

From Chalkboard to Cloud: A Blended Learning Pedagogy for Overcoming Challenges in the Iraqi EFL Classroom

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Abstract

This paper investigates the challenge of how Iraqi English as Foreign Language (EFL) instructors can transition from traditional teacher-centered pedagogy to blended learning while accommodating conceptual constrain. The study was conceptual in design drawing on a systematic review of literature on traditional EFL pedagogy, blended learning theory and the Iraqi educational context. Key Findings indicate that while traditional methods retain their strength in teaching grammar and preparing students for formal examinations, they fail to build communicative competence and learner autonomy. Conversely, adapting blended learning to local infrastructure and realities offers a viable for pedagogical innovation. The preposed "From Chalkboard to Cloud" framework is built on four pillars: flipped interaction, cloud -based sources, online learning channel and data-informed instruction. This model provides grounded solutions to Iraqi realities. The implications of these findings carry significant for EFL practitioners , curriculum development and educational policy in Iraq and similar under-resourced contexts, underscoring the need for empirical validation of blended learning models adapted to such settings.

Keywords: Blended learning, Iraqi EFL, Teacher-centered pedagogy, Communicative Competence, Flipped classrooms.

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الملخص

من السبورة إلى السحابة: نحو منهجية تعليمية مدمجة لتجاوز التحديات في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في العراق تبحث هذه المقالة في التحول التربوي من التعليم التقليدي المتمركز حول المعلم إلى نماذج التعلم المدمج في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية في العراق. في حين تظهر الأساليب التقليدية فعالية في رفع درجات الاختبارات وتوفير تعليم منظم للقواعد اللغوية، فإنها تُظهر قيودًا كبيرة في تطوير الكفاءة التواصلية والاستقلالية التعليمية والمشاركة المستدامة للمتعلمين. يمثل السياق التعليمي العراقي تحديات فريدة تشمل أحجام الصفوف الكبيرة، وضغط الاختبارات، والقبود البنوية التحتية، ولكنه يوفر أيضًا فرصًا من خلال ارتفاع نسبة استخدام الهواتف المحمولة ووجود طلاب ملمين رقميًا. بالاستناد إلى نظريات التعلم البنائية والاتصالية، تقترح هذه المقالة إطارًا للتعلم المدمج يستجيب للسياق المحلي تحت عنوان "من السبورة إلى السحابة". يرتكز هذا الإطار على أربع ركائز تربوية: نموذج التفاعل المقلوب، والسحابة كمصدر ديناميكي للموارد، وتعزيز مجتمعات التعلم عبر الإنترنت، والتعليم الوجيه المستند إلى تحليل بيانات الطلاب. تتناول المقالة تحديات التنفيذ بما في ذلك الفجوة الرقمية، واحتياجات التطوير المهني للمدرسين، والقبول الثقافي، مقدمة حلولًا عملية تستند إلى واقع السياق العراقي. الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم المدمج، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في العراق، التربية المتمحورة حول المعلم، الكفاءة التواصلية، تكنولوجيا التعليم، الصف المقلوب، التعليم العالي.

1. Introduction, Problem, Purpose, and Contribution

1.1 The problem of the Study and Its Significance

The Iraqi English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom is characterized by what may be called as “Chalkboard” model of instruction. This pedagogical approach is defined by its teacher-centered nature, over-reliance on grammar-translation methodologies, and reliance on memorization as the main path to language acquisition. In this space, the teacher functions as the sole authoritative source of knowledge for the students who become passive participants. Iraqi schools are mostly overcrowded and poorly equipped, and examination focused. Those classes hold on to traditional ways for decades.

The overarching objectives of acquiring English in Iraq is not limited to passing qualifying tests (Mohammed & Al-Bakri, 2022). With the development of modern global viewpoint, obtaining communicative competence is required by learners. Furthermore, adaptation to present-day world demands intellectual reasoning and self-reliant lifelong learning. Studying and official correspondence in Iraq, as well as accessing digital resources, all require the English language for all graduates. The shift indicates a sharp break from entrenched learning practices at the front of the room and stresses learners and society.

