The Effectiveness of a Proposed Blended-learning Model in Developing Literary Translation Skills of Saudi-University Students

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to design a blended-learning model and to test its effectiveness in developing literary translation skills of Saudi university students. Participants in the study comprised 140 students (including males and females) distributed randomly between the experimental and control groups. Statistical analysis of the data indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups in the post-administration of the test in favor of those of the experimental group. No significant differences were found between the mean scores of males and females in the experimental group in the post-administration of the test. The suggested model proved to be effective in developing literary translation skills of Saudi university students.

(**Keywords**: Blended Learning, Blended-earning Model, Literary-translation Skills, Saudi-university Students)

فعالية نموذج تعلم تمازجي مقترح في تنمية مهارات الترجمة الأدبية لدى الطلاب الجامعيين السعوديين

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ملخص: تمثل هدف الدراسة الحالية في تصميم نموذج تعلم تمازجي، واختبار فعاليته في تنمية مهارات الترجمة الأدبية لدى الطلاب الجامعيين السعوديين. شارك في الدراسة 140 طالبًا وطالبة. تم توزيع المشاركين بطريقة عشوائية على المجموعتين التجريبية والضابطة. وأوضح التحليل الإحصائي وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين متوسطي درجات طلاب المجموعتين في التطبيق البعدى للاختبار لصالح المجموعة التجريبية. بينما لم توجد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين متوسطي الذكور والإناث في المجموعة التجريبية في التطبيق البعدى للاختبار. وقد أثبت النموذج فعاليته في تنمية مهارات الترجمة الأدبية لدى الطلاب الجامعيين السعوديين.

(**الكلمات المفتاحية**: التعلم التمازجي، الطلاب الجامعيون السعوديون، مهارات الترجمة الأدبية، نموذج تعلم تمازجي)

Introduction

Amidst the *status quo* of modern trends and innovations in the field of learning and teaching, blended learning looms large when it comes to give boost to the student in a learner-centered mode of education. This kind of learning reflects a good practice as opposed to face-to-face and online learning (Wei and Chang, 2020). It is an approach in the education system that provides a multi-delivery mode to optimize learning outcome (Nurasma' and Jasber, 2020). Such a concept includes framing the teaching-learning process that incorporates both face-to-face teaching and teaching supported by ICT. In other words, it incorporates direct instruction, collaborative teaching and individualized computer-assisted learning (Dangwal, 2017). Horn and Staker (2015) defined the term as a formal-education programme in which a student has an integrated learning experience that takes place at least in part online, with some element of student control over time, place, path and/or pace of learning and at least in part in a brick-and-mortar location. Blended learning is also known as mixed, sandwich and hybrid learning. It is a method that conflates traditional-learning environments led by teachers and technology-based e-learning environments (Ceylan and Elitok, 2017).

This hybrid type of learning can be looked at as a learning system that combines face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction. The combination may involve mixing various event-based activities, such as face-to-face classroom, live e-learning, self-paced learning, synchronous online conference and training or asynchronous self-pace learning (Gambari, Shittu, Ogunlade, and Osunlade, 2017). Al-Fahadi, Al-Salhi and Al-Shammari (2015) viewed blended learning as the thoughtful fusion of the two models to create a unique learning experience suitable for the context and intended educational purpose. In this manner, it is an optimally designed combination of online and face-to-face learning. True blended learning is not an optional add-on, but actually results in a reduction of face-to-face contact time. This kind of learning may be differentiated from e-learning in that the latter is concerned only with computer-based or online learning and does not include the on-campus experience of face-to-face learning (Adekola, Dale and Gardiner, 2017). Blended learning merges web-based instruction, videos, audio, synchronous and asynchronous communication with face-to-face learning. In this respect, it refers to the inclusion of e-learning resources in the design and

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delivery of subjects through face-to-face settings (Al-Bahnasawy and Aliweh, 2016).

It can be deemed as a class that meets 50-70% of the assigned class time in the face-to-face classroom setting and spends 30-50% of the assigned class time completing course work in a different setting (Terry, Zafonte and Elliott, 2019). Such a kind of blend is a relatively new educational innovation that has swept the world in recent years and, in the process, garnered quite a bit of both support and skepticism (Anthony, 2019). It is not merely a combination of in-person and online learning, as it is so often defined, but it also allows students greater autonomy over what, when, where and/or how they learn. This learning entails a shift in instructional design away from traditional models with a single pathway and learning objectives that are the same for every student in the class to innovative models with multiple ways in which teachers measure and students demonstrate mastery towards individual learning goals and objectives aligned to academic *standards (*Patrick, Kennedy and Powell*,* 2013). Blended learning is an educational programme where more than one delivery mode are being used with the objective of optimizing the learning outcome and/or cost of the programme delivery. It combines pedagogical approaches (e.g. constructivism, behaviourism and cognitivism) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology (Ceylan and Elitok, 2017). It has also been conceptualised in terms of combining traditional in-class learning with online activities and resources. Hence, blended learning can be viewed as a pedagogical approach that combines the effectiveness and socialization opportunities of the classroom with the technologically enhanced active-learning possibilities of the online environment (Singh and Reed, 2001). This learning improves effectiveness through extending the access, optimizing the cost of development and time, as well as optimizing learning outcomes (Ceylan and Elitok, 2017). Initially, blended learning was defined as the mixture of e-learning and classroom learning (Umek, Tomaževič, Aristovnik and Keržič, 2017). However, it has come to be referred to as a personalized learning environment which incorporates digital tools and includes (1) some learning that is online or through digital media; (2) some elements of learner control over time, pace, path and/or place; and (3) an integrated learning experience connecting the different modalities

(Acree et al., 2017). At the core of blended learning, there is the postulate of networked learning and teaching (Meier, 2016). It can be assumed that blended learning applies whenever a student learns at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home and at least in part through online delivery (Acree et al., 2017). It does not rely on one method in learning; instead, it combines direct-learning methods with e-learning methods to achieve individualized teaching that takes into consideration individual differences among students (Al-Derbashi and Abed, 2017).

