

The Students' Voices on the Use of Blended Learning Model in Teaching English

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Abstract

This qualitative method with a case study aims to describe the students' perception of blended learning model use in teaching and learning English as a foreign language. The research subjects were the tenth-grade students of SMAN 11 Makassar consisting of 38 students taken purposely as the sample of this research. It used semi-structured interviews as the instrument to collect the data needed using narrative analysis with the framework of qualitative analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) into four elements, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion. It was found that the students positively and negatively perceived the use of blended learning models in learning English. The positive perception was indicated by their good responses, actions, and attitudes, that is a feeling good about learning, comfortable classroom atmosphere, and feeling motivated in learning. Conversely, the students are negatively perceived due to their bad responses, actions, and attitudes, namely a feeling confused about learning, uncomfortable classroom interaction and atmosphere, and feeling demotivated in learning. These findings take into consideration that the use of blended learning may lead the students to gain either a good or bad learning mood in teaching English classroom interaction.

Keywords: students voice, blended learning, perception.

1. Introduction

Blended learning expanded from the strengths of face-to-face and distance learning. It integrates both methods of learning both traditional classroom lectures and online learning into the teaching and learning process (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). The integration of these two learning models become the essential factor for improving the quality of students as the nation's pioneers in the education area. The student's quality is exposed to be an expertise not only in technology but also a master in learning. In the process of producing competent, skillful and qualified students, teachers can avoid using various learning applications-based technology in online instruction such as WhatsApp, zoom, and google meet. Through these learning platforms, both teachers and students can easily adjust themselves to technological developments without eliminating the use of face-to-face learning.

It takes into account that the use of blended Learning models has an important role in preparing qualified students now and then. The basic principle for producing quality students is to maximize effective learning methods making the students active in learning and improve their adaptability to the development of information and communication technology-based learning. The ability is intended to deal with technological expertise in accordance with the changing times (Kusuma, 2018). Therefore, the success in the process of learning will be easily accomplished when both the teachers and students are ready to learn, requiring good interaction between them in all sequences of teaching and learning designed based on technology.

In conjunction with the above ideas, the blended-learning process is web-based learning and direct learning requiring a good and independent interaction between the students and teachers. The students are supposed to be self-controlling and self-regulatory needed to independently study using various acceptable ways as one of the four critical components in developing a learning culture with the use of learning models on the web so that they can direct, motivate, and regulate themselves in learning (Rivai & Murni, 2009). Based on the observations conducted by several researchers, it was found that the students may make some great efforts to complete assigned activities (Ridayanti, Halim, & Amin, 2023). Additionally, the teachers set up a huge amount of time allocation for struggling to meet and match between their teaching modes of material presentation with the students' different needs and versatile learning

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preferences in the classroom. Therefore, the teachers are required to go with some various flexible and effective teaching methods in English by considering all the benefits of learning based-technology. By delivering world-class content and a robust, easy-to-use framework for blended and flipped learning approaches, it is a guarantee that the students are able to study the correct stuff, more often, and with better results.

Based on the descriptions above, it is considerable that the blended learning model provides positive effects for learning and teaching that might be differently interpreted and perceived by the students in the English classroom. Therefore, it triggers a sense of curiosity to investigate the students' perception of its use in learning English as a foreign language.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Blended Learning

There are some definitions about blended learning as follows:

- 1) Blended learning combines or blends learning programs in different formats to achieve a common goal or general goals of learning (Driscoll, 2002).
- 2) Blended learning integrates both face-to-face interaction and online learning into the teaching and learning process (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008).
- 3) Blended learning is a flexible, measurable, and meaningful method of teaching and learning in which the online components of blended learning allow students to learn whenever and wherever they want, rather than being restricted to groups or partners (Senffner & Kepler, 2015).
- 4) The primary goal of a blended learning design is to determine the most effective and efficient mix of the two learning modes for the specific learning subjects, circumstances, and objectives (Neumeier, 2005).
- 5) Blended learning is an integrated learning experience organized and supervised by an instructor and includes both face-to-face conversation and virtual presence (Bryan & Bourke, 2016).
- 6) Blended learning combines traditional lecture methods and new methods that are collaborated using technology. It has been used in teaching and learning activities in the context of learning English. Teachers are seeking a way to improve students' enthusiasm in studying English through blended learning, which is being implemented in the learning system. One example is a combination use of web-based learning and use of methods face to face which is carried out simultaneously inside learning. (Siew-Eng & Muuk, 2015).

