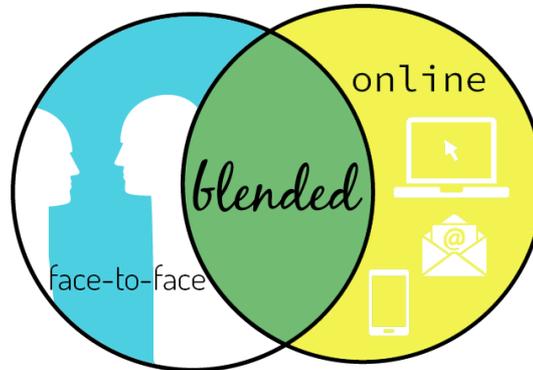




CONSTRUCTING AN EFFECTIVE MODEL OF BLENDED LEARNING: A CASE OF GEN GEO IN ULIS, VNU HANOI



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1. Introduction

2. Effective model of blended learning

3. Piloted GENGEO course in ULIS

4. Research design

5. Research findings and discussions

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1. INTRODUCTION

- Blended learning model has been proved to be very “efficient” (Garrison, 2004; Handcock and Wong, 2012) → many institutions have adopted it in their formal training.
- Theories on models, principles to design as well as characteristics of a blended course are available, BUT very few reveal instructions on time allocation for web-based learning and in-class learning.
- The pilot GENGE0 in ULIS challenges what was asserted earlier that the ratio between traditional face-to-face and online delivery is not important (Hartman and Moskal, 2004)
- This study aims at designing a more effective model of blended GENGE0 course which also suggests a better frame of time allocation and content design between face-to-face and online learning and teaching.

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2. Effective model of blended learning