As an umbrella term, blended learning encompasses a crop of components: Face-to-face teaching, student interaction with course content, peer-group interaction, group discussion and exchange of ideas, accessing e-library, virtual classroom, online assessment, e-tuitions, accessing and maintaining educational blogs, webinars, viewing expert lectures on YouTube, online learning through videos and audios and virtual laboratories (Dangwal, 2017). Research efforts have been exerted to identify the variables that impact the success of blended learning, such as learner, instructor, course, technology, design and environment as well as their effect on learners' satisfaction toward e-learning component in blended-learning environment (Chen and Yao, 2016). Such research pinpoints that blended learning provides an opportunity to integrate the innovative and technological advances offered by online learning with the interaction and participation offered in the best of traditional learning (Dwiyogo, 2018). It focuses on optimizing achievement of learning objectives by applying the "right" learning technologies to match the "right" personal learning style to transfer the "right" skills to the "right" person at the "right" time (Ceylan and Elitok, 2017). Instructors tend to prefer blended-learning environments for a crop of reasons: Richness of pedagogy, efficiency of learning, accessing knowledge, relevant cost and easiness of innovation. Users of blended learning can cull a lot of advantages if they are able to use it properly. It can encourage learners' creativity and simplify the learning environment in order to enhance their self-discipline and motivation. Also, it helps teachers engage in live instruction in class, using communicative activities. Moreover, it offers flexible resources which make the learning environment more active, by providing students with new experiences and outcomes. Online

activities help remove anxiety and encourage students to be more self-dependent. Using web-based resources deepens students' understanding of topics. Because of Web 2.0 tools (such as blogs, wikis, discussion forums, voice and video tools, flash files... etc.), teachers can guide and assess their students. In the future, blended learning "may even become so ubiquitous that we will eventually drop the word "blended" (Al-Fahadi et al., 2015: 51). Since blended learning is a convergence of e-learning and face-to-face learning, it is a promising alternative learning approach compared to conventional e-learning approaches. It maximizes the best advantages of face-to-face and e-learning approaches (Chen and Yao, 2016). Horn and Staker (2015) and Fazal (2019) mentioned three types of blended learning, which are "enabling blends, enhancing blends and transforming blends". Blended learning offers schools the option of using the typical school day in different ways, combining instruction *via* online-learning content with traditional teacher-facilitated best practices. Such a kind of learning is at times referred to as personalized learning, depending on the degree of adaptation and personalization of content, delivery and demonstration of learning. In either case, it refers to ways in which instruction can be tailored by utilizing technology to meet the individual needs of students (Fazal, 2019). The goal of any effective blended-learning programme is to differentiate instruction to meet the learning needs of all students (Horn and Staker, 2015). Students differ in content knowledge and have different learning targets. They learn best when instruction is aligned to their learning needs and goals (Fazal, 2019). Blended-learning combinations range from those that are more connected to people and brick-and-mortar buildings or rotation, flex to contexts in which the students are primarily self-directed through online courses or platforms that deliver the curriculum self-blend and enriched-virtual. Different models of blended learning, such as face-to-face, rotational, flex, online lab, self-blend and online types of learning create potential opportunities for students' learning outcomes (Carreon, 2018). Using the blended-learning approach allows instructional facilitators the opportunity to personalize learning for every participant in any typical leadership training programme (Hilliard, 2015). The nucleus structure of a blended-learning environment is composed of three parts: task-based online learning, group-based peer learning and class-based, face-to-face

traditional learning (Yao, 2018). As an experience that goes beyond the walls of the classroom and appeals to diverse learning styles, blended learning fosters independent learning and includes online options to enhance the learning experience (Terry et al., 2019). This learning can improve access and flexibility for learners, improve active learning levels and achieve better student learning experiences and outcomes (Dewi, Ciptayani, Surjono and Priyanto, 2018). Using the blended-learning approach in a language course has a positive effect on student's motivation, academic success and satisfaction (Andreeva, Artyukhov, Myagkova, Pak and Akkasynova, 2018).

Within the domain of EFL, developing translation skills has come to be a vogue, since one of the main objectives of teaching English is to prepare the student for a multilingual world. Development in literary-translation skills, in particular, is an important undertaking that enables the student to translate into the target language the content, expressive power, language style and an equal function of the literary text (Heinrich, 2017). Researchers have exerted tremendous efforts to develop translation skills in general and literary-translation skills in particular. Comparable efforts were exerted to test the effectiveness of blended learning in developing various language skills. The plethora of the results of such efforts (e.g. Chan, 2014; Fernández-Parra, 2016; Comas-Quinn, 2019; Ahmed and Ibrahim, 2019; Wu, 2019 and others) emphasized the paramount role that translation plays in the mainstream of language learning and teaching as well as in life in general. Some studies suggested methods and techniques for developing translation skills all through various educational stages, prominent among which were flipped instruction, M-learning, U-learning and blended learning. The current study adopted blended learning. Although there is a noticeable paucity in research on the use of blended learning in teaching literary translation to Saudi university students, it is useful in this respect to browse some of the research efforts exerted in this area. Chan (2014) aimed at designing a blended-learning project to develop a web-based library of interpreting-practice resources built on the course-management system Blackboard for Hong Kong interpretation students to practise outside the classroom. Based on a case-study in-class instruction of first-year undergraduates, data proved the effectiveness of the library in rendering its specified targets. Al-Bahnasawy and Aliweh (2016) conducted a study

the main purpose of which was to investigate the effect of a blended-learning programme on student-teachers' teaching skills of undergraduates. The programme aimed at integrating social-network tasks and face-to-face teaching activities. Twenty four participants from the Faculty of Education, Tanta University, Egypt, took part in the study. Data analysis revealed that blended learning had a significant effect on participants' teaching skills. Fernández-Parra (2016) explored the possibilities of expanding the usefulness of CAT tools from the translation curriculum into the foreign-language learning curriculum *via* integrating CAT tools into language learning as a means of teaching and working with languages in the digital era. The study attempted to 'recycle' the main components of CAT tools, such as the TM and the termbase, in order to support the various stages of the language-learning process. The researcher offered a list of suggested activities, which can be incorporated both in classroom learning and private study within the CAT environment. Gambari et al. (2017) investigated the effectiveness of blended-learning and e-learning modes of instruction in the performance of 30 undergraduates in Kwara State, Nigeria. It also determined whether the student performance would vary with gender. The study used three groups, two experimental (blended learning and e-learning) and a control group (traditional-teaching method). Findings showed that there was a significant difference in the performance of the three groups in favour of experimental-group 1. There was no significant difference in the performance of male and female undergraduates taught with blended learning. Lee and Huh (2018) aimed at designing a 20-week-long interpreting and translation certificate programme to teach basic translation and interpreting skills. Participants included trainees who were interested in acquiring such skills for their work or those who wanted to improve their language skills through T and I training. The course utilized online classes. Surveys and interviews with trainees and trainers offered insight into the effectiveness of the online T and I training course. Results indicated that trainees were generally satisfied with their online learning experiences and positively evaluated the efficacy of online translation training, whereas trainers had mixed views on online teaching and learning. Carreon (2018) explored the effect of Facebook as an integrated blended-learning tool. The study gathered data from 15 students for the

