

# Accelerate Language Learning through Blended Learning: Does It Work?

Djuria Suprato<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Language Center, English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

**Keywords:** Technology, Learning, Students Technology.

**Abstract:** As technology develops, learning no longer relies on face to face in the classroom. Online learning provides easier communication between learners and teachers. It facilitates a very flexible learning in terms of time and place. However, in language learning face to face is still needed to enable learners to imply the exercises they do through online, ask questions to the teacher related to the material, prepare next topic; etc. The term Blended learning is learning through both of these methods, online and face to face. This article is to observe whether Blended learning can be applied effectively and achieve the learning outcome. The method used is a descriptive method of analysis by involving 65 students as an observation object including class completion, average score and time on task. The final result will be compared to the previous result whether the level changed. It is expected that students can improve the language level. Research shows the increase in levels is not significant and tends not to increase. It indicates that students focus only to fulfil the requirement of passing mark only, not to improve themselves in using English. The effectiveness of this method of learning depends on how students see the importance of the materials given, not because of their intention to do it. However, this method is a promising way to be implied with the concern of teachers to motivate students in doing online exercises.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Technology changes our way of life drastically. These technological advances have an impact on all aspects, including the development of education. We are encouraged to improve the quality of education as the progress in technological advancement. Teachers are expected to be more innovative and creative to encourage their students to improve their ability. In fact, teachers cannot add face to face time anymore for non-English department students in learning English. The schedule is only once a week @ 100 minutes. It will not be able to pursue technological progress that develops every second. Learning English time for students must be increased. To increase the learning hours in the classroom is not possible because the time is set for many other courses (besides English). Recently, the educational research literature has indicated that blended approaches to learning might provide an optimal environment for enhancing student engagement and success (Vaugan, N., 2014). For that, students are given the training through online that can be done anywhere and anytime, so the time

to learn will be more than face to face. Blended learning is one of the alternatives offered to students that combines classroom meetings and online training, thus accelerating the delivery of learning materials that have only been done face to face in the classroom. Students are expected to accelerate the learning of English and improve the level of English proficiency. According to Kintu's research results (Kintu, M., J., Zu., C.; Kagambe, E.) indicated that some of the student characteristics/backgrounds and design features are significant predictors of student learning outcomes in blended learning, so the writer would like to do this observation. This study involved 65 *Tarumanagara University* students who were regularly given training each week 1 unit of lessons. Lecturers observed students by simply reminding them to do online learning, explore to learn the topic given and do the exercises, then do the test for each unit and expected they could improve unit by unit.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Blended learning can be defined differently based on the implementation of the field. Blended learning at UWS refers to a strategic and systematic approach to combining times and modes of learning, integrating the best aspects of face-to-face and online interactions for each discipline, using appropriate ICTs (Saliba G., 2013; Rankine L., 2013; Cortez, L., 2013). Bowyer (Bowyer, J., 2017) defined Blended learning as a mixture of online and face-to-face learning. In the literature, blended learning is also known as 'hybrid learning' or the 'flipped classroom'. In this study Blended learning means combining face to face lessons in the classroom and online materials given based on the student's English proficiency level, so that students learn more lessons and more hours lecture than usual. According to Krause (2007) in Bath (Bath, D., 2010; Bourke, J., 2010), Blended learning is realized in teaching and learning environments where there is an effective integration of different models of delivery, models of teaching and styles of learning as a result of adopting a strategic and systematic approach to the use of technology combined with the best features of face to face interaction. This means this approach involved two ways of teaching and learning applied to students. Face to face learning is a traditional way of teaching and learning, whereas online learning. The implementation of the combination of these two ways still needs the involvement of the teacher/instructor to guide the students to do their learning well. There are three components of the Blended Learning model stated in Kaur (Kaur, M., 2013), Learning environment, media component, and Instructional component. Even though each learning environment has advantages and disadvantages, the objective of blended learning is to leverage the specific positive attributes of each environment to ensure the optimum use of resources to obtain the goal of learning. Media refers to the tools to deliver materials, no media can be better or worse, but the most appropriate for the students should be selected to drive students to learn well. Instructional components consist of instructional strategies to support learning objectives. Traditional classrooms allow instructors and learners to be face-to-face in the same place. The subjects usually consist of topics such as complex, broad, programmatic or new content, that require face-to-face interaction, expert observation, culture building, team building, networking, business problem solving or materials to be presented by an instructor or facilitator. The term

Instructor-Led Training (ILT) is used synonymously with on-site training and classroom training (Woodall, D., 2010) virtual classroom allows instructors and learners to be in different places at the same time, and allows the instructor to archive the event for later viewing. These events are usually conducted through the use of virtual meeting tools. The topics covered can be similar to those dealt with in a live classroom unless they are too complex or contentious (Woodall, D., 2010).