Based on the explanation above, it is possible to conclude that blended learning is a combination of traditional learning methods (face to face) and online learning methods that can be utilized in both online and offline classroom interaction.

2.2. Keys of Blended Learning

Five keys emerged as significant parts of the blended learning process (Carman, 2005), namely live events, online content, collaboration, assessment, and reference materials. Firstly, Live events are synchronous with a genuine virtual classroom where both students and teachers have a real meeting during the learning process described as a face-to-face model. Secondly, online content deals with learning experiences in which the students do assignments on their own, work individually at their own ability, speed, and time, such as interactive, Internet-based, or CD-ROM training. Thirdly, collaboration going to e-mail, threaded discussions, and online chat are examples of contexts in which students can communicate with one another in situations and environments. Fourthly, assessments are a measure of the students' knowledge to identify their prior knowledge, pre-assessments that can occur prior to having real-class, and post-assessments can occur following the schedule or online learning sessions to measure their learning outcomes. Finally, reference materials refer to all things that help improve the retention and transfer of knowledge in which they are authoritative sources of information providing facts, explanations, or guidance and are primarily used to look up specific pieces of information, rather than for cover-to-cover reading.

2.3. Characteristics of Blended Learning

Blended learning is the solution in the new normal period of the Covid-19 pandemic to give resources that must be delivered face-to-face, such as the application of students' attitudes and character values and direct practice of the content (Hikmah & Chudzaifah, 2020). Additionally, the characteristics of blended learning (Nurhadi, 2020) are as follows:

- 1) The learning and teaching process integrate several learning models and the usage of media based on information and communication technology.
- 2) Combining face-to-face and online learning can make the students learn independently under the guidance of the facilitator.
- 3) Learning is efficiently provided, which is aided by learning methods and learning styles.
- 4) Both parents and teachers play important roles in helping children' learning processes since parents serve as motivators and instructors serve as facilitators.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that blended learning has its own characteristics making possible the effectiveness of blended learning not rely on incorporating online content but also on integrating digital and traditional methods in a way which is pedagogically sound and centered on student learning motivation.

2.4. Perception

Perception has already been defined by some outstanding authors as follows:

- 1) The word “perception” in English comes from the Latin “perceptio,” which means to receive or take. It in a general sense refers to a person's vision or comprehension of something, specifically how that she observes or interprets that thing (Alex, 2003).
- 2) Perception is the process of psychology in which individuals could convert reactions into positive or negative impressions depending on their five sense experiences (Erin & Maharani, 2018).
- 3) Perception is the consciousness of a human brain activity manifesting as the viewpoint of a phenomenon (Koentjaraningrat, 2010).
- 4) Perception is a process of processing data from the senses in order to create meaning to our surroundings (Saks, 2011).
- 5) The ability of the senses to translate stimuli, or the process of translating stimuli into human senses is referred to as perception. In human perception, there is a distinction between detecting something that is excellent or positive perception and feeling something that is negative perception that would affect human activity (Sugihartono, 2007).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that perception is the experience of objects, events, or relationships received through the process of acquiring and processing information.

2.5. Types of Perception

There are three types of perception, that is positive, negative, and neutral perceptions described in the following lines.

1) Positive perception

Positive perceptions are defining all knowledge (whether known or unknown) and the responses that will continue to be exhibited in efforts to apply it (Irwanto, Hadisoepadmo, Priyani, Wismanto, & Fernandes, 2002). It is a type of responses, actions, or attitudes demonstrating, accepting, recognizing, approving, and implementing the standards that the individual is positioned (Ahmadi, Psikologi Sosial, 1999). Positive perception implies that there is a favorable reaction to the viewed target as the result of an individual's contentment with a specific thing which becomes her/his source perception, as well as the individual's knowledge and experience with the object experienced (Robbins & Judge, 2006).