experimental group that was based on internet-access profile and online behavior towards integrated blended-learning mechanism and 15 students for the control group infused in a traditional approach. Findings illustrated that students who got involved in integrated blended-learning tool had a significantly greater achievement, proving that Facebook was an effective learning-teaching integration in blended learning. Shebansky (2018) investigated factors that most influence instructors to adopt blended learning in different ESL settings. The researcher surveyed 48 ESL instructors from three different ESL settings. Quantitative data pointed to similarities in the factors that most influenced the technology-adoption decisions of instructors across different ESL settings. Qualitative data suggested that adoption was primarily hampered by required time commitments and lack of technical support. Comas-Quinn (2019) attempted to incorporate technology-enabled online volunteer translation communities into language teaching in formal education. Translators in language and translation education were implemented, evaluated and refined to offer learners and teachers effective ways of engaging in this rich resource. Through taking part in these communities, 20 participants managed to develop many important skills, including digital, participatory and information literacy, alongside improving their language skills and acquiring knowledge of translation and subtitling. Despite the challenges, an open pedagogy that connected learners with communities outside the classroom offered valuable opportunities to engage learners in meaningful tasks that added value to society and related well to a project-based, situated and experiential pedagogy. Chan (2019) investigated 261 pre-service student-teachers participating in a teacher-education programme that was based on a blended-learning design to understand their perceptions of blended learning and examine how the interaction between traditional and constructivist conceptions influenced learning. Questionnaires and focus-group interviews were administered. Results indicated that the participants favoured face-to-face lectures over e-learning and exhibited strong preferences for traditional modes of learning. Nitzke, Tardel and Hansen-Schirra (2019) designed a "DigiLing" project, which aimed to teach and improve linguists' and translators' skills and knowledge of digitalization.

The intended audience to be targeted were trainers of translation students. For the purpose of competence acquisition, six online courses have been created which revolved around the field of digital linguistics, including localization in the digital age and post-editing machine translation. Fazal (2019) investigated the effects of blended learning, specifically using the station-rotation model, on the achievement of 413 6th-grade students. A t-test was conducted to determine the differences in the scores of students taught in traditional fully face-to-face classrooms and those taught in blended-learning classrooms. Findings showed that students instructed through blended learning scored higher on the MAP assessment. Blended learning was more effective in facilitating growth in learning as compared to meeting grade-level criteria. Wu (2019) investigated back-interpreting tasks, blended regularly into the undergraduate EFL classroom for 12 weeks. The study involved 43 high-intermediate to advanced learners working in pairs and interpreting the Chinese translation of English spoken discourse back into English. Qualitative data from focus-group interviews was analyzed to understand 12 lower-level speakers' and 11 higher-level speakers' perceptions of the task types. Results showed that the format of role plays primed learners to put themselves in the listeners' shoes by focusing on the gist and avoiding literal interpretation. Back-interpreting practice exposed learners' blind spots and enhanced their awareness of native-like expressions. Ilic (2019) attempted to introduce smartphones into a blended-learning context. The study employed a mixed- method longitudinal exploratory multiple case-study design. It collected qualitative and quantitative data on student interactions within a yearlong series of collaborative language-learning activities. The participants were undergraduate students studying English translation at a four-year private university in Tokyo. Results suggested that separate forms of data collected at similar frequencies and times and then triangulated provided an effective methodology for studying collaborative learners in a highly mobile context. This was an evidence for the inclusion of various data-collection cycles within a single mobile-learning research study. Wei and Chang (2020) compared blended learning with face-to-face and online learning. A questionnaire was administered to 653 students. Results showed that blended learning had a higher effectiveness than traditional learning and a higher effectiveness than online learning.

Through browsing pertinent studies, it looms legibly that the plethora of such studies agreed explicitly and implicitly that blended learning proved to be effective to some extent in some learning/teaching domains, one of which is translation. Translation skills, in this connection, render an integral language-learning role. Such skills cannot grow in isolation. They have to be looked after. Specialized and professional programmes have to be designed using suggested and innovative learning/teaching modalities. Most of the previous studies used only one modality of teaching; e.g. Facebook in Carreon (2018) and Smartphone in Ilic (2019). The current study used several modalities at the same time. Both face-to-face learning and e-learning in virtual classrooms were used. Student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, online individual learning and computer-enhanced learning were utilized. Digital libraries, virtual language labs, teleconferences, instant messages, blogs, LMSs, flipped classrooms, virtual studios, wikis and webinars were all employed. Modern Smartphone applications were all available for the students to choose the most suitable and feasible. Some researchers reached controversial results as per the effectiveness of blended learning. Chan (2019), for example, concluded that the participants in the experiment favoured face-to-face lectures over e-learning and exhibited strong preferences for traditional modes of learning. In light of such a state of controversy, the current study attempted to settle some of the dust raised in the area. Some of the previous researchers used a short-time limit for administering their studies. The current study tried to make its time span much more longer, approximately ten weeks. Some studies used a small number of students as a sample. Anthony (2019) used 6 teachers only. Carreon (2018) used 15 students. The current study used a sample of 140 students. Some researchers used as samples primary, middle and high-school students (e.g. Al-Fahadi et al. (2015), Ceylan and Elitok (2017), Fazal (2019) and others). No study, according to the survey conducted, has designed a model for developing literary-translation skills of Saudiuniversity students *via* blended learning. Thus, the current study tended to complete the cycle *via* focusing on literary-translation skills of those students. Some bold efforts were exerted by some researchers investigating the differences

between the two genders as a result of using blended learning (e.g. Gambari et al., 2017). The researchers pinpointed that there were no significant differences in learning due to the effect of gender. The current study went in the same vein of investigating the differences between males and females in literary-translation skills.

Statement of the Problem

In light of the aforementioned backdrop, the problem of the present study arose primarily from the low level of Saudi university students in literary-translation skills. This low level was signaled by students' scores on the pre-test. Such a *status quo* is not at all odd. Rather, it is a net result of the weak emphasis that translation in general receives in the courses taught as well as using methods and strategies in teaching and learning which are not in accord with the nature of that skill. According to Kodura (2019), translation gets excluded from the L2 classrooms. The state gets more aggravated when it comes to the literary type of translation (Ma, 2018; Parvaresh, Pirnajmuddin and Hesabi, 2019). This state gave the researcher the momentum to propose a blended-learning model and test its effectiveness in developing literary-translation skills of Saudi university students.

