

Blended Learning Voice: Students' Perceptions Of Mid Transitioning Into Digital Needs Of Academic Reading

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Abstract: Blended learning is one of the e-learnings to be concerned its improvement and it can not be apart from the digital learning practices. Moreover, the application of blended learning itself is such of educational innovation in the 21st century era not only in Indonesian setting but also in the worldwide spread. In fact, the deployment of blended learning which is covered by e-learning in Indonesia is not good enough in higher education setting. The present study investigated students' perception of applying it in an academic reading class as part of demand in digital era. The descriptive study was employed to analyze the students' questionnaire toward the application of blended learning during classroom practices with the 30 participants took part in the research. The students' positive responses and interpretation from students revealed of implementation of it though some troubles occurred during teaching and learning process. From the result of the data, it indicates that blended learning can be one of the educators' choices of classroom practices in order to improve the quality of higher education and it provides innovation of education in digital era. The study provides the limitations and pedagogical suggestions.

Keywords: Blended Learning, Academic Reading, Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Educational innovation is one of the government efforts in improving the quality of education especially in higher education (Indonesian Government Vision, Mission and Plan, 2014). Nowadays, innovation especially in educational setting is deliberately related to Information and Technologies (ICTs). Besides, the basic output of Indonesian country in which the integration of ICTs and the educational setting develop the quality and access of education to especially university students around.¹ The worldwide facts indicates that the access of education widespreadly occurred because of technology.² Also, the influence of ICTs toward educators and learners stimulate them to be innovative during classroom practices yet the learning environment

¹ D. Kunaefi, "ICT in University Teaching/Learning and Research in Southeast Asian Countries: A Case of Indonesia" (Jakarta: Directorate General Higher Education Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2006).

² L. M. Jeffrey, L. M., Milne, Suddaby G. J, and A. Higgins, "Blended Learning: How Teachers Balance the Blend of Online and Classroom Components," *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research* 13 (2014): 121-140.

is supported to do one.³ Recent years, the applications of Web 2.0 Technologies also have coloured significantly in Chinese educational setting.⁴ The role of ICTs then beneficial in calssroom setting for supporting the academic activities but not limited to Internet-based content.⁵

As the realization of optimalization of ICTs as the soulpart of education, blended learning is such of recent crucial ways for meeting the educational worldwide demand in 21st century. As it is stated by Bernatek, Cohen, Hanlon & Wilka (2012)⁶ that integrating between pedagogy and practice in educational setting with donating the technology role as the part of the academic practices innovation⁷. This blended learning provides the flexibility and comforness to the students becuase of prior activities are conducted on line, besides FtF or Face to Face activities may be done for crucial consideration between teacher and students so that increasing the learnig community is recommendable to support effective learning.⁸ Some benefits are offered by applying blended learning such as; freeness of access, flexibility, active learning zone, self-regulated learning promotes.⁹ From considerations aforementioned, the blended learning is noticeable to be applied by Indonesian educators in facing globalization.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research question was, “What are students’ perceptions of application blended learning in academic reading class in terms of utility, satisfaction and motivation?”. For conducting the study, questionnaire with Likert Scale 5 was administered to the students online at the end of the semester. The considerations of choosing the online mode were flexibility and privacy terms. The term flexibility refers to the online questionnaire provides free times and place to poll the choices while the following term “ privacy” means the educators or other friends surely possible to not record one’s polls. Furthermore, the objective of the study was at measuring students’ perceptions in terms of utility, satisfaction and motivation during the implementation of blended learning in classroom practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

³ M. López-Pérez, M. Pérez-López, and L. Rodríguez-Ariza, “Blended Learning in Higher Education: Students’ Perceptions and Their Relation to Outcomes,” *Computers & Education* 56 (2011): 818–826.

⁴ R. Shih, “Can Web 2.0 Technology Assist College Students in Learning English Writing? Integrating Facebook and Peer Assessment with Blended Learning,” *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology* 27, no. 5 (2011): 829-845.

⁵ S. Paturusi, Y. Chisaki, and T. Usagawa, “Assessing Lecturers and Student’s Readiness for E-Learning,” *GSTF Journal on Education (JeD)* 2, no. 2 (March 2015).

⁶ B. Bernatek, J. Cohen, J. Hanlon, & M. Wilka, “Blended Learning in Practice. Introduction to Case Studies from Leading Schools” (Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, 2012).

⁷ Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi, “Metamorfosa Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam,” *AT-Tabdzib: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Muamalah* 4, no. 1 (2016): 92–109.

⁸ C. Chen, and K. Jones, “Blended Learning vs. Traditional Classroom Settings: Assessing Effectiveness and Student Perceptions in an MBA Accounting Course,” *The Journal of Educators Online* 4, no. 1 (January 2007).

⁹ G. Saliba, L. Rankine, and H. Rankine, *Fundamentals of Blended Learning* (Sydney: University of Western Sydney, 2013).

