STUDENTS' READINESS AND PERCEPTION ON BLENDED LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION IN ESP CLASSROOM

Mochammad Abdullah Salim
Tadris Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Tarbiyah, Universitas Islam Tribakti Lirboyo, Indonesia
abdullahsalim@uit-lirboyo.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The introduction of blended learning in ELT has brought various positive impacts to the leaners. However, a study related to the utilization of blended learning in ESP environment is rarely undertaken. Thus, this paper provides an investigation of blended learning implementation in ESP classroom, a teaching approach that integrates between internet-based activity and the traditional daily teaching and learning. The investigation was carried out in the form of survey involving 200 ESP students as the samples of university of Muhammadiah Malang. The finding explored that the majority of the students have been ready to implement the blended learning in the learning process. it was also found that most of the students showed good perception on the blended learning implementation.

Keywords: blended learning; ELT ; ESP

ABSTRAK

Pengenalan blended learning dalam ELT telah membawa berbagai dampak positif bagi para pembelajar. Namun, penelitian terkait pemanfaatan blended learning dalam lingkungan ESP jarang dilakukan. Oleh karena itu, makalah ini menyajikan investigasi mengenai penerapan blended learning di kelas ESP, yaitu pendekatan pembelajaran yang mengintegrasikan antara aktivitas berbasis internet dan pengajaran tradisional sehari-hari. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam bentuk survei yang melibatkan 200 mahasiswa ESP sebagai sampel dari Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas mahasiswa telah siap untuk menerapkan blended learning dalam proses pembelajaran. Selain itu, ditemukan pula bahwa sebagian besar mahasiswa memiliki persepsi yang baik terhadap penerapan blended learning.

Kata kunci: blended learning; ELT; ESP

INTRODUCTION

The advent of technology in English language teaching (ELT) has brought number of advantages that ease teachers in their daily teaching. Taking advantage of information and communication technology (ICT) provides students with motivation and pleasure as well as allows them to have more communicative tasks (Elliot, 2009). Besides, technology nowadays has been involved in the students' life that make them called as digital leaners (Brown and Lee, 2015). Raihan and Lock (2010) also suggest that technology in the current era should be the crucial part to function the learning activity due to its benefits. Hence, discovering the most efficient strategy of integrating technology in organizing the learning should be taken into account by the teachers.

Furthermore, as cited in Emily and Gwendoline (2014), there are number of advantages of having e-learning or involving technology in the teaching activity. Three of those are cost

saving, immediate learning, and time saving. It is also in line with Cicco (2009) found that students in higher education have more time flexibility by taking advantage of technology in online learning. Integrating technology in the classroom can be performed in numerous methods such as by taking advantages of some learning mobile phone applications or involving social networks to facilitate the teaching. The implementation of the technology has big possibilities to be succeed since most students in higher education have more ability and confidence to use technology (Muilenburg & Berge, 2005; Hauser, Paul, Bradley, & Jeffrey, 2012). Moreover, many studies have found that integrating technology in the classroom has been successfully improved the students English skills (Harb, 2013; Ebron & Mabuan, 2016; Geta & Olango, 2016; Adas & Bakir, 2013). Hence, implementing technology in the classroom for the time being seems to be no longer a choice.

In the early implementation of technology in the classroom, teachers were introduced with computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Warschauer and Healey (1998) states that CALL has been involved in the daily teaching and learning in number of approaches. Meanwhile, the first introduction of CALL in the language learning has been started since 1981 (Davies, 2003). Many international studies found that CALL implementation in language learning has brought positive result (Faqha, 2002; Abbas, 2008; Bulut and AbuSeileek, 2009). However, the studies of technology implementation in language classroom do not stop there since they also go side by side with the technology development.

Around 2005, Mobile assisted language learning (MALL) first involved in the language teaching environment (Chinnery, 2006). It then spreads globally around 2009 at the same time with the development of mobile application for language learners by British Council (Hockly, 2013). The introduction of MALL in the language classroom is likely overtaking the position of CALL since people also begin to modify their technology preference from computer to mobile devices. It is also believed that the most functions required by learning design can be performed well by mobile devices (El-Hussein and Cronje, 2010; Sad and Goktas, 2013). They also add that the majority of studies related to mobile learnings come with positive result. In line with them, Pollara and Kee Broussard (2011) also argue that mobile learning can bring positive potency in various context especially in learning tasks.

