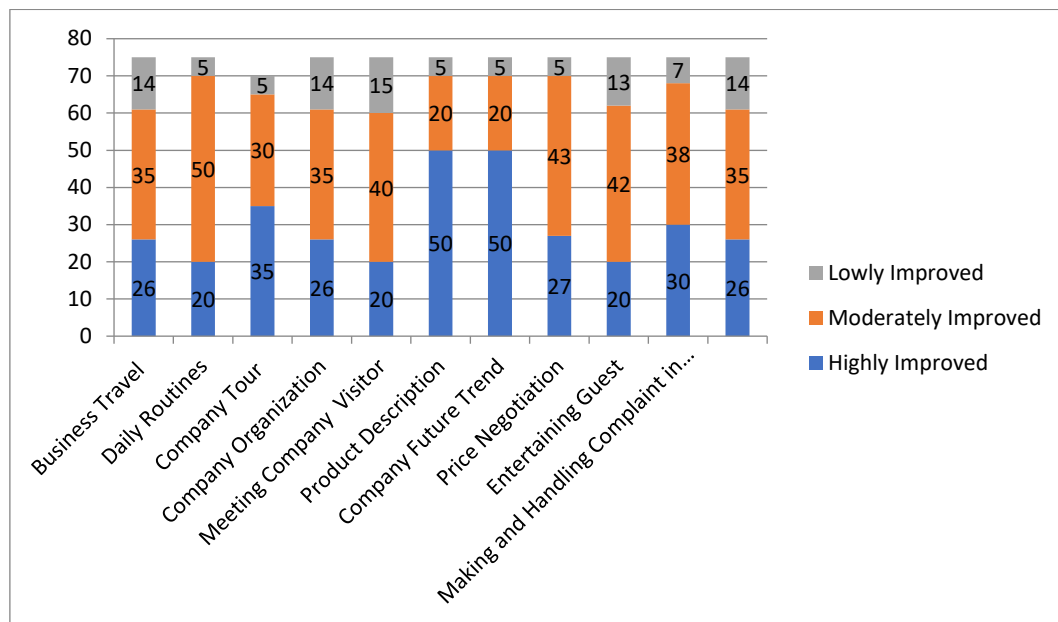


Figure 2. The impact of hybrid learning on students' understanding in particular topics

Figure 2 shows the impact of blended learning on student's understanding of a particular topic. The student's level of knowledge is classified into three measurements categories: highly, moderately, and lowly improved. Generally, the student's overall performance indicates that they all have a good understanding of all topics. However, their experience is influenced by the variety of topics where they have strong performance on some topics and low performance on some other topics. Product description and daily routines, for example, are the two topics where the student's understanding was highly improved. Sixty-six percent or approximately 50 participants have a highly enhanced knowledge of how to describe a product. At the same time, 47% or around 35 participants also have a highly improved ability to talk about daily routines.

On the other hand, there are several topics where the students perceived their understanding as moderately-improved such as handling complaints (45%), entertaining guests (56%), company future trends (57%), and business travel (66%). Compared to other business English topics, the students perceived their understanding as lowly improved in working on company tours (8%), company organizations (20%), and writing travel itineraries (18%). Finally, it can be concluded that blended learning approaches have impacted students' quality of understanding, particularly in learning business English topics.

The data indicated that students considered that the highest impact of Hybrid Learning improves their English skills, especially in Product Description. This finding encouraged the researcher to explore the impact of Hybrid Learning in improving students' business presentation skills. One of the most significant skills for Business Administration students in Vocational Higher Education is a business presentation. For effective presentations, good communication skills, planning, preparation, organization, respect for the audience, and an approach to the audience members are all essential. These aspects are also important factors to be considered for having a successful career in our society. Preparing these presentations in English, the international language of communication in multinationals, business, and academia will help students improve their foreign language skills and motivation to present their ideas, proposals, and projects in an accurate, fluent, and correct manner, enhancing their motivation to put forth their ideas, proposals, and projects in an accurate, fluent, and correct manner (Simona, 2015).