1.2 Aims of the study

This research aims to investigate the implications of the accelerated adaptation of technology in the higher education context following COVID 19 crisis. This dramatical change has affected Iraqi society and reshaped how learning and teaching practices are organized. The challenges remain evident as such as the reliability of electricity supply, a lack of broadband infrastructure and approximately a chasm separating access to digital devices (Engel et al., 2023; Imran et al., 2023; Turnbull et al., 2021). Most teachers haven't received professional preparation for teaching with technology. Conversely, there aren't a lot of chances. University students are, for the most part, digital natives who carry smart phones. Since the beginning of the pandemic, all but a few learners should have had at least some experience with online learning platforms.

There is, however, a clear research gap. While many studies have examined the blended learning process in many novel and familiar situations, few of them presented models for the Iraqi academic context. The existing literature has yet to convincingly explore this confluence of cultural expectations, infrastructural limitations and classroom realities in Iraq. Additionally, a few reflections on how to make the other realist types of pedagogical innovation more embedded in traditional ones.

1.3 Limits of Study and Value

This study acknowledges several limitations. As a conceptual paper, the framework it presents, “From Chalkboard to Cloud,” has not yet tested in Iraq empirically. Besides, the Iraqi EFL context encompasses various internal variations. It is practically challenging to imply a single framework of a teaching model. practical framework described as “From Chalkboard to Cloud” make three main contributions: providing a practical theory-informed model of educators, identify challenges and possible solutions in specific

context, and propose a research agenda move towards systematically validating blended learning within resource-limited EFL contexts.

2. Literature review

2.1 Defining Blended Learning

Blended learning refers to a combination of class instruction and online learning activities. It may include a variety of modalities, strategies, and designs that is either pedagogically or student-centered (Hrastinski, 2019). Garrison & Vaughan (2008, p.5) defined blended learning as “the thoughtful fusion of face-to-face and online learning experiences”. It is not simply sitting in traditional teaching ahead of technology. It combines online preparation and class practices.

Teachers decide what is appropriate for a class setting and what works better online. Campus learning is engagement, real-time feedback and community. Researchers usually say that online education is more flexible and self-reflective than classroom-based instruction.

2.2 Theoretical Basis for Blended Learning

Blended learning finds theoretical support in multiple corresponding frameworks.

Constructivism

At the core of this insight is a simple observation: You don't learn from passively received information, you create knowledge through active social engagement. The social constructivism of Vygotsky highlights that development happens in social contexts and through the mediation by language and cultural tools our thinking is shaped (Vygotsky, 1978, 2024).

Connectivism

Connectives view learning as participation and involvement in a network of connections, information, openness and relationships. These networks take different shapes: social, institutional or technological. This concept was introduced by George Siemens and Stephen Downes (2008). The underlying premise is knowledge is built and shared across various environments. Thus, learning improves through dynamic connections over time.

Self-Determination Theory

Deci and Ryan (2000) identify autonomy, competence, and relatedness as three needs that can drive motivation. Blended learning supports each one. Choice and pacing (autonomy) with online tasks. Digital tools provide feedback (competence). Collaboration builds relationships (relatedness) also online and in person.

2.3 The “Chalkboard” in Empirical Literature: A Holistic Perspective on Conventional Pedagogy

To appreciate the transition from chalkboard to cloud, it is first necessary to understand model of education that has long modeled Iraqi classrooms and similar contexts. The literature is a mixed picture. Transmission-based, traditional pedagogy has demonstrated advantages. Likewise its limitations are demonstrated and documented, especially when considering engagement and stability. Taken together these limitations necessitate adopting a hybrid approach. A summary of this evidence is listed in table 1

What it Does well	Where it falls short
Helps with exams and grades: Students often gets higher grades on academic tests, especially in English (Şan et al., 2020).	Weak in real communication: Doesn't give enough practice in speaking, listening, or authentic interaction (Yassin et al., 2024; Hashim, 2025).
Strong on rules and accuracy: excellent teaching grammar and vocabulary in a clear, systematic way (Hashim, 2025; Mahajan, 2025).	Students become passive: Learners often lose motivation, don't participate much, and develop fewer positive attitudes (Üzum & Özbek, 2024; Shaikh et al., 2023).
Quick test score gains: In some cases, results match modern methods in the short term (Busa & Chung, 2024).	Skills aren't balanced: Reading and writing dominate. Listening and speaking are underdeveloped (Yassin et al., 2024; Hashim, 2025).
Works in big, exam-focused classes: Provides structure and a clear language model that fits traditional classrooms (Shaikh et al., 2023; Farooqui et al., 2024).	Doesn't fit today's world: Struggles in tech-rich or multilingual settings; blended approaches are better (Öliyeva, 2025; Gryshkova, 2025).