With the growing trend of technology involvement in language learning, it builds up the concept of blended learning. In association with technology development and language learning, blended learning is described as a teaching approach which combines both traditional face to face classroom and online learning activities (Graham, 2006; 2013). In some cases, however, traditional face to face teaching provides better motivation for adult leaners that the online one. Nevertheless, it will decrease the students' possibility of success when it has to deal with some barriers that make them only have limited time in the classroom (Haye, 1988; Zacharakis et al., 2011). Thus, the idea of having blended learning will be enlarging the students chance to success. In addition, blended learning brings number of advantages for students in higher education since it facilitates the different learning needs as well as provide collaborative learning communities (Hoskins, 2012; Wyat, 2011).

Regarding the benefits of blended learning in higher education, an issue of limited time allotment appears in English in specific purposes (ESP) classroom. ESP is described as a language learning approach based on the leaners need (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Based on the interview of the lecturers of university of Muhammadyah Malang, some of them find it difficult to make the leaners master the whole skills of English effectively since the limited

time allocation for English subject. Some studies also find that teaching ESP class has its own difficulties.

Teaching ESP brings various challenges for some teachers due to there is lack of theoretical framework to support the teaching of ESP (Chen, 2011). Suzani et al. (2011) mentions there are several barriers in teaching ESP classroom such as the unreadiness of the students with the course, lack of motivation of the students as well as the passive methodology of ESP teaching. Besides, they also mention that most of them are used to dealing with traditional teaching and learning method. Even if it is hard to generalize those finding into all ESP environments, it makes the implementation of blended learning in ESP classroom comes into question. Besides, the study of the investigation related to blended learning implementation in ESP classroom is hardly can be found. Therefore, this study will investigate students' readiness and perception on blended learning implementation in ESP classroom.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study was carried out using a quantitative research methodology to allow for the precise measurement of variables which are students' readiness and perceptions, enabling researchers to identify specific factors that influence students' attitudes towards blended learning and quantify the extent of these influences. a survey instrument was used to many participants simultaneously to make the data collection process more efficient and manageable. Standardized survey instruments ensure consistency in data collection, which is essential for comparing results across different groups and time periods. By leveraging these benefits, the study can provide robust, generalizable, and actionable insights into students' readiness and perceptions of blended learning in ESP classrooms.

Participants

The subjects of this study involved 200 ESP students of university of Muhammadyah Malang. The total 200 samples were obtained after the data reduction. The reduction was administered because the data was carried out through online that makes additional participants came even after the due date. To get a better insight into the samples, the participants were asked what mobile devices that they mostly used, and what operation system installed in their devices. Those additional questions were administered to know whether the participants are already having compatible devices for the blended learning implementation.

Instrument and Data Collection

The instruments for this study involved a self-report questionnaire with 27 questions. The questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part consists of questions on the students' identity. In this part, some of the questions are optional which means that the participants may or may not complete them due to the privacy of the participants. The second part is questions related to the students' readiness of the blended learning implementation with 5 Likert scale for each question. The questions in the last part focuses on the students' perception of blended learning. The questioner was administered by taking advantage of Google Forms. In the process of developing the research instrument, a stages of instrument development by Colton and Covert was administered. The stages of the development were shown in figure 2.1.
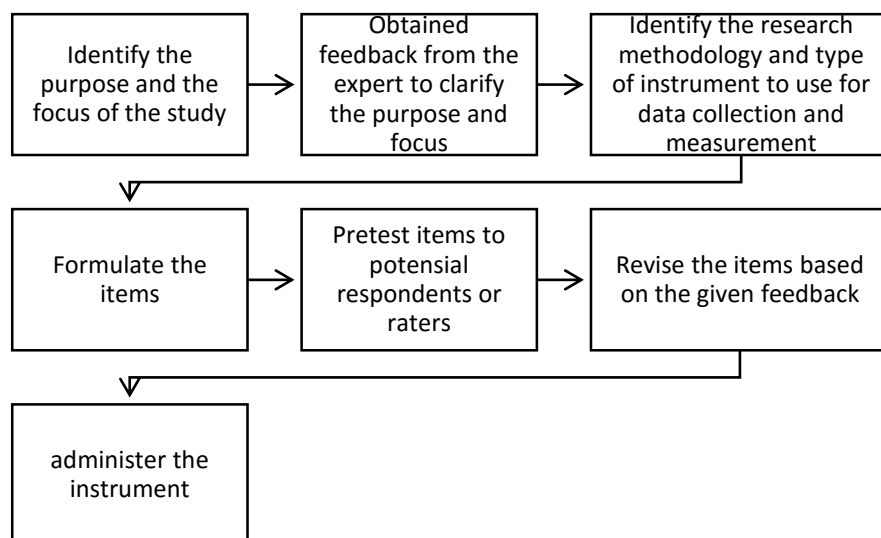
Figure 2.1