Rationale of the Study

In spite of the fact that translation is a pivotal skill in our multilingual age, it hasn't been given due care in Saudi universities. According to the review of related literature, no study has been conducted to design a blended-learning model for developing literary-translation skills of Saudi university students at the level chosen by the researcher. The researcher was motivated to conduct the present study by a crop of factors. First, students' low level in literary-translation skills was indicated by their mean scores in the pre-administration of the literary-translation test as well as their scores in the periodic administrations of monthly quizzes, mid-term exams and final exams in the literary-translation course. Second, an intensive and thorough review of pertinent literature in perspective revealed that there is a noticeable dearth in research conducted to develop literary-translation skills of Saudi university students. Third, recommendations of other researchers in the field (e.g. Fernández-Parra, 2016; Ma, 2018; Comas-Quinn, 2019; Ahmed and Ibrahim, 2019; Wu, 2019; Qin, 2019; Parvaresh et

al., 2019; Nurasma' and Jasber, 2020; Zhang and Zhu, 2020 and others), the plethora of which lay great emphasis on the significance of blended learning in general and translation in particular, suggest that more studies should be conducted to devise methods and techniques in order to enhance it. Fourth, the researcher's varied and wealthy experience in the field of English-language teaching for a long time pinpointed that translation in general and literary translation in particular don't receive the attention which they should have in Saudi universities. Methods and strategies used in teaching translation in general and literary translation in particular are not in harmony with the nature of such a skill and its sub-skills. Furthermore, only one course in literary translation is taught per the four-year programme. The course is so general that it hardly tackles specific characteristics of that academic discipline. The researcher got to realize abreast that more research is needed to devise methods, strategies and techniques that are apt to develop students' literary-translation skills. Fifth, *via* the researcher's experience in teaching translation courses for more than 22 years, he has come to notice that literary translation may be called students' ghost, since it requires a lot of expertise and specialized know-how. Ma (2018) and Parvaresh et al., (2019) gave boost to this idea. Sixth, once more, the researcher's experience – also varied and wealthy, yet in a differing domain – in the field of translating poetry, novel and short story put him in a proper position that enabled him, or rather urged him, to transfer his experience that he has accumulated for decades to his students in the form of the current model that has the intent of developing literary-translation skills.

Objectives of the Study

The study targeted fulfilling a two-fold objective:

1. **An instructional objective;** that is designing a blended-learning model intended to develop literary-translation skills of Saudi university students.

2. **A research objective;** that is testing the effectiveness of the suggested model in developing literary-translation skills of Saudi university students.

Questions of the Study

The study aspired at answering the following questions:-

1. To what extent is the proposed model effective in developing literary-translation skills of Saudi university students?

2. Are there any statistically significant differences between males and females in literary-translation skills as per the effect of using the suggested model?

Hypotheses of the Study

The study tested the following hypotheses:

1. There will be statistically significant differences at 0.01 significance level between the mean scores of the students of the experimental and control groups in the post-administration of the literary-translation test in favor of the experimental group.

2. There will be no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of males and females in the experimental group in the post-administration of the literary-translation test.

3. The suggested model will be effective in developing literary translation of Saudi university students.

Significance of the Study

The relative value of the current study emanates from the fact that it may lead to shed light on the vital role played by blended learning in enhancing translation skills in general and literary-translation skills in particular. The study may lead to change mechanical methods and strategies used in teaching translation. Moreover, the study presents a proposed blended-learning model aspiring at developing literary-translation skills of Saudi university students. The study offers also a standardized literary-translation test that proved to be valid and reliable. Furthermore, the study may help students, teachers and model designers *via* helping students to develop their literary-translation skills, guiding English teachers by improving their teaching practices of translation in general and literary translation in particular and providing model designers with what's needed to develop literary-translation skills of university students. Since no study has been conducted to propose such a type of model in Saudi Arabia for the stage chosen, the present study tried to fill in the gap in such a research area.

Limitations of the Study

The current study was conducted in Qassim, K.S.A. on a sample of 140 students selected randomly out of the Faculty of Science and Arts. Students were distributed equally between the experimental and control groups. Participants included both males and females. The experimental study lasted for 10 weeks, approximately 3 hours per week. The study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2019/2020.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in the present study:

Blended Learning: Blended learning is operationally defined as a type of learning that encompasses traditional face-to-face model and e-learning model, thus garnering benefits from both models in order to create a richer learning environment. It combines online and offline learning experiences. It involves collaborative and individual-learning situations. It includes structured and non-structured learning materials.

Literary-translation Skills: For the purpose of the present study, literary-translation skills are operationally defined as those skills that students have to acquire and develop in order to deal with translating poetry, short stories, novels, plays, essays, scripts, critiques, biographies and autobiographies, idioms and proverbs.

Methods of the Study

In conducting the study, the researcher made use of the descriptive method for reviewing pertinent literature and identifying the general design of the proposed model and the literary-translation test. The researcher used also the quasi-experimental method while conducting the experiment, administering the suggested model and the literary-translation test, analyzing data and interpreting results.

Experimental Design

The researcher used two groups: An experimental group the students of which studied the proposed blended-learning model and a control group the students of which had their regular classes.

Participants in the Study

Participants were selected randomly from level-eight students, Al-Qassim University, K.S.A, totaling 140. Students chosen have been studying translation for four years. They were divided randomly between the experimental and control groups including both males and females.