Conventional teaching methods are good for learning rules and passing exams. But they don't go far enough in developing authentic communication skills, learner autonomy or motivation." Educators agree that the way forward is to combine traditional strengths with modern, interactive strategies. In other words, a hybrid model provides students with both the structure that they need for accuracy and the freedom they need to communicate authentically.

Strengths of traditional Instruction "Chalkboard"

Traditional methods continue to offer advantages in digital age. It is still relevant to the learning environment in Iraq; however, this paper advocates an optimization of technology. Research highlights several key strengths:

Improved Test Scores: The strongest argument for traditional methods is improving test performance. Evidence from Turkish research confirms that higher achievement among students in a teacher-led, structured classes (Şan et al., 2020).

Accuracy and Grammar: The traditional approach helps students in developing grammar and vocabulary rules. The teaching here is inductive. It also emphasizes accuracy in writing skills (Hashim, 2025; Mahajan, 2025). Traditional approach according to this view supports steady progress in the learning process.

Short-Term Performance: Teacher- led classrooms sometimes yield stronger short-term measurable outcomes. One study contrasted "traditional," teacher-fronted instruction with

student-centered “jigsaw” activities in TOEIC reading session. Both groups demonstrate a significant improvement. In retrospect, the final test scores (Busa & Chung, 2024) were rather similar.

Managing Large Classrooms: In large classroom settings structure is essential. In exam-focused classrooms, such as Iraq and Pakistan, teachers are assured that if there are structure and order in the learning environment then they can control learning. Examination demands, the pressure, large halls settings and structured routines help maintain order in the classroom (Shaikh et al., 2023; Farooqui et al., 2024).

Limitations of Traditional Instruction

Despite these strengths, many studies raised concerns about traditional models. When taken solely, this model does not improve the four language skills necessary to optimize language in real communication. It is also not particularly conducive to learner autonomy and engagement.

Poor communication skills: Grammar-based and translation-oriented approaches focus mainly on rules and writing. Actual conversation involving listening and speaking is neglected. Consequently, there has been less use of English in authentic settings (Yassin et al., 2024; Hashim, 2025; Stepanechko, 2022; Shaikh et al., 2023).

Passive learners: Teacher-centered lessons rely on lectures and recitations. Students become mostly passive listeners. Recent studies show this teaching strategy negatively affect students’ participation and engagement (Yassin et al. (2024), Üzum and Özbek (2024) Shaikh et al. (2023)

Affective challenges: In teacher-centered classrooms, learners show lower self-esteem and are less satisfied. As such, techniques that take a more learner-centered approach, like cooperative work and project-work, lower anxiety in learners and boost attitudes and motivation towards learning much better than does grammar-translation (Üzum & Özbek, 2024; Mosa, 2023).

Mismatch with current educational demands: Traditional methods are inadequate for today’s multilingual digital classrooms. Most learners prefer technology supported classes. Recent studies confirm the necessity of hybrid and blended approaches (Öliyeva, 2025; Gryshkova, 2025; Mahajan, 2025).

A New Consensus to Help undergird Blended Learning

Pedagogy should work as terms based so rules, accomplish in the school but not enough to maintain communication, autonomy and motivation (Yassin et al., 2024; Hashim, 2025; Şan et al., 2020; Mosa, 2023; Stepanechko, 2022; Mahajan, 2023). Solution is not to leave chalkboard, but rather to update the way instructors run it.

Researchers have been increasingly recommending blended models that preserve elements linked to meaningful teaching practices while infusing these communicative, task-based and more learner-centered practices (Guelly, 2025; Hashim, 2025; Gryshkova, 2025; Gjoni & Dibra, 2025; Mahajan, 2025; Shaikh et al., 2023). It is this mixed approach that will shape the “From Chalkboard to Cloud” pedagogy of this paper.