The objectives of the Business Presentation topic are 1) motivating students to improve their understanding of English grammar and vocabulary, as well as their linguistic ability in making precise and fluent presentations; 2) encouraging students to use English accurately and clearly in a number of contexts when giving a business presentation; and 3) developing their knowledge of the role of preparation when giving effective and good presentations. Students can be encouraged to enhance their foreign language skills, prepare speeches and presentations using learning, e-learning, practice, and feedback, and participate in communicative teamwork activities, monitored, assessed, and rewarded. Students' presentation skills must be constructed in foreign language classes by motivating them to present their ideas in a coherent, logical manner, encouraging them to be self-confident, productive, and structured. Students also need assistance to resolve their shyness and fear of speaking through teamwork activities, which require them to prepare and deliver presentations on given topics as well as topics of their choice. (Simona, 2015).

Based on the data acquired from the students' recorded video, it was discovered that most students could articulate their ideas in an uncomplicated, smooth, and suitable manner. Their presentations were also enjoyable and engaging with proper gestures, eye-contact, and facial expression. Their speaking and presentation skills appear more natural in the way they choose certain facial expressions and tones to emphasize a particular point they raised independently. As a result of the data, it can be concluded that Hybrid Learning provided students with more personal space to improve and

practice speaking in English in a more relaxed setting, with eye contact, body movements, and a clear voice. They should be encouraged to speak in front of the class, where all their classmates would be staring at them. They took control of their learning process because they could tailor it to their specific needs. In truth, there are various methods to use technology to aid self-access language learning, but having flexible and convenient access to recording tools can help language learners gain knowledge for communicative competence by allowing for endless communicative practice (Castellano et al., 2011).

The following is the summary chart of students Responses to Hybrid Learning impact on developing student learning engagement, motivation, collaboration, and students' technological skills, autonomous learning, and creativity.

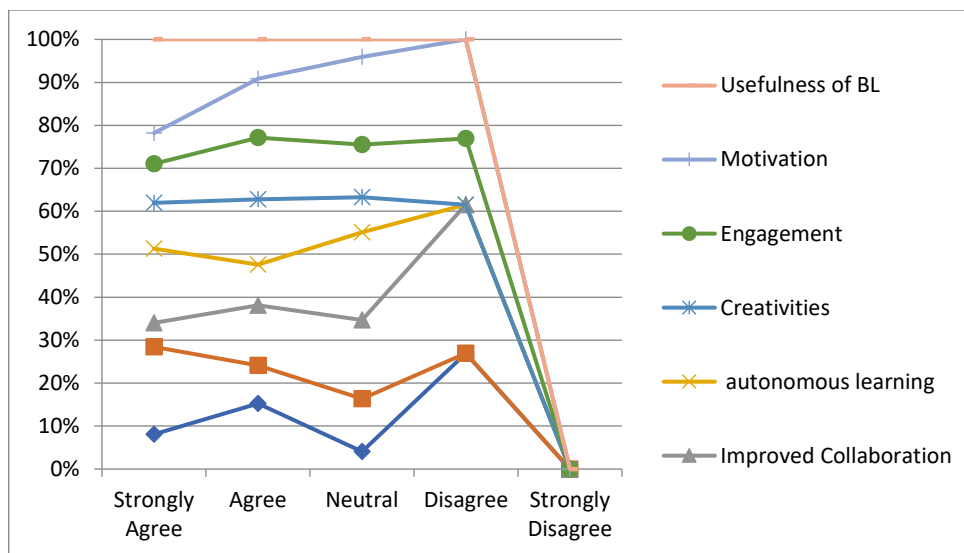


Figure 3. The summary of the impact of hybrid learning in teaching English for business communication

The results of this study showed the varied impact implementation of Hybrid Learning could be categorized into three: Highly Impacted Hybrid Learning (HIBL), Moderately Impacted Hybrid Learning (MIBL), and Lowly Impact Hybrid Learning Student Response (LIBL). The different responses resulted from students' perceived usefulness of Hybrid Learning-Based instruction in teaching English for Business Communication in vocational Higher education.

4 CONCLUSION

The study's findings show that students' attitudes towards the integration of Hybrid Learning had a positive impact in enhancing students' English for Business Communication skills and competence as well as the autonomous technology learning and learner motivation. Digital technologies had a significant impact on our students' business English learning, demonstrating that students did more than merely socialize online and improved their business English language skills. As a result, we believe Hybrid Learning improves learning effectiveness, information transfer and sharing, learner confidence, and engagement. In conclusion, Hybrid Learning's positive impact was numerous and varied, including the impacts of behavior, abilities, and knowledge, and motivation. The impact of Hybrid Learning in teaching English for Business Communication can be categorized into three Highly Impacted, Moderately Impacted and Lowly Impacted on students, attitude, skills and competence, and motivation.

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