Data analysis

After checking the completion of each questionnaire, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Utilizing SPSS in this research offers a strong foundation for data analysis, allowing for accurate measurement and understanding of variables, and clear presentation of findings.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The study would like to investigate the students' perception and readiness toward the implementation of blended learning in the classroom especially for ESP students. Knowing the students' perception and readiness toward the implemented strategy is crucial to make the teacher are able to implement the strategy effectively. The teacher data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. Overall, most of the correspondents have good both perception and readiness toward the implementation of blended learning. Based on the analysis of the data obtained. The presentations of the findings are divided into two. The readiness of the students in the implementation of blended learning is illustrated in the first table. Meanwhile, the illustration of the students' perception on the utilization of the blended learning was described in the second table. The result of the investigation on the students' readiness of blended learning is in the table 3.1.

No	Students' Readiness	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Willingness	200	4,03	0,947
2	Aptitude	200	2,68	0,859
3	compatible device	200	4,30	0,911
4	time allotment	200	3,25	1,080
5	Environment	200	4,05	0,846

Table 3.1

In the remainder of the questionnaire, participants were asked to score a series of statements related to the students' perception on the implementation of blended learning with ten questions and under five different themes of questions along a Likert scale running from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree". In general, the students are ready of the implementation of blended learning in the classroom.

Over 80% of students agreed that the students can easily adopt the blended learning in the way they learn. It is in line with Thorne (2003) states that blended learning gives the best of both classroom and online learning, facilitating learning delivery by taking advantage of IT yet retaining a good degree of classroom interaction. Furthermore, this flexibility will increase access to education for all learners. That is why in terms of flexibility, over 80% of the students can adopt the flexible time of blended learning. Meanwhile, in terms of study management, there are more than 30% of the students doubting their ability to manage learning when they deal with the implementation of blended learning. In the last aspect, technology involvement, 89% of the students believe that they are ready with the technology involvement in the classroom which means that they are also ready with the blended learning implementation in this aspect. Big number of studies also found that the implementation of technology will bring positive effect toward learning (Harb, 2013; Ebron & Mabuan, 2016; Geta & Olango, 2016; Adas & Bakir, 2013).

CONCLUSION

Technology has been used widely including in the English language teaching (ELT) environment. In the context of ELT, the implementation of technology has appeared for years in various approaches, and blended learning is one of them. Many studies have found that blended learning approach provides number of advantages for ELT. However, there still questions whether the students are ready and have good perception if blended learning is administered in the ESP context. Dealing with that issue an investigation was carried out. This study would like to investigate the students' readiness and perception on blended learning implementation in ESP classroom. This study found that most students in ESP classroom are ready with blended learning. Furthermore, they also have good attitude towards the blended learning implementation. Thus, it is suggested for the teachers to implement a blended learning strategy in their teaching activity if necessary. For the following researchers, it is suggested to have wider samples of the population so that the result can be more reliable. Furthermore, since this study only focuses on the students, it is also suggested to have teachers' perception related to this issue so that questions related to this issue can have more justifiable answer.

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