2.4 Blended learning in EFL: Strengths and Constraints

Strengths

High-quality blended learning becomes an important model in English language teaching. Research highlights several key strengths. It supports flexibility. Graham (2006) states that the learners retrieve the materials whenever they want and from any place. Blended learning provides authentic content. The internet opens a world of language and culture beyond the textbook to students. The blended methods also provide customized learning experiences. Students can use online drills to practice harder concepts for longer. The blended approach leads students to take responsibility for their learning process (Hockly, 2018). Finally, Online platforms provide the teachers with data and insight on students' performance and engagement.

Constraints

Despite its potential, the blended poses some challenges. The first and foremost is the digital divide. In many regions, the internet connection is not reliable as well as students' devices (Warschauer, 2003). At the same time, the teacher training is critical, especially in Iraqi atmosphere. The younger generation is familiar with technology, and in some cases, more than older generation. Without sufficient preparation, technology stays as alternative rather than a means of transformation (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008).

Student expectations may influence implementation. Those who are accustomed to traditional models may resist this model and pose a challenge.

Finally, design complexity matters. The offline and online elements would also be poorly coordinated at times. This leads to overwhelming students and increasing the workload for them.

3. The EFL Contest: Challenges and opportunities

3.1 Everyday realities in Iraqi classroom

Infrastructure

In Iraq, electricity supplies sometimes unstable. The internet access in cities, for example, differs from region to region. Some universities invested in technology, but many schools lack stable access to the internet, functioning projectors or connectivity.

Access to Devices

As per observation, most students use smartphones. Personal laptops are relatively limited. This in turn limits the online activity scope because instructors optimize only those smartphone friendly applications.

Pedagogical traditions

Till this moment, some classrooms follow the traditional teacher-centered mode. Research confirms that this mode is affected by authority and hierarchy (Shaikh et al., 2023). There are possible ways of innovation, however it is gradual.

Examination Pressure

High-stakes exams shape teaching practice. But students, parents and administrators all have a shared interest in performing well on centralized exams. Exams emphasize rules, reading and writing accuracy on the expense of communication practice.

Curriculum Constraints

In many other countries, national curricula and textbooks define narrow content expectations. While methods are up to the individual teacher. It is unlikely that time-consuming learner-centered approaches will be employed when there is pressure to move through content within limited time. This practice reduces the opportunity to find spots to interact and communicate.

3.2 Emerging Opportunities

Mobile learning Potential

Smartphones and mobile apps are already part of young learners. They are ubiquitous and Internet-connected. They provide low-zero cost mobile learning opportunities that do not depend on institutional level investment.

Digitally Inclined Learners

Students grew up with digital technology. Students' awareness regarding social media and applications can be utilized for pedagogical benefits.

Post-Pandemic Openness

COVID-19 pandemic introduced everyone in the learning cycle to remote teaching. It pushed teachers and students onto online platforms, video calls and learning systems whether it was working or not. It was the precursor of blended learning.

Cultural Values as Resources

How respect for teachers supports innovation. Students are inclined to buy into what they believe that teachers are doing correctly on their behalf. Iraq's collective culture also encourages collaboration — online and IRL.

4. Pedagogical Components “Chalkboard to Cloud” Model

4.1 Initiating a Model for the Iraqi Context

Any teaching model intended for Iraqi schools should take local conditions into consideration. As it is stated above there is a challenge of inconsistency of electricity, internet access and classroom resources. For this reason, the model presented in this paper propose sound pedagogical component alongside an awareness of challenges the teachers might encounter.

Context Responsiveness

Technology should match the conditions of classroom environment. For example, low bandwidth; here, offline options are essential.

Pedagogy First, Technology Second

Technology is tool that helps to achieve service-learning goals. According to this model it is not a goal but a means to improve and to facilitate learning. Blended model powers, not dictates learning. The model begins with clear pedagogical goals. Then, digital tools are chosen to support those goals.

Sustainability

Educational development plans must be affordable and easy to maintain, especially with limited resources. This model favors low-cost entry tools. Within this model, lasting improvement emerges from regular teaching practice rather than expensive tools or training events.