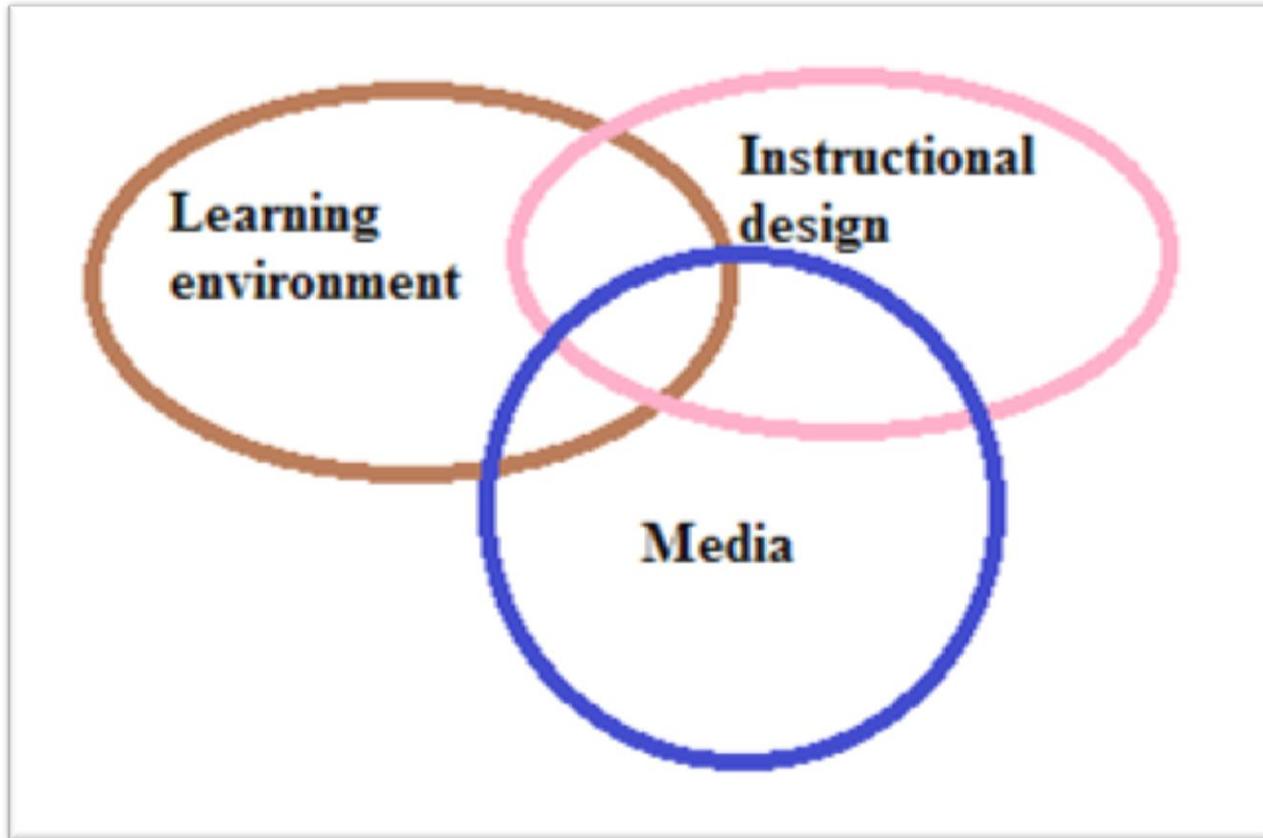
2.1. Components

2.2. Principles

2.3. Characteristics

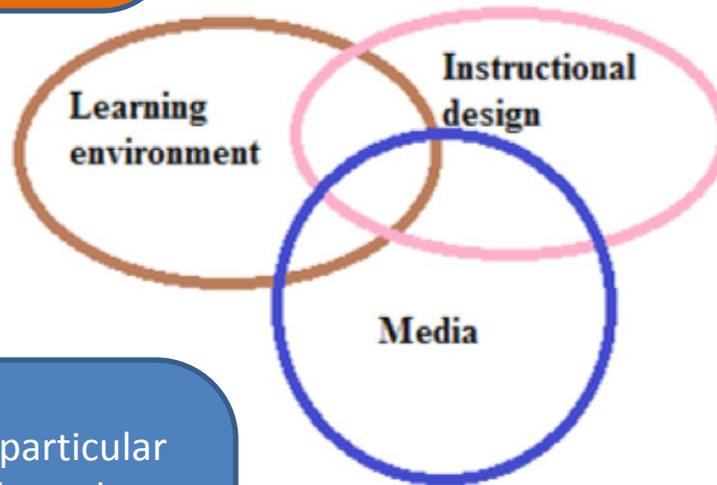
2. Effective model of blended learning

2.1. Components



- **face-to-face + online**
- employ positive attributes of each environment to + best use of resources → attain the instructional goal and learning objectives

- **classroom time:** complex, broad, programmatic or new content as well as culture building, team building, networking activities or materials to be presented
Woodall (2010)



- the selection of a particular medium affects how the content is designed and delivered → make use of the positive attributes of that specific medium

(Holden and Westfall, 2006)

Table 1 Media used in Blended Learning

<p>Live face-to-face (formal) Instructor-led classroom Workshops Coaching/mentoring On-the-job (OTJ) training</p>	<p>Live face-to-face (informal) Collegial connections Work teams Role modelling</p>
<p>Virtual collaboration/synchronous Live e-learning classes E-mentoring</p>	<p>Virtual collaboration/asynchronous E-mail Online bulletin boards Listservs Online communities</p>
<p>Self-paced learning Web learning modules Online resource links Simulations Scenarios Video and audio CDs/DVDs Online self-assessment Workbooks</p>	<p>Performance support Help systems Print job aids Knowledge databases Documentation Performance/decision support tools</p>

Source: Strategies for Building Blended Learning
 Rossett, Douglis and Frazee

2. Effective model of blended learning

2.1. Components

2.2. Principles

2.3. Characteristics

2.2. Principles

1/ LEARNERS DO MOST OF THE WORK, NOT TEACHERS.

