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## Hybrid Language Teaching in Practice: Perceptions, Reactions, and Results (A Book Review)

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**Abstract:** Hybrid language teaching is becoming very popular during the recent years thanks to wider and more convenient access to technology in the classroom and outside. "Hybrid Language Teaching in Practice: Perceptions, Reactions, and Results" is an attempt to pave the way for a better, smoother transition from mere face-to-face language classes to the classes of future. The book presents "perceptions" of teachers about hybrid language teaching, "reactions" about the implementation of hybrid courses, and "results" of this implementation. The book uses a down-to-earth, easy-to-understand structure that even teachers of other disciplines can take advantage of. On the other hand, it concludes with prescribing suggestions, which are claimed not to be the goal of the book.

**Keywords:** Hybrid language teaching; Hybrid courses; Face-to-face classes.

This book is primarily aimed at implicitly setting a framework for integrating online and face-to-face instruction coherently in one language course, although the authors claim that the book is not attempting to prescribe a series of dos and don'ts. The relatively concise but well-crafted book considers teachers as its main audience, walking them through various stages of creating a hybrid class, namely decision-making, planning, integration, and evaluation.

Throughout the course of the book, the authors use their first names to sound more down-to-earth and friendly and report the results of their experience in the form of action research while they were busy working together to design a hybrid course.

Chapter 1 is an attempt to lay the groundwork for the discussion of integrating online with face-to-face instruction by presenting a thorough, detailed definition of hybrid teaching and then moves on to the qualitative study carried out by the authors to answer the questions of how do hybrid courses "change our teaching" and "affect student-learning experiences". Their study, as they state in Chapter 1, formed the skeleton of the book, therefore, it is dedicated to the design and procedures of the study.

Chapter 2, entitled Step-by-Step Hybrid Design, describes the measures required in different phases from designing the course to its evaluation. In this chapter, first the need to get familiar with hybrid courses is from different sources such as asking experienced instructors, attending orientation programs, and reading on "organisations that research, promote, and evaluate online education". The chapter goes on with determining available resources, building the course, and managing and accessing courses.

In Chapter 3, the book draws on M-learning theory as a key framework to meet the requirements of implementing hybrid courses. The authors present the result of their experience in applying the M-learning theory in their classes, as well as the analysis of learning outcomes, student reactions, and their "own perceptions of feasibility and effectiveness". Then this chapter moves on to the three activities that are possible in traditional classes, but they can better be implemented in hybrid classes. These three activities, which can be enhanced by technology, are student-produced videos, online discussions, and culture presentations.

Chapter 4 deals mostly with a case study of learners' attitudes and feedbacks on the hybrid courses they attended. What the focus group participants thought about the activities, and which ones they believed were the most effective or otherwise, are discussed in this chapter. The most beneficial aspects of the course were reported to be having access to authentic input and having the opportunity to produce authentic output, whereas the least beneficial ones, as learners believe, were technical issues with technology and sometimes being exposed to inauthentic language, which in this case was because of the textbook. The noteworthy and, at the same time, praiseworthy point in this chapter is that the base for the analysis of the effectiveness of the course is the learners' ideas about their overall achievements they take home from the hybrid class. As reported in this chapter, the learners who participated in the classes believed that their cultural knowledge and intercultural competence improved over the course of the hybrid classes.

The focus of Chapter 5 is a discussion of the two authors, Stacy and Berta's, perspectives about the course. The chapter is divided into two main parts, presenting each teacher-author's reflections about the course and their experience of working in a hybrid system. With regard to their different teaching backgrounds, one of them more technology based and the other more face-to-face, the authors put themselves in the shoes of teacher-interviewees who are answering questions about their learning to teach experiences, professional development over time, their first encounters with technology as a teacher, and the role of technology in teaching vocabulary, grammar, and culture, as well as their own reflection on how they define the qualities of their teaching style.

Finally, Chapter 6 mainly discusses the gap between "research-based and practice-oriented resources" and the need to bridge theory and practice through action research that they carried out during the course of their study on the way to study the best practices. The chapter goes on with presenting some advice for teachers who are trying to integrate face-to-face and technology-based activities and practices to form and run a hybrid course. There are also advice for hybrid students and how the authors concluded the discussion. Last but not least, the chapter closes with the anticipation of the future directions of hybrid courses.

All in all, one of the key themes of this book is collaboration between two teachers with different views about how to integrate technology in classes. In doing so, they work together to design a hybrid course and then put it into practice to see for themselves how, and in what ways, hybrid courses can be effective. With their fluent and practical way of writing, the authors report their experience of running the hybrid course, followed by the learners' perceptions and opinions about it. If we are to summarise the aim of the whole book in one sentence, we will say: it looks at hybrid courses from a practical angle to bridge the gap between theory and practice through sharing experiences.

However, although the authors conclude the book with some advice and emphasise that their aim is not presenting dos and don'ts for teachers who are tasked with forming hybrid courses, this claim sounds a little impossible. Books of this nature, if looked at from above, are ultimately a series of suggestions that are not very different from dos and don'ts. Therefore, considering the fact that the book is mostly descriptive, having prescriptive conclusion drawn from the case studies reported is inevitable.