Gradual Integration

New practices work better if they are introduced gradually. Both instructors and learners need time to be comfortable with new educational styles. Blended model, for this very factor, allows different levels of technological implementation starting from simple activities to a more advanced tool.

4.2. Four Pedagogical Components

The model that this paper offers is built around four components. Those components are set against the ultimate denial of traditional teaching. It rather develops blended practices that advances language learning in large EFL classes.

Component 1: Reversed Interaction Model

Material and instruction follow different sequences. First, Students get the material before the class. Second, the class time will be used as a time and space to practice and interact. This approach is known as flipped classroom. In other words, the students get the material in advance from the online specified resource and then discuss and explain in a guided activities in class.

In the Iraqi context, teachers may record short video explanations, post or refer to a material on YouTube for viewing on mobile, pre-reading tasks via Telegram or other apps like this that play well on mobile. This method increases the value of face-to-face interaction. It also answers the criticism of some methods providing little real communication (Yassin et al. 2024; Hashim 2025). Notwithstanding, instructors here remain central not as lecturers but as a guide and support to learning.

Component 2: Expanding Teaching Resources

The traditional textbook is undoubtedly a great resource but is also limited and frozen in time. Online space offers a wider range of authentic material that give students the chance to engage with English beyond the textbook. This includes links to English-language news sites, YouTube channels and podcasts relevant to students' interests. Moreover, Students will encounter authentic material like movie trailers, and a growing catalogue of student-generated material, including presentations or writing samples. This component addresses the criticism that appropriate language usage through traditional instruction ends up limiting learners' exposure to authentic language and under-developing their listening skills (Yassin et al., 2024; Shaikh et al., 2023). It helps foster digital literacy, as students practice reading and evaluating sources online.

Component 3: Build a Community for Online Learning

Learning is an inherently and fundamentally social process (see Vygotsky). However, in a traditional classroom environment, interactions are limited to class time periods which must

be organized way ahead of time. Open, simple online spaces can help create learning communities that extend beyond the classroom. For Iraqi students, they have experience of channels on telegram and WhatsApp where they share resources and discuss homework. These spaces appeared to respond to the criticism of conventional approaches that foster passive learning (Üzum & Özbek, 2024; Shaikh et al., 2023) since they constantly offered opportunities for interaction or reflection. They also build on students' familiarity with social media platforms.

Component 4: Data-Informed Classroom Teaching

One of the most powerful benefits of online teaching components is what they tell us (instructors) about student learning. A brief online quiz, poll or submission (of some previous thoughts) to class discussion just before the lesson gives instructors an insight into students' areas of confusion to. This exposé, furthermore, leads to better plan management. What's more, they can pinpoint the precise needs of individual students. In this sense, teacher role moves beyond delivering lectures to passive learners to a guide for students' learning.

4.3 A Practical Example: A University EFL Class

The following example shows how the framework can be applied in a university EFL class

Pre-Class (Cloud)

Students watch a short (5 min) YouTube video presenting environmental vocabulary or concepts. Then, they take a short quiz on Google Forms to be submitted before class. The quiz is easy to take on a phone and requires minimal internet data.

In-Class (Chalkboard + Technology)

The instructor begins with quiz review, synthesizing misconceptions and clarifying key vocabulary (5–10 min). Then students engage in a small-group discussion activity, debating for or against a question such as “Should our university ban plastic bags?” They must make use of the target vocabulary and display argumentative skills (25 min).

The groups present their conclusions to class, getting feedback from peers and the instructor (10 minutes). The instructor ends with a preview of the post-class prompt, linking what they talked about with the rest of the unit (5 minutes).

Post-Class (Cloud)

Students write a short paragraph where they share their opinion on the environmental issue to the class blog or group Facebook for class. They are also expected to respond to at least two responds of their peers, engaging in written interaction beyond classroom. The instructor reviews these contributions, offers feedback and identify strong examples to be highlighted in the following session.

In this way the activity brings together key elements of the model: flipped content delivery, use of cloud-based authentic materials, learning community that extended online and data-informed instruction.