## 3 METHODOLOGY

This study used the observation of students in the same major instructed to do online learning, whereas traditional face-to-face classroom runs as usual. The face-to-face classroom and online class run parallel. The students were the first time doing Blended Learning, so the beginning of class started with an explanation of Blended Learning (what and how), then in meeting two (week 2) they sat for the initial test. The material of the test was TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) listening and reading skills. The initial test determined the level of material taught for online learning. The online materials started in week 3. They are expected to finish each lesson in one week. Each week, the material is opened one unit and is closed in following week when the other opened. The material is from English Discovery (<http://ed.engdis.com>) which materials consist of exploring, practice, and test. The total units are 10 units, unit 1-5 was opened all unit in the middle of the semester, and unit 6-10 was also opened at the end of the semester to provide students a chance for reviewing and revising. The completion and the test score were a part of the assignment score. The face-to-face learning discussed listening and reading TOEIC materials and discussed their difficulties in doing online materials. They can ask as many questions to the instructor related to online materials. Besides face-to-face meeting, students were provided instructor individual contact, they can contact and ask questions whenever they got difficulties related to English online learning. Data is retrieved from the initial score (from the level proficiency) and the final score. The score comparison indicates the alteration of the initial level to the final level. In this vein, it signifies whether it is increased, stable, or decreased. The time used for online is also a part of the consideration in concluding this study. In the end, it

will conclude where the Blended Learning implemented works or not.

#### 4 DISCUSSION AND RESULT

The result of the initial test determined the students' level of material given. Average students observed level is Intermediate with 50 students over 65 observed (intermediate 1=37%, intermediate 2 =

17%, intermediate 3=15%). After 5 units online and half semester face to face (7 meeting once a week), the result was all in intermediate levels, it means the increase of the basic level (15%) and decreasing of advanced level (7%). The final Test result is different from mid-semester test. 10% was back to basic level and 8% is advanced level. In general, the result is almost the same as the initial test. The result of the test is as follows (table 1)

Table 1. The Result of the Test.

Level	TOEIC Score Range	Initial Test	%	Mid Test	%	Final Test	%
Basic 1	125-180	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Basic 2	185-225	2	3%	0	0%	2	3%
Basic 3	230-360	8	12%	0	0%	8	12%
Intermediate 1	365-550	24	37%	18	28%	12	18%
Intermediate 2	555-675	11	17%	37	57%	21	32%
Intermediate 3	680-785	15	23%	10	15%	14	22%
Advanced 1	790-870	1	2%	0	0%	5	8%
Advanced 2	875-945	4	6%	0	0%	3	5%
Total		65	100%	65	100%	65	100%

Individually, students' level is almost the same (no change) from initial to final test (62%). 18 students (28%) get increased 1 level. 1 student (2%) increased 2 levels and 1 students (2%) increased 3 levels, there are 5 students (8%) decreased 1 level.

Table 2. Summary of individual changes level.

Changes	Total	Percentage
No change (same level)	40	62%
Increase 1 level	18	28%
Increase 2 level	1	2%
Increase 3 level	1	2%
Decrease 1 level	5	8%
Total	65	100%

Students are expected to spend 2 hours for each unit in doing online material every week. They are expected to spend 20 hours in total (10 units x 2 hours). In fact, from the observation, the average time is only 11 hours 8 minutes and 34 seconds or 55.71%. It was far from the expectations. Online learning model has not yet become a learning model for these observed students. This was the first time they do it. The focus of the students so far is passing this course, whereas the lecturer's expectation is to improve the quality of his own English mastery.

Related to the blended learning component, in terms of the learning environment, students are accustomed to using gadgets, accessing the internet and browsing various things. No more obstacles for them when they access English discovery and do their assignment, It can be seen from their test results, almost all of them get good grades. Media component is also familiar to students, they know how to access materials. They can ask questions to lecturers and friend (they have a social media group for asking and answering questions for online learning). Instructional component is implemented by social media and face to face class. They were instructed well.

#### 5 CONCLUSION

Based on the research, 62% of students exhibit no change in level, although there was a 1% increase (28%), it can be concluded there is no effect of the learning that has been done during this semester. The causes were the material given online and face to face was different, so it cannot help students to increase their ability in doing the TOEIC test. The exercises conducted online is only for them to

practice general English with a different topic of the TOEIC, only face to face that can affect the student strategy to answer questions on the final test. Online only helps students in practicing especially the implementation of strategy in answering TOEIC questions especially reading and listening. In addition, students would like to do the online materials given to get a score (it is a part of the assignment score to count their grades), not to improve their ability in English. Teachers have to match the objective and the materials given. To know how far the effect of this blended learning, we should do further research to see the background of the students and design features. This method still can be used with concern of teachers to motivate students to continue learning English after passing the English course without teachers' supervision. As Graham (2006) stated in Güver (Güver, B., 2014; Caner, H., 2014) that blended learning would have a great role in the future and it would be dominated by the distributed learning environments.

Vaughan, N., 2014 *Student Engagement and Blended Learning: Making the Assessment Connection* *Education Sciences* 4 pp 247-264  
doi:10.3390/educsci4040247

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was funded by Bina Nusantara University and data collection was gathered in Tarumanagara University.

## REFERENCES

- Bath, D., and Bourke, J., 2010 *Getting Started With Blended Learning* (UK: Griffith Institute for Higher Education)
- Bowyer, J., 2017 *Evaluating Blended Learning: Bringing The Elements Together Online*  
<http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/research-matters/>
- Güver, B., and Caner, H., 2014 *The past, present and Future of blended learning: an in depth analysis of literature* *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 116 pp 4596 – 4603
- Kaur, M., 2013 *Blended Learning-its challenges and future* *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 93 pp 612-617.
- Kintu, M., J., Zu., C., and Kagambe, E., *Blended Learning Effectiveness: The Relationship between Student Characteristics, design features, and outcomes* *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 14(7)
- Saliba G, Rankine L and Cortez, L., 2013 *Fundamental of Blended learning* (Sydney: University of Western Sydney)
- Woodall, D., 2010 *Blended learning strategies: Selecting the best* *SSWP*.1610.0810