Instruments of the Study
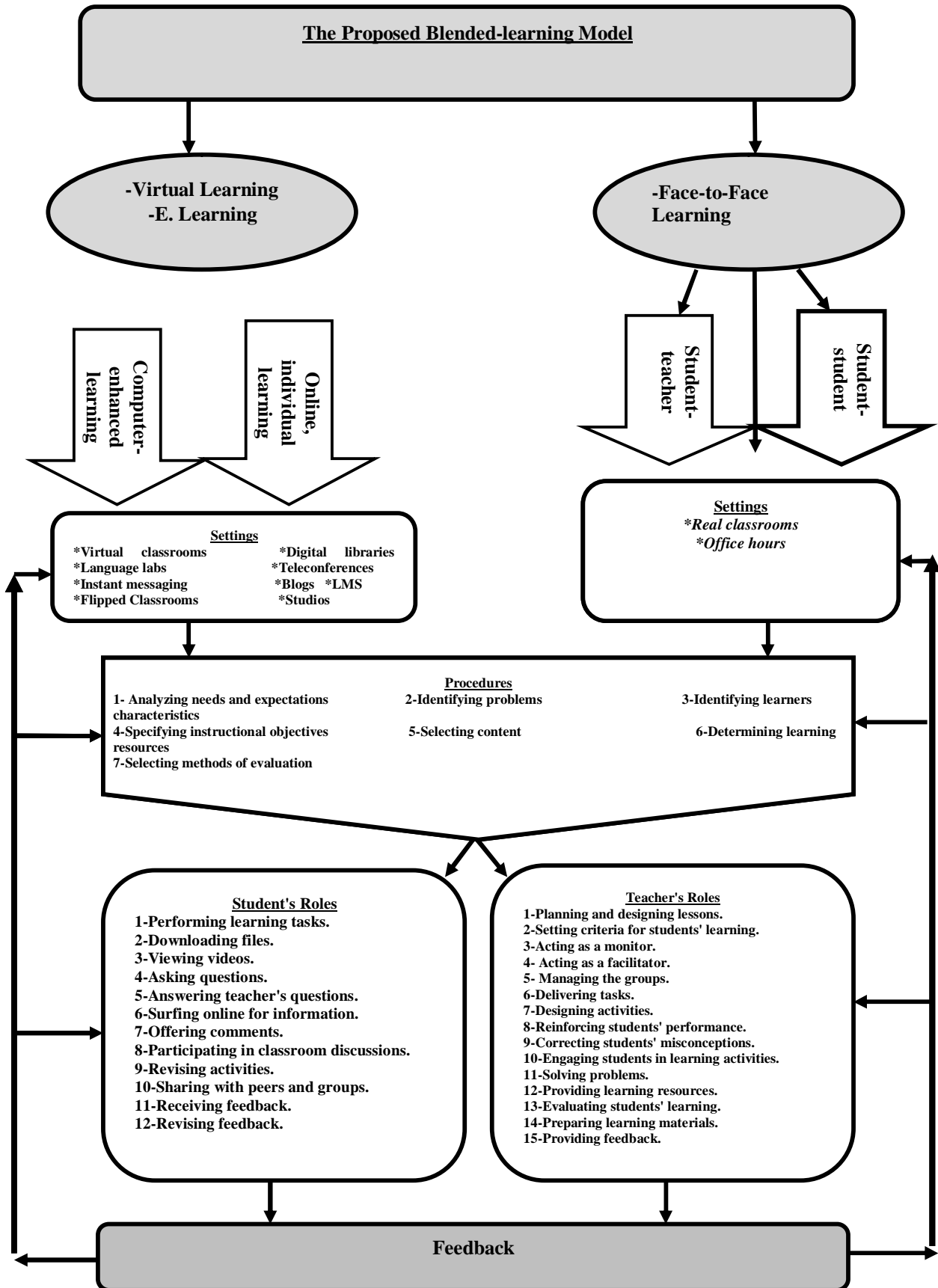
1. The Proposed Blended-learning Model

The proposed blended-learning model was designed in light of reviewing pertinent theories and pedagogical approaches of constructivism, behaviourism and cognitivism, related literature in the area of blended learning, developing literary-translation skills and model design, consulting some specialists in the field, making use of the researcher's long experience in the field of language teaching and determining literary-translation skills which are suitable for Saudi university students. The *blended-learning model hinges primarily upon the social-constructivism theory.* It is an offshoot of individualized instruction and the learner-centered mode of education. It is deeply rooted in computer-assisted learning, both synchronous and asynchronous. Such a hybrid type of learning aims at self-paced learning. It provides a multi-delivery mode of instruction. It attempts to frame teaching-learning processes that incorporate both face-to-face teaching and teaching supported by ICT. It combines direct-learning methods with e-learning methods simultaneously. It incorporates direct instruction, collaborative teaching and individualized computer-assisted teaching. It conflates traditional-learning environments led by teachers and technology-based e-learning environments. It combines the effectiveness and socialization opportunities of the classroom with the technologically enhanced active-learning possibilities of the online environment. While designing the model, the researcher put the following crucial points into consideration: First, requirements for fulfilling blended learning; second, objectives of the English department as specified by the university; third, objectives of the present study as specified previously by the researcher and fourth, emphasizing the student's role in learning a foreign language. The major goals of the model were to develop literary-translation skills of Saudi university students, give

momentum to the active role of literary translation in learning English, give vent students' role in the learning situation, and to make use of one of the avant-garde innovations in the field of English-language learning and teaching; that's blended learning. The major objectives of the model were to develop the following literary-translation skills: Translating poetry, translating short stories, translating novels, translating plays, translating essays, translating scripts, translating critiques, translating biographies and autobiographies, translating idioms and translating proverbs. The content consisted of 10 units intended to develop literary-translation skills of Saudi university students. The material has been gathered from different sources including textbooks and websites in addition to texts created by the researcher in his own literary works. In conducting the model, the researcher used a blended-learning strategy subsuming beneath it many teaching methods and techniques, such as think-pair-share, round-table, minute papers, student presentations, problem-based learning, challenge-based learning, inquiry-based learning, role play, jigsaw, brainstorming, working in pairs and groups, warm-ups, student projects, peer correction, whole-class discussions, teacher/peer feedback and feedforward, ... etc. The researcher made the utmost use of a bevy of activities, such as inaugurating the literary-translation club, giving students the chance to translate texts of their own choice, whole-class discussions, working in pairs and groups, peer editing, designing personal electronic sites and blogs to share and publish students' translations, venturing into collecting good products and producing them in the form of a book (both electronic and in print), ... etc. Three types of evaluation were used while conducting the model: Pre-evaluation before administering the suggested model in order to assess the *status quo* and achieve equivalence through administering the pretest, ongoing evaluation while administering the model *via* the literary-translation exercises following each lesson and post evaluation after administering the model *via* the posttest. The suggested model was submitted to a jury committee of specialists to show their opinions. The researcher put the juries' observations into consideration while preparing the final form of the model. Moreover, the researcher piloted the model prior to the real experiment. The pilot study lasted for two sessions totaling 6 hours. 11 students participated in it.

Figure (1)

The Proposed Blended-learning Model

The Proposed Blended-learning Model

-Virtual Learning
-E. Learning

-Face-to-Face Learning

Computer-enhanced learning

Online, individual learning

Student-teacher

Student-student

Settings
*Virtual classrooms   *Digital libraries
*Language labs   *Teleconferences
*Instant messaging   *Blogs   *LMS
*Flipped Classrooms   *Studios

Settings
*Real classrooms
*Office hours

Procedures
1- Analyzing needs and expectations characteristics   2-Identifying problems   3-Identifying learners

4-Specifying instructional objectives resources   5-Selecting content   6-Determining learning

7-Selecting methods of evaluation

Student's Roles
1-Performing learning tasks.
2-Downloading files.
3-Viewing videos.
4-Asking questions.
5-Answering teacher's questions.
6-Surfing online for information.
7-Offering comments.
8-Participating in classroom discussions.
9-Revising activities.
10-Sharing with peers and groups.
11-Receiving feedback.
12-Revising feedback.