Some activities are student-led discussion; students find and discuss web resources; peer assistance and self-assessment

2/ INTERACTIVITY IS THE KEY TO EFFECTIVE BLENDED LEARNING

higher interaction and connection between teachers and learners as well as among learners

3/ 'PRESENCE' (physical presence, social, cognitive and teaching presence)

- social presence : a community of learning,
- cognitive presence = teachers and learners construct meaning through discussion;
- teaching presence = facilitation and direction of cognitive and social process for the realization of personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes

2. Effective model of blended learning

2.1. Components

2.2. Principles

2.3. Characteristics

2.3. Characteristics

- **Visual:** Visibility can be both teachers' visibility during the course, such as timely return of assignment and feedback or communication via emails, or different visuals aids and media used in the course, for example, videos or photos.
- **Organized:** both online and blended courses require high time management responsibility of learners, which leads to increased organization responsibility of the teachers → teachers include regular learners' self-assessment, prepare syllabus and assignment due dates carefully, in addition to an orientation session of how to be successful on blended learning courses.
- **Compassionate:** blended teachers should allow frequent communication with learners via emails, discussion forums, and they should show how much they care about learners' personal progress by reminding them about upcoming events or deadlines or frequently discussing learners' progress.
- **Analytical:** teachers need to manage online learning assignment to ensure that students fulfill the assignments and achieving learning outcomes.
- **Leader-by-Example:** teachers give good online learning and behavior such as model responsibility by returning assignments timely or model the right way learners should communicate online.

(Savery, 2005)

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3. Piloted GENGEO course in ULIS

- General Geography of the United States and United Kingdom (GENGEO)
 - Offered in the form of face-to-face lecture-based sessions.
 - Four piloted blended GENGEO classes last semester which managed to recruit 104 students from Year 2 to Year 4.
 - Assessment: 2 quizzes, 2 reflective essays, 1 group presentation and 1 final exam as assessment
 - The amount of information, mainly facts and figures of the American and British geography and culture, is rather large but quite manageable for students to take in
- suitable for the blended approach which requires students to be independent and responsible for their own learning. As a result, of all the country studies subjects, GENGEO was chosen to be pilot as the first blended course in the faculty.

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4. Research design

- Four blended GENGE0 classes were divided into two groups which used different time allocation – different time-shared portion between in-class and online
- Aim to investigate the time and content appropriateness of these blended courses based on students' view and feedback on their experience learning in the blended courses.
- The first group (2 classes) is coded Group A with 50 students; the second group (2 classes) is Group B with 54 students.
- The materials of which had been prepared and posted on the online platform (an e-learning platform of ULIS) however, were divided with some differences in terms of when and what to learn on online and face-to-face sessions
- After 15 weeks the students were asked to do survey questionnaire on their experience with the pilot blended GENGE0 course (the questions in the questionnaire focus much on the students' feedback on their experience – satisfaction and difficulties when taking the blended courses in order to improve the quality of the course and the students' contentment with the course)

ĐẠI HỌC NGOẠI NGỮ
KHOA NGÔN NGỮ VÀ VĂN HÓA CÁC QUỐC NỘI TIẾNG ANH
 Bộ môn Đất nước học
 * * *

PHIẾU KHẢO SÁT
 về khóa học tập kết hợp môn Địa lý đại cương Anh-Mỹ

Các em hãy khoanh vào đáp án mà em đồng tình nhất:

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Overall, I am satisfied with this course.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Given the opportunity I will take another course in the future that has both online and face-to-face components.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	This course experience has improved my opportunity to access and use the class content.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The online and face-to-face course components of this course enhance each other.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The E-learning site (Moodle) is well-organized and easy to navigate.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The web resources in this course are helpful.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	When I encountered a problem with the use of the technologies in this course. The technical support service helped me with my problem in a timely and effective manner.	1	2	3	4	5
Compared to typical face-to-face courses I have taken		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
8.	...this course offers the convenience of not having to come to campus as often.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	... this course allows me to reduce my total travel time each week and related expenses.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	... I am more engaged in this course.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	... I am likely to ask questions in this course.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	... I feel that the amount of my interaction with other students in this course increased.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	... I feel that the quality of my interaction with other students in this course was better.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	... I feel connected with other students in this course.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	... I feel isolated during this course.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	... I feel that the amount of my interaction with the instruction this course increased.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	... I feel that the quality of my interaction with the instruction this course was better.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	... I am overwhelmed with information and resources in this course.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	... I have trouble using the technologies in this course.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	... I feel more anxious in this course.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	... this course requires more time and effort.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	... this course has improved my understanding of key concepts.	1	2	3	4	5

