

An Adaptive Blended Learning in English Language Teaching

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Abstract

The post-Covid-19 outbreak exposes vulnerabilities in the educational system. The learning process shifts from online to blended learning. This article aims to describe the process of adapting blended learning for English education students. This article discusses the process of applying blended learning to English education students, the difficulties of doing so, and the impact on students who learn using blended learning at IAIN Ponorogo. This research was conducted on 6th-semester English education students at IAIN Ponorogo. The findings of this study show that the lectures were conducted in blended learning in the English education department at IAIN Ponorogo. The students said that blended learning helps them to understand the material easily. The finding of this study also revealed a positive impact experienced by students. Adaptive blended learning provides the students with new experiences as it combines virtual face-to-face learning and classroom interaction.

Keywords: *blended learning; English language teaching; EFL students*

INTRODUCTION

Since the coronavirus disease (covid-19) spread to Indonesia, many human activities have had to undergo many changes. Educational activities have also experienced the impact of the emergence of the virus. To prevent the spread of Covid-19, the government issued orders for all educational institutions to limit and even stop various activities that cause crowds and social contact. Since then, educational activities initially carried out

face-to-face in the classroom have to turn into distance learning with an online learning system.

Online learning is a learning system that uses technology networks in the learning process (Susanti & Prameswari, 2020). The online learning system has been commonly used since 2020. Until the end of 2021, the government has permitted several levels of education in certain areas to conduct face-to-face learning again. However, it must be done within the limitations according to the level of PPKM in their respective regions. Many educational institutions are still implementing the two learning systems alternately to the current conditions of the spread of COVID-19. Many educational institutions are applying blended learning to adapt to the current pandemic conditions and educational needs.

Combining face-to-face and online learning is becoming a new method of teaching and learning. It is called blended learning. It is an educational program in which learners learn, in part, through online learning, with some control over time, place, path, and pace (Puspitasari, 2021). Hence, learners can benefit from it because space and distance no longer matter.

The face-to-face classroom exists in the present. It overviews where the class is and how it progresses (Bukhari & Mahmoud Basaffar, 2019). Both teachers and learners interact in actual courses. The teachers can respond immediately to learners' misconceptions (Brown, 2002). They give correction of the student's understanding directly. It is also helpful to live up to the curriculum and focus on the entire group's attention (Tomlinson & Whittaker, 2013; Hrastinski, 2019). It enables the teachers to observe the learners' work and collaborate and teach them in a collaborative manner that develops interpersonal skills (Fahlvik, 2014).

In this study, the researcher examines the process of adapting the implementation of blended learning to English education students at IAIN Ponorogo. In the pandemic era, students have virtual meetings during the learning process. In post-pandemic, the teaching-learning approach combines virtual and face-to-face interaction classrooms. In face-to-face learning classes, students practice their English skills directly by interacting with lecturers and friends. Still, since learning has been conducted online, many changes have occurred in it, directly impacting various aspects of student learning activities. Therefore, implementing blended learning is one

of the solutions to carrying out educational activities during the post-pandemic outbreak.

In another study conducted by Susanti & Prameswari (2020) regarding the application of blended learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, they found various challenges in the teaching and learning process experienced by students, teachers, and parents in SDIT Nurul Yakin and how they implement blended learning in English subjects. The learning process is carried out using online learning media in the form of google classroom and google meet, as well as offline learning, which is expected to be carried out by parents as teachers of the students at home.

In this study, the researchers focus on the blended learning experience of English education students at IAIN Ponorogo and find out the student's perspectives. The research questions of this research include: (1) how the process of implementing blended learning for English education students, (2) what are the challenges of implementing blended learning for English education students, and (3) the impact of blended learning on English education students.

The classroom activities can be effectively carried out by using blended learning. Using compelling interactive materials to access it online might be substituted for complete online learning in a mixed classroom approach. It may be followed by small-group work, seminars, discussions, or working on real-world case studies. The learners' performance in completing the activities is anticipated to improve.

METHODS

The research design used in this study was descriptive qualitative, where the data is collected in the form of words and presented descriptively (Cresswel, 2010). Qualitative research does not depend on the results of numerical calculations. The procedure for conducting qualitative research is flexible according to the field's needs, situations, and conditions. This method is used for analysis to describe and answer the studied problems in more detail.