Teacher's Roles
1-Planning and designing lessons.
2-Setting criteria for students' learning.
3-Acting as a monitor.
4- Acting as a facilitator.
5- Managing the groups.
6-Delivering tasks.
7-Designing activities.
8-Reinforcing students' performance.
9-Correcting students' misconceptions.
10-Engaging students in learning activities.
11-Solving problems.
12-Providing learning resources.
13-Evaluating students' learning.
14-Preparing learning materials.
15-Providing feedback.

Feedback

2. The Literary-translation Test

The main intent of the test was to assess literary-translation skills of Saudi university students. It was administered as a pre-post test in order to determine the effectiveness of the proposed model. The test aimed at assessing students' skills in translating poetry, short stories, novels, plays, essays, scripts, critiques, biographies and autobiographies, idioms and proverbs. The researcher designed the test in light of the goals, objectives and skills previously specified. It comprised 20 questions. The test was submitted to a jury committee of specialists in curricula, instruction, translation and linguistics to show their opinions. The jury members agreed upon the validity of the test. Thus, content validity was assured. Moreover, the researcher proved self validity of the test which reached 0.92. The researcher used the test-retest method with a time span of 15 days. Reliability coefficient reached 0.84. Facility, difficulty and discrimination indices were computed. They were 0.75, 0.25 and 0.18, respectively. The researcher administered the test to a pilot sample of 12 students not taking part in the real experiment. The purpose was to make sure of the suitability of the test, calculate the mean time needed, compute reliability and detect problems that might arise while administering the test.

Procedures

Teaching procedures for the experimental group went as follows:

1. *Via* the analysis of the results of the pre-test, the researcher managed to analyze students' needs as per literary-translation skills. General problems were identified. Students' characteristics and potentialities were detected. All of these matters were put into consideration while selecting the content and implementing it in teaching.

2. An orientation session was held in order to acquaint students with the instructional objectives of the study as well as the proposed model. They were given a general idea about the content to be studied, the method to be followed, the learning resources to be offered, the activities to be practiced, as well as the methods of evaluation to be used.

3. Each session used to be divided into two parts; one to be conducted face to face and another to be conducted virtually.

a) The former used to take place within the classroom limits and to be supplemented if necessary during office hours. It depended on real-life student-student and student-teacher interaction. The researcher initiated each part of the session with a theoretical background pertaining to the skill(s) to be tackled, the problems that students may encounter, strategies for dealing with such problems, ... etc. Some literary terminologies were given each time with their equivalent translations. The assigned text was offered to the students. A general idea was offered about it, illustrating its genre, and how to deal with it. Sometimes, a general idea about the literary work as a whole was offered if the assigned text was a mere extract or quotation. Students were drilled in how to deal with new lexis and unfamiliar structures. The skill to be exercised was emphasized *via* using it in various textual contexts with varying degrees of difficulty. When the text was clear, it was divided into segments. Tasks were assigned. Pairs and groups (up to five) used to cooperate together in order to find the most suitable rendition of the text. Different answers were exchanged and evaluated. The researcher used to interfere in cases of vital errors. Students resorted to the researcher so frequently whenever a grammatical, lexical, semantic, ... etc. problem overwhelmed them. The researcher was always ready for remedy and feedback. When the segments of the text were satisfactorily dealt with, they were put together in order to reach a uniform text in the target language. These were submitted to the researcher in order to be revised and scored. The best text was announced during the second session. Bonus was offered to the winner.

b) The latter was to be rendered virtually as a continuation. Students were asked to go through a similar text of the same genre, encompassing the same skills practiced formerly, but *via* electronic devices out of the classroom limits. Students were divided into groups out of their own choices in order to ensure familiarity and homogeneity in each group. Each group chose a name. Each student in the group was asked to use his/her real name. Individual roles were exchanged within each group every session. Blackboard was a mandatory choice for all groups in order to meet unanimously outside the classroom. The choice of other devices was left to the groups and to individual students. Students got a passion for Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, You-Tube, e-mails ... etc. and so the researcher allowed them to choose. He was a

member in each group in order to facilitate, observe and administer all at the same time. Using Blackboard aided by smart-phone applications helped the researcher and students create virtual classrooms anywhere and at any time, to visit digital libraries, use virtual language labs, hold teleconferences, exchange instant messages, create blogs, send and receive assignments, give proper feedback, initiate webinars, get a share in discussion forums, ... etc. The chosen text was illustrated in the virtual classroom. Skills were elucidated theoretically first, then in practice. Vocabulary and structures were clarified in manners that suited each context. Tasks were assigned. Segments of the text were distributed among students. Different answers were exchanged and evaluated. Supplementary material was posted to students. Digital dictionaries were accessed. Electronic sites were browsed for additional data. Virtual classrooms used to overcome spatial and temporal limitations. Quizzes and short tests were sent to students over Question Mark. The best target text was announced during the second session. Bonus was offered to the winner.

4. Throughout the two halves of each session, the real-classroom session and the virtual session, students' roles were determined from the very beginning. Students were expected to perform translation tasks as required, download files posted by the researcher, ask questions whenever necessary, answer the researcher's questions when posed, surf online for information if needed, offer comments on others' answers, participate in classroom discussions, share with peers and groups, receive feedback from the researcher and other students, revise their answers in light of the feedback offered by the researcher and other students, ... etc. As for the

researcher's role, he was expected from the very beginning to plan and design translation tasks, set objectives and criteria for the students, select the suitable content, act as a monitor and facilitator, manage the groups, deliver and assign tasks, design suitable activities for each skill, reinforce students' performance, correct students' mistakes, engage students in translation activities, detect and solve problems, provide needed resources, evaluate students' progress, prepare supplementary materials, provide needed feedback, ... etc.

5- When the assigned time was over and the allotted content was covered, the post-test was administered.

As for the control group, only real classrooms were used. Each 3-hour session used to be spent in class. Only available customary classroom facilities were used. Translated texts used to be rendered on paper. The researcher used to collect these papers each session for revision and scoring. Students had their regular course through regular classroom procedures. All of the students had the same class *via* the same textbook at the same time in the same place, dealing with one text all at the same time.