5. Implementation of Principles in Low Bandwidth Contexts

5.1 The Digital Divide

The most immediate practical challenge in implementing blended learning in Iraq is the digital divide, reflected in uneven access to technology and connectivity. Dealing with this issue requires composite strategies, which should be informed by the principles outlined in Section 4.1.

Mobile-First Design

Where online elements are included, they should be adjusted for mobile access. This requires the use of platforms optimized for mobile access, that are comparatively low-bandwidth and not desktop-only applications.

Offline Options

Wherever possible, learning materials should be also accessible offline. Videos, for instance, can be downloaded when connectivity permits. Paper-based materials may be shared as PDF files. Assignments can be designed with flexible submission options.

Institutional Resources

Universities might establish “tech hubs” — facilities with computers and dependable internet access — for students lacking home connectivity to complete online components. It can also provide technical support and troubleshooting assistance.

Peer Support

Students can support each other by finding ways to lend, trade, or share access to devices and resources that are appropriate within their cultural and institutional constraints. Study-group clusters can coordinate to help the members who are most challenged on connectivity.”

5.2 Empowering the Professor

Blended learning involves major shifts in teachers’ knowledge, skills and identity. Professional development cannot be a one-shot workshop; it requires the creation of ongoing communities of practice that support this change.

Sustained Support

Professional development is a marathon, not a sprint, and it gives teachers the chance to try things out in the classroom, reflect on what went well and what didn’t, and then practice again. These might include an ongoing blended learning working group that meets regularly, opportunities for peer observation and feedback and continued access to coaching or mentoring.

Collaborative Design

Sharing and Collaborative Design of Blended Learning Materials: The teachers should be provided support in designing and sharing these materials This alleviates burden on any individual, reinforces collective wisdom and experience of the team, and fosters a spirit of co-ownership of innovation.

Pedagogical Focus

Research suggests that professional development should foreground pedagogical development rather than technological proficiency. It is not for instructors to learn how to operate a new tool. They must also be supported to renew their instructional design.

Recognition and Incentives

Instructors engaged in innovation need to be rewarded and recognized by institutions. They could include everything from awards for teaching to invitations to present a talk at a conference or consideration in promotion and tenure process.

5.3 Shifting Student Mindsets

This learning and resistance to break out of the mold is textbook: students who have only been taught rote, prescriptive feedback on lessons may be even resistant at first about taking more agency or ownership in blended spaces. The following strategies that can support adaptation within this context.

Clear Communication

This rationale for blended learning should also be communicated to students from the very beginning. When students see how doing the approach will help them in their learning, they tend to engage positively.

Scaffolded Introduction

The Next Steps toward Blended Learning Expectations for student autonomy and ownership should increase gradually. Early in a class, online parts might be low-stakes and optional; as students get fluency and confidence, the expectations can shift upward.

Explicit Skill Building

Students may need an explicit lesson on what success looks like in a blended learning environment, including how to manage their time if they are used to sitting at desks together as a group, which habits of online communication will set them up for success with this new platform and what self-directed learning strategies work best. These can be covered and restated throughout the course.

Supportive Classroom Culture

Encouraging a classroom culture of effort, risk-taking and what we learn when things are not going as well will allow students to experience holistically new learning models with their peers. Teachers can model this culture on how they respond to challenges and uncertainty.

5.4 Gaining Institutional Support

However, the effective implementation of blended learning rests on many supportive actions at different verticals in an institution that ensure structured processes. Here are some strategies to build this support.

Evidence-Based Advocacy

For teachers and administrators who have a vision of blended learning, they must support their arguments with evidence. This includes research about blended learning effectiveness, data from local pilots, and alignment with national goals in education and global standards.

Alignment with Existing Priorities

Blended learning initiatives need to be articulated, not in terms of how they compete against the existing priorities we have — student outcomes, preparing our students for the digital economy and lifting institutional reputation — but rather in terms of how blended can be the delivery method that enables us all to keep achieving those other goals.

Starting Small

Pilot projects, especially at the level of departments or courses, can showcase feasibility and effectiveness and create momentum for broader adoption. Little victories are more convincing than big plans.

Building Alliances

The advocates of blended learning will have to form alliances with colleagues who think like them, supportive administrators and sympathetic outsiders, such as the mutual organizations around education technology or foreign universities.