Course Format Preferences

23. If the same course is being offered in different formats, which course format would you prefer?
 A. Entirely face-to-face course format
 B. Blended course format (meaning some face-to-face activities are replaced with online activities)
 C. Entirely online course format (with no face-to-face class time)
24. If you had a choice between attending lectures face-to-face or accessing lectures online which would you choose?
 A. Attending lectures face-to-face
 B. Accessing online downloadable videos of lectures
 C. A combination of both
25. If you had a choice between doing the quizzes/tests on paper or online which would you choose?
 A. On paper
 B. Online
 C. A combination of both
26. If you had a choice between participation in classroom discussion or online discussion which would you choose?
 A. Class discussion
 B. Online discussion
 C. A combination of both

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
27.	I have strong time management skills.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I am self-motivated to study.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	I am open to new methods of learning.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	I have good computer skills.	1	2	3	4	5

Please share additional comments or suggestions about this course.

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5.1. Satisfaction

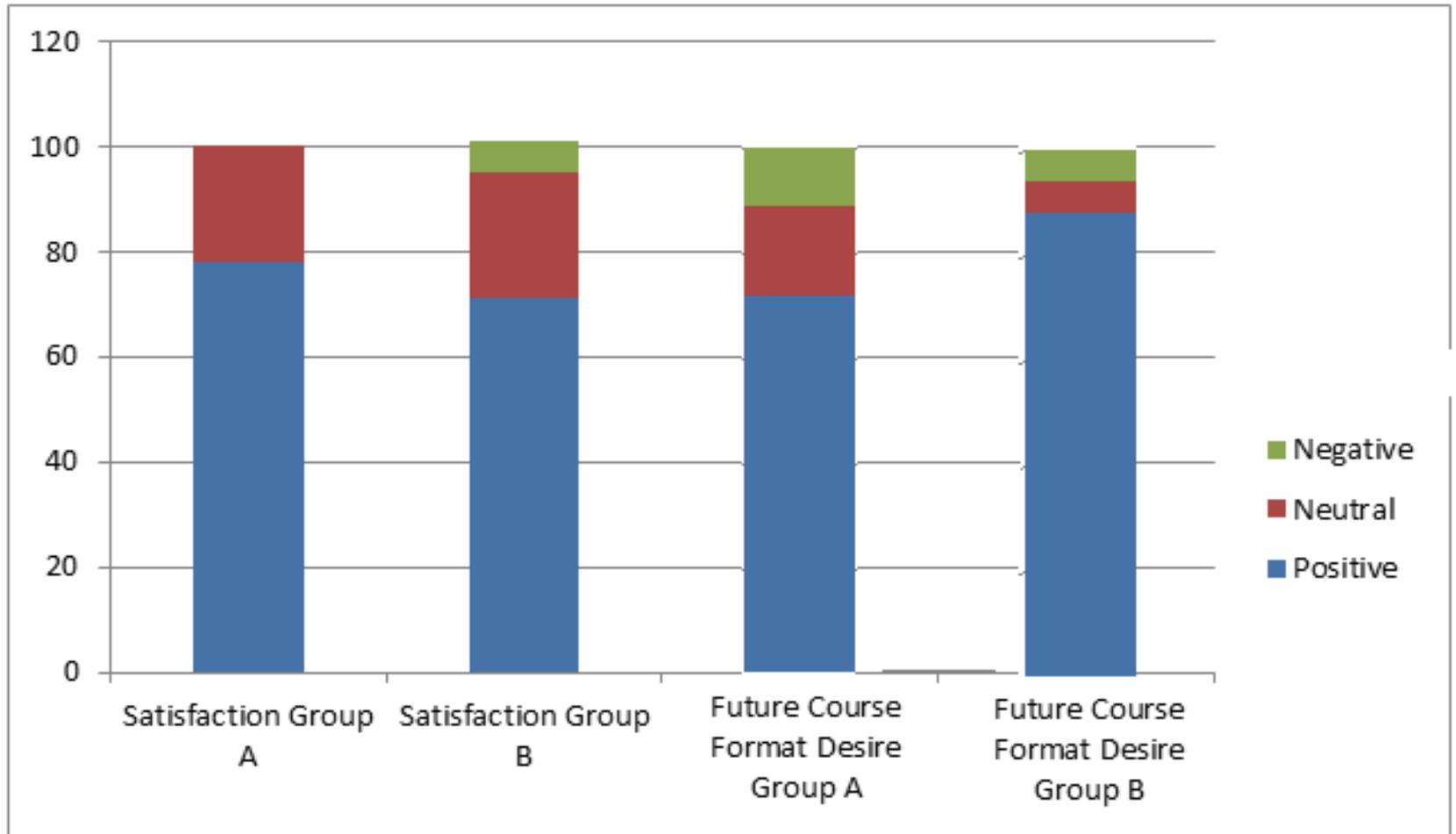


Chart 1. Findings on satisfaction and future course format desire

5.2. Time allocation

Figure 3. Time allocation A

- Week 1: In-class activities
- Week 2: In-class activities
- Week 3: Online Learning
- Week 4: Online Learning
- Week 5: Online Learning
- Week 6: Online Learning
- Week 7: In-class activities
- Week 8: In-class activities
- Week 9: In-class activities
- Week 10: Online Learning
- Week 11: Online Learning
- Week 12: Online Learning
- Week 13: Online Learning
- Week 14: In-class activities
- Week 15: In-class activities

Figure 4. Time allocation B

- Week 1: In-class activities
- Week 2: Online learning
- Week 3: Online Learning
- Week 4: Online Learning
- Week 5: Online Learning
- Week 6: In-class activities
- Week 7: Online
- Week 8: In-class activities
- Week 9: Online learning
- Week 10: Online Learning
- Week 11: Online Learning
- Week 12: In-class activities
- Week 13: Online Learning
- Week 14: In-class activities
- Week 15: In-class activities

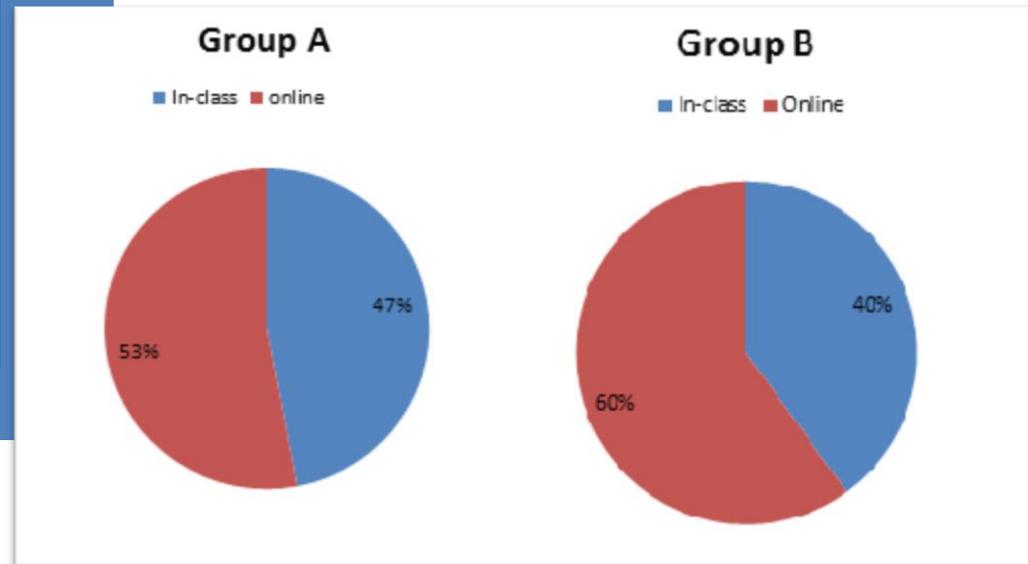


Chart 2. Time allocation

5.3. Content and activity scheme

Week 1: In-class activities

- Course introduction
- Presentation guideline
- Unit 1: Introduction to the United Kingdom
- Course schedule
- Presentation Guidelines