Results of the Study

The First Hypothesis

Concerning the first hypothesis which states that "there will be statistically significant differences at 0.01 significance level between the mean scores of the students of the experimental and control groups in the post-administration of the literary-translation test in favour of the experimental group", the researcher used t. test as follows:

Table (1)

Terminal Means, Standard Deviations and t. Test Results for the Scores of the Two Groups in the Post Administration of the Test

Group	Number	Means	Standard Deviations	Difference between Means	Free Score	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Level of Significance
Exp.	70	32.43	5.09	16.87	138	21.08	2.61	0.01
Con.	70	15.56	4.36					

From the above table, it may be noticed that there are statistically significant differences at 0.01 significance level between the mean scores of the students of the experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental group. In this way, the

first hypothesis of the study was accepted. Attempting to interpret this result, the researcher assumes that the proposed model proved to be effective. First of all, the design of the model and its inherent components focused primarily on

blending face-to-face learning with virtual learning and e-learning. Face-to-face learning provided opportunities for student-student interaction as well as student-teacher interaction. As for virtual learning and e-learning, opportunities were offered for computer-enhanced learning, online learning and individualized learning. Second, the setting in the suggested model encompassed real classrooms which students are used to. Office hours were made very good use of. These were blended with e-learning settings encompassing virtual classrooms, digital libraries, language labs, teleconferences, instant messaging, blogs, LMSs, flipped classrooms, studios, ... etc. Third, procedures of the suggested model went so smoothly and consistently, analyzing needs and expectations, identifying problems, identifying learners' characteristics, specifying instructional objectives, selecting content, determining learning resources, selecting methods of evaluation, ... etc. Such procedures were made clear for students from the very beginning. Fourth, the model specified the student's role from the start. Students were supposed to perform learning tasks, download files, view videos, ask questions, answer teacher's questions, surf online for information, offer comments, participate in classroom discussions, revise activities, share with peers and groups, receive feedback and revise feedback. Fifth, the model, as well, specified the teacher's role. The teacher was supposed to plan and design lessons, set criteria for students' learning, be a monitor and facilitator, manage the groups, deliver tasks, design activities, reinforce students' performance, correct students' misconceptions, engage students in learning activities, solve problems, provide learning resources, evaluate students' learning, prepare learning materials and provide feedback. Moreover, the model offered feedback that played a cyclical role, since it helped detect gaps in all phases of the model. This provided an opportunity for improvement and enhancement. As well, the active role of the students in blended learning may be assumed to have led the teacher to view each student as unique in his/her own right. In blended-learning situations, similarities got diminished to the barest minimum. Differences came to give boost to diverse participations. Furthermore, variety in learning/teaching modes put the students in a proper position to make the best use of the suggested model for the purpose of developing literary-translation skills, which is the main target of the present study. Students' awareness of these

skills in advance provided them with opportunities to get ready for such a confrontation between them and the arduous tasks of literary translation. Moreover, providing students with the objectives of each lesson may be said to have upgraded their latent potentialities beforehand as a manner of getting ready. This, in coordination with the model proposed in the present study aided by its main methods and techniques, can be said to have placed the students in a better position to tackle literary-translation skills. In addition, encouraging students to design their own personal blogs and electronic sites and publish their own good translations on them had a magic effect on students. Furthermore, students were more than under a spell when the researcher promised them that some of the best translations will be published either electronically or in print. Moreover, the researcher's roaming throughout every phase of every lesson with the students played a gigantic role in this juncture. In an atmosphere that was similar to a workshop, the classes used to go. Instant advice was offered. Immediate help was provided. On-the-spot feedback was available. The researcher used to correct and score students' answers. Mistakes were discussed in the next session. Students liked to keep portfolios of their work to self-assess themselves every now and then. Such a chance offered to the experimental-group students *via* the proposed blended-learning model may be said to have put those students in a proper position to deal with literary-translation skills in a different manner. Individualizing the process of learning is a password in this respect. Each student got the feeling that s/he was the focus of the whole process. Each was encouraged to get out the best. Barriers were eradicated. An atmosphere all of help and readiness pervaded. The researcher was always at hand, ready for any intervention. As for the control-group students, they did not study the suggested model. Instead, they had their regular courses using the regular method. As a result, it may be said that those students dealt with literary-translation skills in the same conventional way. They may be said to have been just exerting their efforts to come up with something off-hand in order to fulfill the requirements encountered in the test. The researcher assumes that methods and strategies utilized by the majority of English teachers when teaching translation in general and literary translation in particular may provide a key answer in this respect. Such methods and strategies may be responsible for the low level of students in

literary-translation skills. Out of the researcher's long and wide experience in EFL, he has noticed that teaching translation in general proceeds through certain predetermined steps which teachers (novice as well as old-hand) have become accustomed to, which is the rub. Such stagnated procedures may be said to be at odd with the nature of translation. As long as the researcher can remember his years of study, translation classes used to be consecrated comprehensively to practicing translation. Long texts used to be selected by the instructor. Answers used to be exchanged by students. In most cases, one model translation was shared by all students. One of such memorized translations used to be targeted in the exams. For sure, most, if not all, answers would be just replicas. From a theoretical and pedagogical point of view, this case of teaching translation used to put the cart first; that's before the horse. As long as the researcher can remember, no instructor used to start the course upgrading the ways to translation as per its theories, approaches, types, problems and solutions. We, as students, used to grapple with the text trying to figure out an easy and safe way to deal with it away from such theoretical assumptions that we rarely dealt with. If the case is so with translation in general, it will be more morbid when it comes to literary translation, since it is one of the most technical and

sophisticated disciplines that require certain knacks and techniques to tackle. In order to deal with a certain literary text, especially poetic ones, one, that's the translator, has to get armed with certain skills that can never be acquired or developed by chance. Throughout the researcher's examination of a lot of students' written translations of literary texts, he has come upon the miserable Cinderella status of literary-translation skills in universities. A literary text is dealt with in the same way as a scientific, legal or political text. Students rarely feel the difference between these texts. Whenever a literary text is looked at in this mechanical way, it is not amazing at all that all of its aesthetics will be lost. Its beauty will evaporate. Its meaning will disappear behind a veil of words and sentences. It will have a mechanical outlook that lacks vividness and life. Whenever the students come to this poor concept of literary translation, it is not surprising at all to reach the result of the current hypothesis.

The Second Hypothesis

Concerning the second hypothesis which states that "there will be no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of males and females in the experimental group in the post-administration of the literary-translation test", the researcher used t. test as follows:

Table (2)

Terminal Means, Standard Deviations and t. Test Results for the Scores of Males and Females in the Experimental Group in the Post-administration of the Test

Gender	Number	Means	Standard Deviations	Difference between Means	Free Score	C. t	T. t	Level of Significance
Males	35	32.86	3.5	0.68	68	0.59	2.65	Insig.
Females	35	32.18	5.7					

It can be observed from the above table that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of males and females in the experimental group in the post-administration of the test. This provides a proof for accepting the second hypothesis. This result may indicate that gender difference did not render difference in literary-translation skills. Such skills may be said to hinge primarily upon the coordination of other cognitive, psychological, technical, aesthetic and methodological variables that may not be affected by gender difference. Since information processing

and cognitive processes may be similar in males and females, literary-translation skills may be affected by other factors rather than difference in gender. Some bold efforts were exerted by some researchers investigating the differences between the two genders. Nasr (2010) and Gambari et al. (2017) are just two of them. The researchers pinpointed that there were no significant differences due to the effect of gender. The current researcher seizes the opportunity to call other researchers to further investigate this area.