2) Negative perception

Negative perception defines knowledge (whether known or unknown) and responses that are not allied with the item being experienced (Irwanto, Hadisoepadmo, Priyani, Wismanto, & Fernandes, 2002). It means that it is a negative reaction to the viewed target as a form of behavior, actions, or attitudes communicating rejection or disapproval of the dominant norms in the individual's environment (Ahmadi, Psikologi Sosial, 1999). Besides, it stems from the individual's unhappiness with a certain thing which becomes his/her source of perception, the individual's ignorance, and the individual's lack of experience with the object viewed (Robbins & Judge, 2006).

3) Neutral perception

When both positive and negative impacts are limited, neutrality emerges in which the situation exemplifies a state of neutrality, that is one feels neither strongly positive nor strongly negative. He also stated that the neutral effect is not the same as experiencing nothing, but rather nothing in particular that might be as simple as feeling indifferent, having no preference one way or the other (Gasper, 2018).

Based on the explanation, it can be concluded that perception is made up of various components and is influenced by several circumstances that influence how an individual perceives the perception's target. The process of selection, organizing, and interpretation culminates in a response, which might be positive, negative, or neutral.

3. Methodology

This research used a qualitative method with case study. Its subject was the tenth-grade students of SMAN 11 Makassar consisting of 38 students taken as the research sample purposely as because they showed learning enthusiasm and motivation through the blended learning models applied by their teachers based on the previous classroom observation conducted. The instrument used to collect the data was a semi-structured interview using Miles and Hubermann (1994) of narrative data analysis consisting of four aspects, they are data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data collection, the data through interviews and documentation was gathered. The data collected was reduced by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transcribing the data, utilizing coding techniques to uncover the patterns and themes in the data. The data then was to display something known as data presentation to know what is going on and plan future work. The data finally was to draw conclusions and verify them in which the preliminary conclusions are still tentative and subject to change if no significant evidence is discovered.

4. Findings and Discussions

The narrative analysis of the semi structured interview found that the students positively and negatively perceived the use of blended learning models indicated by their responses, action, and attitudes demonstrated during the English teaching and learning processes in the classroom. The description of these findings is in the following lines.

4.1. Students' Positive Perception

The positive perception of the students was indicated by their good responses, actions, and attitudes in learning English through the utilization of blended learning models, that is a feeling good of learning, comfortable classroom atmosphere, and feeling motivated in learning as shown in the following descriptions of extracts.

1) Feeling good of learning

The use of the blended learning model in English classrooms positively channels the students to have an enjoyment in learning providing a source of learning that can break from the monotony of reading books or solely focusing on the teacher's instructions in line with all sequences of activities provided that can be seen in the following extracts.

Extract 1 (RD, 26 March 2024)

“Saya senang belajar kak, apalagi ketika guru menggunakan metode lain untuk mengajar. Dengan blended learning ini kan bisa merefreshkan otak karena tidak melulu dituntut untuk mendengarkan penjelasan guru”. (I enjoy learning, especially when the teacher uses other methods to teach. By blended learning, I can refresh my brain because I am not always required to listen to the teacher's explanation).

Extract 2 (AA, 26 March 2024)

“Lumayan suka sih kak, soalnya menurutku itu bisa buat jadi bahan hiburan biar nda selalu monoton baca buku atau perhatikan guru terus saja”. (I quite like it, because I think it can be used as entertainment material so that it is not always monotonous to read books or pay attention to the teacher).

Extract 1 (RD, 26 March 2024)

“Saya lebih semangat dan senang kak karena model pembelajaran ini bervariasi dan memperbolehkan untuk menggunakan gadget dalam proses pembelajaran”. (I feel enthusiastic and happy because this learning model is varied and allows to use gadgets in the learning process).

2) Comfortable classroom atmosphere

The application of the blended learning models in English classroom interaction puts the students into a comfortable classroom atmosphere in the frame of material presentations and learning activities integrated between face to face and online learning interaction through some applicable learning technologies. These classroom interactions positively lead the students to have a good learning mood and concentration as it could slightly avoid them feeling bored in learning as proved in the following extracts.