Week 2: In-class activities

- Unit 2: British General Geography (physical, human, holidays)
- Unit 3: An Overview of England (Physical Geography)

Week 3: Online Learning

- Unit 3: An Overview of England (Continued)
- Unit 4: Scotland: geography, symbols, identity
- Unit 3: England
- Unit 4: Scotland
- Questions 1-10

Week 5: Online Learning

- Unit 7: The British people - Attitudes, beliefs & values
- British people
- British people
- Questions 1-5:

Week 6: Online Learning

- Film Showing - Miss Potter (PG)
- Reflection Writing
- Reminder of Citation, Referencing & Plagiarism

Week 7: In-class activities

- Quiz 1: The UK
- Presentations - The UK
- Hand in reflection essays on "Miss Potter"

Week 8: In-class activities

- Unit 9: A first look at the United States, symbols & images
- A first look at the U.S.
- A first look at the U.S. (cont.) - American symbols
- A first look at the USA (cont.) - American Popular Culture

Week 9: In-class activities

- Unit 10: General geography of the US (physical, human, festivals)
- American Human and Physical Geography

Week 10: Online Learning

- Unit 11: Northeast U.S.
- Northeast U.S.

Week 11: Online Learning

- Unit 12: Central U.S. (Midwest & South)
- Central United States
- Central USA

Week 12: Online Learning

- Unit 13: Western U.S., Alaska & Hawaii
- Western United States

Week 13: Online Learning

- Film Showing - The adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1993) (PG)
- Reflection Writing
- Reminder of Citation, Referencing & Plagiarism

The screenshot displays a detailed weekly schedule for a US Geography course. It is organized into two columns of content. The left column lists 'In-class activities' and 'Online Learning' for each week, while the right column lists 'Online Learning' and 'In-class activities'. The weeks are numbered 1 through 14. The content includes course introductions, presentation guidelines, unit introductions, and specific topics such as British General Geography, the Northeast U.S., Central U.S., and Western U.S. Activities include quizzes, presentations, reflection writing, and film showings. The course concludes with a reflection essay submission and a final quiz on the US.