By the focus of this study, the researcher described the findings related to the blended learning adaptation process experienced by English education students in the 6th semester at IAIN Ponorogo for the 2021/2022 academic year. The data obtained by the researcher was data from

interviews and observations. Interview data were acquired from the students of the English education department. The data obtained will then be analyzed in 3 phases: data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

FINDINGS

Based on the circular number: B-1363/ln.32.1/PP.00.9/02/2022 issued by IAIN Ponorogo, the implementation of blended learning at IAIN Ponorogo officially starts from the beginning of the even semester of the 2021/2022 academic year. It was precisely starting on February 21, 2022. Blended learning at IAIN Ponorogo began to be implemented after previous learning activities had to be entirely online since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. Implementing blended learning was regulated by policies set by the campus. Still, in practice, the procurement of activities learning in the classroom also depends on the consent of lecturers and students.

In general, learning activities at IAIN Ponorogo are held for 14 meetings in each course for one semester. In IAIN Ponorogo, blended learning was implemented by following the rules of online and offline learning schedules following existing regulations. English education students in the 6th semester have been determined to conduct online learning activities for 7 weeks before the midterm exams and then only be able to hold face-to-face meetings after the midterm exam for 7 weeks of learning activities until before the final exam.

During the process of teaching and learning with a blended learning model, to hold learning activities both online and offline, it is necessary to have learning media as a facility to support learning activities. In IAIN Ponorogo, the conventional classes (offline) classes are carried out in classrooms directly by utilizing physical media, just like the classes before the Covid-19 pandemic. The different thing about the classes is the implementation of health protocols. However, during online learning, using learning media such as LMS (Learning Management System), media conference apps, etc., is essential for the continuity of the teaching and learning process. The use of online learning media is even still used during face-to-face learning activities in blended learning.

The data obtained showed that 5 (Tadris Bahasa Inggris/English education) TBI classes in the 6th semester, namely TBI A, B, C, D, and

E, organized complete online learning activities during the pre-mid-semester teaching and learning process. In contrast, there were some differences in teaching and learning activities after the mid-semester.

According to the data obtained, the teaching and learning activities after mid-semester are primarily carried out online and offline. Even in some courses, many have held whole offline learning from mid-semester until before the final semester.

The most widely used learning media in all classes is Whatsapp Group. In addition to WhatsApp groups, Google classroom is an LMS application commonly used in teaching-learning. Virtual learning also cannot be separated from the conference app, where the most widely used in English education is the Google Meet application. Although these three apps are the most commonly used, many other apps are also used to support learning activities in English education classes, such as YouTube, e-learning, and zoom meetings.

The researcher gave some questions regarding the learning experience using the blended learning method to some respondents from TBI A, B, C, D, and E. From the interview, the researcher asked the student's assessment of this blended learning on a scale from 1 to 5. It used the Likert scale. They stated that their learning experiences through blended learning were good (87%). Meanwhile, 10% of informants said it was very good.

According to most respondents, the material presented during blended learning can be more easily understood because if the students have problems learning online or offline, they can ask questions to the lecturer directly during offline learning. In addition, with this learning model, students are not easily bored because they only have to do online or offline learning.

All respondents felt that the biggest obstacle experienced during semester 6 was the learning conducted after the mid-semester exam. Many schedule changes occurred, and sometimes suddenly confused.

The data shows some of the impacts felt by students, both negative and positive impacts. The impact experienced by students on the physical condition of students who become tired, some feel unable to understand the material due to confusion. Some feel it is easy to understand because learning is carried out with 2 models. Some feel blended learning is

enough to provide variety in learning activities so that learning activities are not dull.

DISCUSSION

The COVID-19 pandemic forces all educational institutions to be able to adapt to various learning conditions. Conventional learning, generally done offline before the pandemic, had to be done online at the beginning of the covid-19 pandemic. Both learning models are standard, and even many educational innovations are commonplace in various educational institutions. One of them is the implementation of blended learning to organize educational activities.

Educational activities that implement blended learning combine offline learning that is carried out face-to-face and online by utilizing a digital system; to be categorized as blended learning, at least 30 to 79% of learning activities must be carried out online using online learning media. Adaptive blended learning provides an individualized learning experience with technologies focused on the learners' strengths (Greving et al., 2020).