Extract 3 (RK, 26 March 2024)

“emm, situasi kelas cukup menyenangkan dalam proses pembelajaran campur , teman-teman juga kelihatan senang, apalagi ketika banyak siswa sudah mulai kelihatan bosan atau tidak memperhatikan guru.” (Well, the classroom situation is quite enjoyable during the mixed learning process. Friends also seem happy, especially when many students start to look bored or not pay attention to the teacher).

Extract 4 (AA, 26 March 2024)

“Kalau yang saya liat, senang semua ji kak. Apalagi jaman sekarang gadget sudah dipakai banyak tempat dalam proses belajar.” (As I saw, everyone was happy. Especially now that gadgets are used in many places in the learning process)

3) Feeling motivated in learning

The blended learning model in teaching and learning leads the students to find their learning enthusiasm and happiness triggering their learning motivation in English as a foreign language. Additionally, the students gave an emphasis the importance and convenience of supplementary online learning resources in the blended learning models making them find an exciting learning adventure with their peers to sustainably get engaged and motivated by accessing some diverse sources of information beyond traditional textbooks, such as YouTube and matching with the students' learning style as a result. Those perceptions can be found in the following extracts.

Extract 5 (RK, 26 March 2024)

“Iya kak, selama pembelajaran offline-online ini saya termotivasi sekali belajarku kak, karena tidak hanya ki belajar melalui buku saya bisaki belajar dari sumber lain dari internet” (Yes, sis. During this blended learning, I feel very motivated in my studies because not only do I learn through books, but I can also learn from other sources like YouTube).

Extract 8 (AA, 26 March 2024)

“Cukup termotivasi kak, karena kalau saya pribadi untuk belajar pake media online itu suka karena itu sesuai dengan model belajarku, kak.” (I'm quite motivated, sis, because personally, I enjoy studying using online media because it fits my learning style).

4.2. Negative Perception

One student negatively perceived the use of blended learning models in teaching and learning English as a foreign language for them due to their bad responses, actions, and attitudes, namely a feeling confused of learning, uncomfortable classroom interaction and atmosphere, and feeling demotivated in learning. The description of these negative points of view is in the following elaboration.

1) Feeling confused of learning

The use of blended learning models makes the students get confused to learn English because of the availability of diverse learning materials. The huge number of learning references put them into the inability to sort and select materials to be learnt. That is the reason why they prefer having face-to-face interaction to the online one. These points of view obviously show that they need for clearer instruction, guidance, and learning management to help them choose the most relevant resources in line with their learning need analysis and preferences. These data can be seen in the following extract.

Extract 9 (ASA, 26 March 2024)

“Jujur kak, saya merasa pembelajaran bahasa Inggris melalui blended learning membingungkan. Ada begitu banyak sumber belajar yang mana membuat saya bingung yang mana harus saya pelajari dan saya lebih suka kalau tatap muka belajarnya daripada lewat online kak, soalnya saya susah fokus, di kelas saja kadang tidak saya perhatikan”. (Honestly, sis. I feel that learning English through blended learning is confusing. There are so many learning resources which make me confused about which ones I should study and I prefer face-to-face learning over online learning, I find it hard to focus, I don't pay attention in class sometimes).

2) Uncomfortable classroom interaction and atmosphere

The student negatively perceives the blended learning models particularly the online learning due to the appearance of non-interactive classroom atmosphere making it hard for the student to stay focused on learning and distracted by other things during the teaching learning process. This condition slightly puts the student into academic learning boredom as shown in the following extract.

Extract 10 (ASA, 26 March 2024)

“Situasi kelas pas pembelajaran online kurang menarik dan membuat saya sulit fokus belajar tapi kalau pembelajaran offline saya suka kak, setidaknya tidak terganggu sama aktivitas yang lain karena belajar di dalam kelas jadi harus perhatikan penjelasannya guru, kalau online kan bisa saja saya main gadget buka sosmed kalau bosanka” (The classroom situation during online learning is less interesting and makes it difficult for me to focus on learning but I like face-to-face learning, at least I am not disturbed by other activities because I learn in the classroom so I have to pay attention to the teacher's explanation, in online class I can just play gadgets open social media if I feel bored).