6. Implications for Practice, Policy and Teacher Education Implications

6.1 For Classroom Teachers

The framework provides a flexible set of principles and practices that can be adapted to local contexts. Its focus on mobile-first design and low-bandwidth solutions mean the approach works even in regions where technology infrastructure is scarce. An incremental, scaffolded implementation approaches recognize that teachers are human and will need time to grow and become confident in new competencies as much as students. Teachers are advised to start with one pillar (e.g. flipped interaction) that can be realistically achieved rather than aiming for full implementation; to record, share and reflect on experiences in order to create a collective body of knowledge within the institution; to solicit student feedback on how blended elements can be improved; and most importantly, focus first on pedagogical goals above all and only then choose which technology would best suit guiding students toward those aims.

6.2 For Teacher Educators and Professional Development Providers

That requires a shift away from technology design to pedagogy design. A mandate to simply teach teachers how to use new tools wouldn't be sufficient for them to totally overhaul their courses; they would like assistance with it, these respondents suggested. The second is models of sustainable, collaborative professional development. This means that the teacher education for pre-service teachers must be designed and patterned using low-bandwidth blended-learning design principles. In short, we need in-service to be blended, so that we can learn as learners do. He expanded on it: There should be formalized supported Professional learning community for blended learning. It is more visceral in nature; other ways the field has been served have included documentation and sharing of case studies contextualized towards teacher educators.

6.3 For Educational Policy Makers and Administrators

The framework suggests it makes sense to nudge innovation towards marginal rather than paradigm shifts. Indeed, investments in literacy coaches or instructional planning time are valuable, but so is investment in teacher development and the cultivation of institutional cultures that welcome experimentation (and its inevitable failures). This will include national blended learning/hybrid structured policy guidelines that would take into consideration the current infrastructural set-ups, availability of resources to infrastructure (tech hubs, connectivity) as well as human capacity (teacher development), structuring of incentives that recognize innovative practices but also work towards sustaining their

responsiveness/call to proposal and support Research & Documentation on localized blended learning efforts across India with propositions, emboldened by international organizations/universities for intercontinental knowledge exchange.

6.4 For Curriculum Developers

The CCSS provides some level of flexibility in curricular planning and material production. QR codes linking to online content can help fill gaps left by textbooks. Blended learning activities are recommended in curriculum documents or traditional ones. Assessments can have online and F2F components. Language learning goals to be explicitly expanded to measurable digital literacy outcomes?

7. Agenda for Empirical Validation

The structure presented in this article is theoretical, based on established research and contextual assessment. Empirical validation is urgently needed. This section describes research designs to test, augment, and expand the model.

7.1 Collaborative Research Action

Iraqi EFL teachers who implement the framework should be supported to document their experiences using collaborative action research. Such studies would investigate how teachers adapt the four pillars to their contexts; challenges faced and strategies used to address them; perceived changes in student engagement, participation and learning; and teacher learning and shifts in identity as a result of implementing it.

Multiple case studies of 3–5 classrooms comprising a diversity of Iraqi contexts (urban/rural, well-resourced/under-resourced, central Iraq/Kurdistan Region) would yield rich insight into how the framework functions across different settings. Potential data sources include classroom observations, teacher interviews, student focus groups and analysis of online interactions.

7.2 Comparative Designs

Design – based research (Longitudinal)

Longitudinal based research (DBR) is the most appropriate approach for empirical validation and refining the “From Chalkboard to Cloud” framework. A properly structured DBR research should proceed through the following phases:

Phase One-Needs Analysis

The initial phase involves conducting surveys, interviews, and classroom observations to record instructional needs, and infrastructure limitation. Spatial attention is given to infrastructure limitations. Develop materials, select low-bandwidth digital tools, and train instructors.

Phase Two-Design and Development (Iteration 1)

Design the initial blended intervention based on needs analysis findings. Create learning materials, choose low-bandwidth digital tools and train participating teachers.

Phase Three- Implementation and Data Collection (Iteration 1)

Implement the intervention for one academic semester These could be through observations in the context of classroom, evaluation data on learners, reflective journaling by teachers and attitude surveys among students.