The Third Hypothesis

Concerning the third hypothesis which states that "the suggested model will be effective in developing literary-translation skkills of Saudi university students", the researcher used Blake's formula as follows.

Table (3)

Ratio of Gain

Test	N	X	Total Test Score	Gain
Pre-	70	15.65	40	1.13
Post-	70	32.43		

It is obvious from the above table that the ratio of gain lies within the range defined by Blake which is (1-2). This indicates the effectiveness of the model in rendering what it was intended for. The effectiveness of the model may be attributed to a crop of reasons: First, following a scientific and accurate method in its design; second, identifying literary-translation skills needed by students beforehand; third, presenting the objectives of each lesson to the students beforehand; fourth, enriching the model with various activities; fifth, using various suggested strategies in teaching the model; sixth, using different kinds of teaching aids which helped render the model more exciting; seventh, using various kinds of evaluation before, during and after teaching the model and eighth, types of interaction and inherent relations among the students and between the students and the researcher which may be said to have given momentum for students' latent potentialities. Moreover, the proposed model made good use of the advantages of both face-to-face learning and e-learning in virtual environments.

Discussion and Conclusions

As demonstrated formerly, statistical analyses of the data indicated palpably that the proposed model proved to be effective in developing literary-translation skills. Students' low level in literary-translation skills as evidenced in the performance of the control group after administering the model may be attributed to a number of reasons, the most prominent among which is the inappropriate position translation in general and literary translation in particular hold in learning/teaching processes and traditions. It may be assumed that the strategies of teaching translation in general, and literary translation in particular, require good planning, effective presentation, demonstration and adequate practice. In the backdrop of the main drawbacks identified in the traditional methods of teaching translation and based on the main findings of research in modern methods and strategies of teaching translation, the present model was suggested making use of blended learning to find some remedy for the poor *status quo*. As well, setting instructional objectives, designing a coherent instructional content, devising diverse and motivating activities, creating an environment of self-respect and mutual rapport, using differing types of assessment, establishing a culture for blended learning, managing classroom procedures, communicating with all students, engaging students in learning, demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness, providing feedback and using discussion techniques all can be said to have contributed significantly to the success of the proposed blended-learning model. In terms of traditional methods of teaching, blended learning can be assumed to have provided a full scope for traditional classroom teaching where students get ample time to interact with the teacher. Face-to-face interaction proved to be highly motivating for both the teacher and students and added a human touch to the learning/teaching process. Moreover, students practiced many life skills and social values in non-formal interaction with their peer groups. This may be said to have widened their outlook and enriched their knowledge. This helped in meeting the cognitive as well as the social objectives. Blended learning also proved to be effective with students who don't get benefits from classroom teaching as they require personal guidance and complete attention. Such students may choose the option of e-tuition that is meeting a private tutor and getting personal guidance. Students can get a feeling of real life while studying. Blended learning can make the difficult concepts and phenomena concrete for them. In blended learning, students get ample time to interact with each other. They can interact inside college campus and also in virtual space. Due to

variety of experience in blended-learning situations, students in the current study got a wide exposure to language and their content knowledge got enriched. They got to see various new dimensions of the content and gain practical useful knowledge. As for the teacher in blended learning, he always plays a different role from the traditional role of a teacher in classroom. In addition, he acts as a motivator, a resource person, an organizer, a developer, a guide, ... etc. A major advantage of blended learning in the current experiment was the online delivery of instructional content with the best features of classroom interaction and live instruction to personalize learning in ways that allowed thoughtful reflection and differentiated instruction across a diverse group of learners. Blended learning may be said to have changed the pattern of learning from teacher-centered to the learner-centered learning. It balanced learner's learning independence. Moreover, it motivated learners to achieve learning discipline. Enabling blends provided more flexibility to the learners and gave them the same opportunities for learning experience, but through a different modality. In addition, blended learning can be assumed to have made it possible for the content to be adjusted in real time based on students' activity. Such a kind of flexibility of pacing and content gave the teacher the potential to differentiate learning opportunities and experience for all students. When the traditional and online learning formats were combined together, they created a comprehensive learning-experience situation. Such a transition of educational system created flexibility that allowed students to progress to master skills at their own pace, time and place. Blended learning may be said to have created opportunities for students to explore course topics, both inside and outside the classroom learning situation. In this juncture, the researcher can invoke a very crucial point, a psychological one this time. He has noticed that introvert students needed online learning tools more than others. This is a credit for blended learning. Furthermore, providing feedback to each student can be said to have played a paramount role in the positive results of the present study. Blended learning provided an additional flexibility to the learners *via* attempting to provide the same opportunities or learning experience, but through a different modality. Results of the current study are in line with those reached by Al-Bahnasawy and Aliweh (2016), Gambari et al. (2017), Carreon

(2018), Comas-Quinn (2019), Ilic (2019), Wei and Chang (2020), and others.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

In light of what has been documented in the current study, the researcher recommended that:

1. Modern technological innovations should be implemented in teaching translation. Effectiveness of such devices has been empirically detected by various researchers.

2. Blended learning should be implemented as an integral part of the methods and strategies used in language classrooms.

3. Translation in general, and literary translation in particular, should be dealt with in a manner so far from mechanical in order to be able to bring forth students' latent potentialities.

4. Literary-translation courses should be tailored according to skills previously specified. Checklists and questionnaires should be administered beforehand in order to enable students to have a say in determining the skills that they need as well as the content to be studied in order to actualize these skills.

5. Modern teaching methods should be used in order to eradicate traditional ones and eliminate routine and boredom that used to overwhelm translation classrooms.

6. Theory and practice should be amalgamated in literary-translation classrooms, so that students can be fully well-equipped when it comes to confront a text in translation. Integrating theory and practice in the same lesson can be feasibly rendered *via* modern technology.

7. Following the same footsteps of the current study, the researcher thinks that more studies are needed to:

-Investigate the effect of other modern technological innovations, especially social media, on developing certain language skills.

-Design similar models using different kinds of strategies for developing translation in general and literary-translation skills in particular at different levels.

-Replicate the suggested model for other educational stages.

-Further investigate the effect of gender difference on (literary-translation skills).

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