3) Feeling demotivated in learning

As with the previous condition, the students negatively perceived the use of online learning as part of the blended learning models applied by the teachers in teaching and learning English. They convincingly confirmed that the online learning models will easily make them feel bored and sleepy. Consequently, their learning interest and motivation are easily distracted due to the appearance of confusing learning resources hindering their ability to stay engaged and interested in the learning process. Conversely, the face-to-face learning interaction will draw their focused attention to the lessons presented by the teachers because of the classroom situation. Their points of view can be seen in the following extracts.

Extract 11 (ASA, 26 March 2024)

“Kalau saya, saya kurang bersemangat kak kalau belajar lewat zoom atau video call WA, karena seperti yang kubilang tadi, akan bisaka terdistrek dengan hal yang lain, apalagi kalau belajar online begitu biasanya saya di kamar duduk di tempat tidur, jadi biasa saya mengantuk jadinya nda fokusma belajar. kalau di kelas kan beda, duduk di bangku yang keras baru ketemu sama teman-teman, guru juga ada di depanku menjelaskan.” (For me, I'm less excited kak learning via zoom or google meet, because as I said, I will be distracted by other things, especially if online learning, I usually in the room sitting on the bed, so I usually feel sleepy so that I don't focus on learning. It's different with learning in class, sitting on a hard bench and then meeting friends, the teacher is also in front of me explaining).

Extract 12 (SA, 7 March 2024)

“Menurutku kak, blended learning tidak memotivasi saya untuk belajar bahasa Inggris. Materi online terlalu rumit, dan saya sulit untuk tetap tertarik.” (In my opinion kak, Blended learning isn't motivating me to learn English. The online resources are confusing, and I struggle to stay interested).

Those findings above obviously point out that the use of blended learning models lead the students to have both positive and negative perceptions for a variety of logical and acceptable reasons. Basically, it may come on the surface due to the various ways of teachers delivering and creating learning materials and interaction. Regarding the positive point, Andriyani, Maulina et al (2022) found that the process of learning English through blended learning was well-implemented, indicated by a high level of favorable perceptions when learning English through WhatsApp integrated with a face-to-face language learning interaction. Meanwhile, the negative perception is empirically supported by Khaerunnisa' research (2021) found that the students feel uncomfortable to learn English virtually as they find it difficult to understand the material due to the unclear teachers' explanation.

In conjunction with the availability of negative perceptions toward the use of the blended learning models, it is suggested the teachers should consider the steps of using them to avoid the unexpected things during the processes of teaching and learning English. Those steps are planning, designing and developing, implementing, and reviewing and evaluating (Bath & Bourke, 2010). The teacher should make a good plan in terms of the course contents, learning resources, learning activities, and assessments, and identify the technological use which is familiar and applicable for the students. In terms of designing and developing, the teacher should define learning objectives, activities, and assessments to have a further development for their learning materials presented in the applicable blended learning models by creating numerous types and strategies for evaluating them before teaching. Next, the teacher should take into account the students' participation in learning through the blended learning used to go with learning activities using a variety of teaching and learning approaches, methods, and techniques matching with the students' needs and learning styles. Finally, the teacher should provide both online and offline feedback to review and evaluate what both the teacher and the students have already done to examine the weak and the strong points of blended learning models in teaching. Those steps are expected to provide a good online and offline classroom interaction and atmosphere to make the students sustainably keep engaged with their learning interest, motivation, mood in learning English as a result.

5. Conclusion

The description of those findings above takes into consideration that the tenth-grade students of SMAN 11 Makassar mostly positively perceived the use of blended learning models in learning English and others came with a negative one. The students with positive perceptions tend to enjoy learning, feel comfortable in classroom interaction and atmosphere, and have a good spirit of learning. Meanwhile, the students with the negative tend to feel confused by the amount of learning materials provided, do not find an interesting classroom interaction and atmosphere, and feel demotivated to learn due to the online learning resources. However, the use of blended learning leads the students to gain either good or bad learning mood showing their reflection on every single thing performed by their teacher in EFL classroom interaction.

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