Phase Four- Analysis and Redesign (Iteration 2)

Findings from initial implementations are analyzed to identify both strengths and weaknesses. The frame subsequently refined and tested in a second iteration. Comparisons across iteration help to reveal how the context shapes the outcomes

Phase Five- Final Reflection and Theory Building

Findings from all iterations are synthesized to generate design principles which add transferable knowledge building to the existing blended learning literature.

7.3 Implementation Research

Factors Influencing adoption

Further investigations of facilitators and barriers to adoption at the level of teachers, students and institutions would provide useful data for scale up work. These include such questions as: What are the teacher characteristics (for example, discomfort with technology, beliefs about pedagogy) that predict successful implementation. Or, how do student characteristics (e.g., digital literacy, motivation to learn) influence engagement with blended components; and what are the institutional factors (support from leadership, technical infrastructure, culture of collegiality) that facilitate or inhibit adoption.

Professional Development Models

Collaborative research should be conducted to study the factors that affect the implementation of blended learning. Also, comparative studies on compared on different types of professional development, e.g., workshops or learning communities; face-to-face or online. Also, research that compares blended and non-blended professional development designs would identify potential effective approaches for facilitating teachers into a blended learning transition.

7.4 Component Analysis

Future studies may also explore effective designs of learning for particular goals. For example: do flipped interactions lead to greater speaking gains compared with traditional instruction? Better writing? Motivational or affective outcomes? Will data-informed instruction create more effective and efficient use of limited in-person labor in larger courses? Such research will not only help validate and refine the framework itself but will also contribute to a growing body of literature on blended learning in non-Western, resource-constrained contexts. Iraqi researchers are uniquely positioned to contribute to this.

8. Conclusion

The shift from chalkboard to cloud does not represent a rejection of the traditional teaching. It is rather an evolution towards keeping pace with world's digital practices. Traditional methods (chalkboard) have played important role in Iraqi classes for decades. Today, blended learning offers extra facilities to enhance learning. The new digital world offers practitioners broader perspective to find alternative methods to be adopted to the new learning environment. Blended learning offers possible ways forward. It allows instructors to maintain traditional methods while navigating spaces of interaction. When the traditional approach and digital learning are put together, they create new classroom environments that

go beyond grammar rules. This is what the “From the Chalkboard to Cloud” model attempts to achieve.

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Appendix A: Sample Blended Learning Leason Plan

Phase	Activities	Modality	Time	Technology / Tools
Pre-Class (Cloud)	1. [Activity description] 2. [Activity description]	Online asynchronous	[Estimated time]	[Platform or tool]
In-Class (Chalkboard Technology) +	1. [Activity description] 2. [Activity description] 3. [Activity description]	Face-to-face	[Estimated time]	[Resources needed]
Post-Class (Cloud)	1. [Activity description] 2. [Activity description]	Online asynchronous	[Estimated time]	[Platform or tool]

Appendix B: Low- Bandwidth Digital Tool For Iraqi EFL Context

Tool	Purpose	Mobile-Friendly	Offline Capability	Cost	Typical Data Use
YouTube	Video viewing and sharing	Yes	Videos can be downloaded	Free	High
Google Forms	Quizzes, surveys, polls	Yes	Internet required for submission	Free	Low

Quizlet	Vocabulary practice and flashcards	Yes	Some offline features	Free basic version	Low
Padlet	Collaborative discussion boards	Yes	Limited	Free basic version	Low
WhatsApp	Group communication and file sharing	Yes	Messages stored locally	Free	Low
Facebook Groups	Discussion and resource sharing	Yes	Posts accessible offline after loading	Free	Low
Google Drive	File storage and sharing	Yes	Offline access with synchronization	Free with account	Medium
Edmodo	Learning management platform	Yes	Limited	Free basic version	Low
VoiceThread	Multimedia discussion platform	Yes	Limited	Free basic version	Medium
Canva	Creation of visual learning materials	Yes	Limited	Free basic version	Low
Telegram	Messaging and file sharing	Yes	Messages accessible offline	Free	Low
Google Classroom	Course organization and communication	Yes	Limited offline access	Free	Low
Kahoot!	Game-based learning activities	Yes	Requires internet connection	Free basic version	Low
QR Code Generator	Sharing links quickly	Not applicable	Not applicable		