Figure 5. Content and activity scheme type A

Figure 6. Content and activity scheme type B

5.4. Learning activity preference

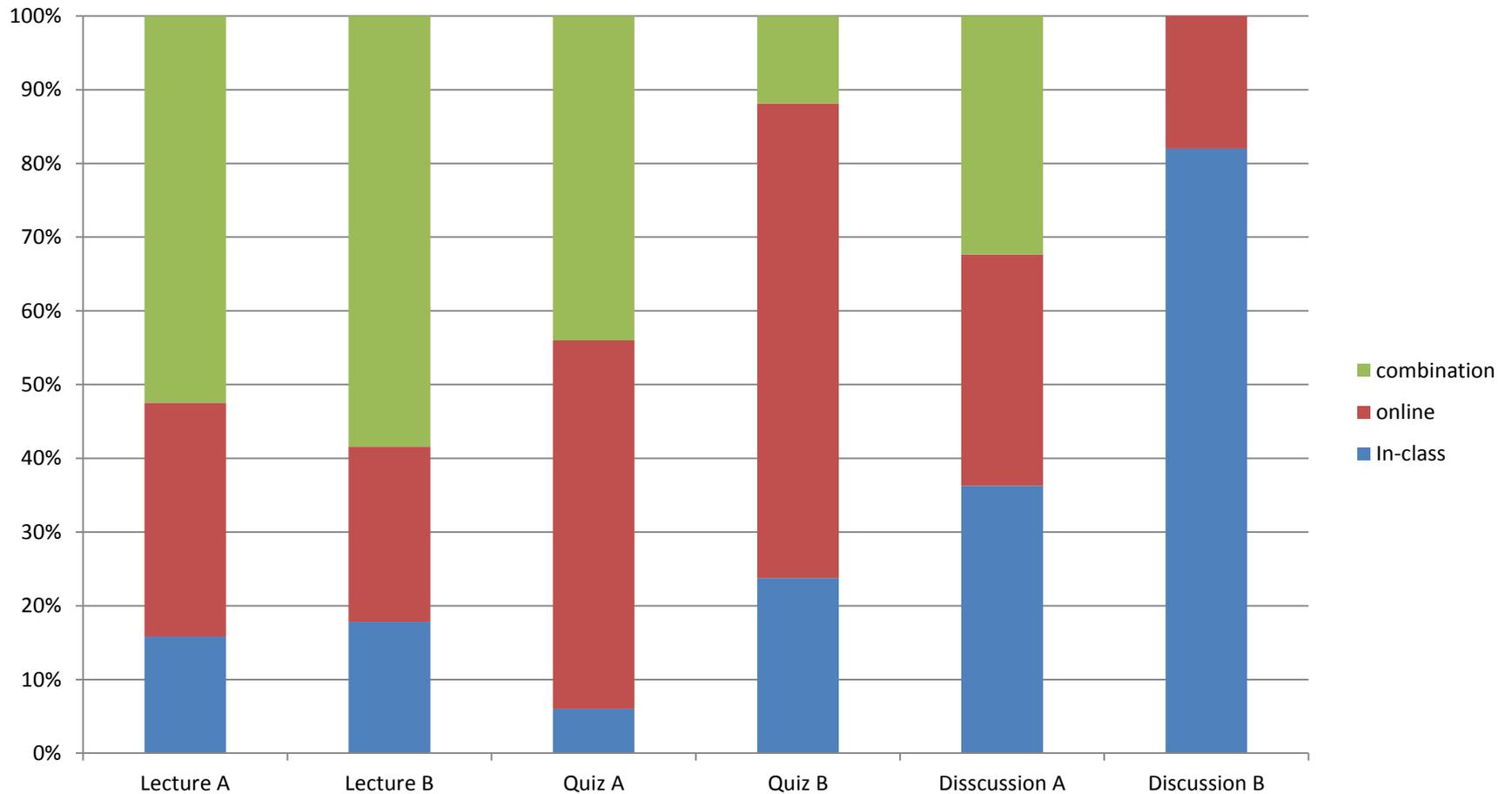


Chart 3. Learning activity preference

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6. Conclusion

- Although there are theories on models, principles and characteristics of an effective blended learning courses, recommendations on the design (allocation of time and content) in practice are not as available.
- A pilot GENGE0 is a good and right start.
- The findings from the pilot GENGE0 suggest that in a blended content course
 - The face-to-face and online sessions should be at least equal; in-class sessions should account for at least 50% of the course time.
 - The majority of the face-to-face time should be prioritized for discussion rather than teachers delivering lectures.
 - The students preferred much more face-to-face discussion than what they did in the pilot course while they were content with a combination of in-class and online lectures.
 - Lecture notes, together with other reading materials, should be posted on the platform and made accessible in advance so that the students can access and prepare for the in-class discussions.
 - The face-to-face sessions should be bestrewn so that the teachers can help remind and reinforce learning strategies as well as motivate students in their self-paced learning sessions.
 - A better preparation of web-based sources in terms of quantity as well as quality, such as lecture notes, reading materials, videos, photos and maps in order to facilitate better the students' self-paced learning.

6. Conclusion (cont.)

Recommendations to design better blended GENGEO course

- In terms of time allocation, a future blended GENGEO will surely have equal share of time between face-to-face and web-based learning.
- In terms of content and activities, most lecture notes and quizzes will be web-based while it is advisable that discussions be mainly held in class in order to support students' better understanding of the content as well as to increase the interaction between lecturers and students.

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