The data shows that learning activities in English education semester 6 IAIN Ponorogo can be categorized as blended learning. It is because, overall, over 55% of learning activities are carried out by utilizing online technology using several learning online learning media such as WhatsApp group, google classroom, e-learning, google meet, zoom meeting, and youtube. In contrast, the rest of the learning is done face-to-face (offline) in the classroom.

From the data obtained, most students think that with the implementation of blended learning, the learning material is more understandable than the previous learning method, which was only done online. Implementing blended Learning encourages students to quickly understand the material better and be more active in learning, to improve student learning outcomes. This learning also emphasizes students learn independently by utilizing various sources to increase their knowledge (Pardede, 2012; Singh, 2021).

In addition, blended learning has other advantages, namely the efficiency of learning time management and variations in learning that make students not feel bored compared to online learning. This advantage is that blended learning offers more flexibility in terms of time, place, and variety of learning methods compared to online and face-to-face methods. Based on

observations, it also shows that blended learning makes it easier for educators to share their teaching and learning materials with students through various LMS (learning Management systems) and other media as intermediaries between teachers and students. It is also said that the use of digital technology enabled online learning, where activities could be created to change in response to the demands of each individual student; Hernández & Ramírez, 2016).

Implementing blended learning also has various shortcomings, especially for those applying this learning method for the first time (Picciano et al., 2014). From the data obtained based on the respondent's answers, all agreed that the biggest obstacle to implementing blended learning was the changing learning schedule. The schedule change results from the flexibility of time and place and blended learning variations. With this flexibility, lecturers and students can change the learning schedule according to the majority agreement. Due to the schedule change, students often experience confusion about when and where or with what media the learning will take place.

From the implementation of blended learning that students have carried out for one semester. There are several impacts felt by students, both positive and negative impacts. Students can develop skills and experience using digital technology because blended learning can accommodate broad technological developments without having to leave face-to-face learning. A study conducted by Lynch & Dembo (2004b) found that in a blended educational setting, distance education and self-regulation literature identify learner self-regulation skills predictive of academic performance.

In addition, with blended learning, most students can understand the learning materials well because, in online learning, students can do independent learning by exploring information via the internet. In contrast, the lab focuses on active learning and application experiences during face-to-face learning. By having a strategy for organizing teaching, delivering appropriate, unique teaching, and making it easy for students during the learning process (Hockly, 2018), the students can be interested in the study field. With the teacher's good material delivery strategy, most students can easily understand the material. However, because the learning organization strategy, especially schedule organization, is still lacking, many

students feel confused. Learning becomes less efficient and makes it difficult for students to follow the learning process.

According to (Nguyen, 2021), a mixed learning environment combines traditional face-to-face and online engagement. Many teachers use it as a top choice for higher education in contexts that are entirely online (Al Zumor et al., 2013). The flexibility of online access to both lecture/course materials and discussions in the asynchronous classroom is allegedly provided to learners by blended courses (Hardiansyah et al., 2021), including comprehensive online courses. The crucial component of a blended learning environment. However, it is the utilization of traditional face-to-face meetings to encourage and support an online social culture that supports information acquisition through interpersonal and group debate and disclosure (Shahroom & Hussin, 2018; Sasan & Rabillas, 2022; Olah, 2019)

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Blended learning is a learning method that combines conventional classes with online digital technology-based courses that have various advantages. Among these advantages are the varied classes that make students not quickly get bored, the use of appropriate methods and media that can make students easy to understand the learning material, and advantages in terms of time, place, and learning media. Although there are many advantages obtained from blended learning, in its implementation, there are still various challenges that become obstacles for students in the learning process, such as the organization of learning that needs to be more neatly arranged so that learning becomes more efficient and can be readily accepted by students. With the implementation of blended learning, students felt a positive impact on learning, including the material being studied becoming easier to understand because of the collaboration in the use of various online learning media and the existence of face-to-face interactive classes. In addition to the positive impact, the application of blended learning also has a negative impact, namely student confusion due to some learning that is less efficient due to chaotic schedules that are not consistent and neat.

Overall, the process of adapting the application of blended learning to English education students in semester 6 of IAIN Ponorogo is quite

acceptable for students. Although there are still various challenges in the learning process, this blended learning brings learning innovations that can be considered positive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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