Some evidences indicated that application of blended learning significantly and positively influence classroom.¹⁰ The positive impact of applying online learning and instructions showed in language learning¹¹. Then, the blended learning is one of the teaching method which is assured to be supplemental solution for classroom learning.¹² The implementation of blended learning then provides big role for promoting students' achievement cognitively, motorically and affectively (Bawaneh, 2011). Another research also reported that the use of blended learning got positive result if it compared with the pure face to face activities during teaching and learning process.¹³ The same voice of application of blended learning occurred that combining two models of learning: traditional and online affected dramatical result on academic writing class (Mizayoe & Anderson, 2009).

E-Learning in Indonesia

As the part of realization of implementing the e-learning, the coverage of blended learning, the Indonesian government through the decree of ministry of Education and Culture declared the program of the integrated and opened Indonesian e-learning since 2014 (Guidelines of KDIIT, 2014). Through the program, all of the higher education institutions both public and privates are demanded to develop the courses with Internet-based content. The considerations for choosing higher education as the stakeholder of e-learning because of the worldwide demands and the globalization competences¹⁴. As the previous description of the worldwide facts of digital learning in which the access of education and flexibility of education are commonly offered to the students without limitations of place and time so that the education for whoever is achieved¹⁵. Higher education is then directly facing the challenges from digital and globalization era so that the global competencies are crucially needed for university students as the part of the input before working. To support the government program, some universities and higher education institutions now preparing the e-learning in which the forthcoming will be mandatory for all higher educations.¹⁶

Theoretical Framework

As it is explained from the previous session. The author intended to study extent the students' perceptions regarding the blended learning application during the classroom activities (utility, satisfaction and motivation) are described in detail from the questionnaire. The utilizing of blended learning is the primary-topic to be discussed for evaluating the application of blended learning during teaching and learning process and to do forthcoming activities related to it. The

¹⁰ Jeffrey, Milne, Suddaby, and Higgins, "Blended Learning: How Teachers Balance the Blend of Online and Classroom Components," 121-140.

¹¹ Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi, "Paradigma Pergeseran Educational Technology Menuju Instructional Technology" (2017).

¹² Shih, "Can Web 2.0 Technology Assist College Students in Learning English Writing? Integrating Facebook and Peer Assessment with Blended Learning," 829-845.

¹³ P. Mitchell, and P. Forer, "Blended Learning: The Perceptions of First-Year Geography Students," *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 34, no. 1 (2010): 77-89.

¹⁴ Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi, "Landasan Historis Perkembangan Teknologi" (2017).

¹⁵ Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi, "Kawasan Teknologi Pembelajaran" (2017).

¹⁶ Kunaefi, "ICT in University Teaching/Learning and Research in Southeast Asian Countries: A Case of Indonesia."

indicators showed the utilization of blended learning environments provide the effective and efficient learning style to students, promote students' engagement and empowerment during academic activities, active learning and construct problem-based learning.¹⁷ The perceptions of utility derived of blended learning, the students can easily express their preferences, their problems encountered during the use of it and students' advantages of learning tools provided during classroom activities.¹⁸ The second part of students' perceptions assessed is in the term of satisfaction¹⁹. Some authors have reported that student satisfaction increases when blended learning is adopted (Lim & Morris, 2009). The motivation to learn is one of the variables that has most often been studied in the field of education (Lim & Morris, 2009). The possibility of having more types of interaction has proved to be a factor that increases motivation, creating positive attitudes towards learning and leading to higher marks being awarded (Donnelly, 2010²⁰; Woltering et al., 2009)²¹.

RESEARCH METHOD

Participants

The study was conducted to the 30 students with lower intermediate reading proficiency who studied academic reading. During a semester, blended learning has been utilized for academic activities which combined face to face interaction and online mode during learning. By giving them an online questionnaire, the study was aiming to find out the students' perceptions on application of blended learning at one of private universities in Ciamis, West Java.

Research Design

The answers of the online questionnaire were measured by using descriptive analysis on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated "lowest degree of interest or of agreement" and 5 indicated "highest degree of interest of agreement" or vice versa depending on the items of the statement. After the data collected online, the value of data were given for each answers. Then the frequency answers were also multiplied which is totally added at the end of activity. For getting the result of interpretation for this case was students' perceptions on utility, satisfaction and motivation toward application of blended learning, the multiplication of the highest and lowest score and the total number of the students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

¹⁷ Linda De George, Walker, Hafeez-A. Baig, R. Gururajan, and P. A. Danaher, "Experiences and Perceptions of Learner Engagement in Blended Learning Environments: The Case of an Australian University," ed. Y. Inoune, *Cases on Online and Blended Learning Technologies in Higher Education: Concept and Practices* (Harsey, New York: Information Science Reference, 2010), 23-43.

¹⁸ López-Pérez, Pérez-López, and Rodríguez-Ariza, "Blended Learning in Higher Education: Students' Perceptions and Their Relation to Outcomes," 818-826.

¹⁹ Muh. Barid Nizarudin Wajdi, "المناهج التعليمية للغة العربية في تطوير المفردات لغبر الناطقين بها," *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah; Vol 5 No 1 (2016): January 2016 (2016)*, <http://ejournal.stimuhpaitan.ac.id/index.php/tajdid/artide/view/15>.

²⁰ R. Donnelly, "Harmonizing Technology with Interaction in Blended Problem-Based Learning," *Computers & Education* 54 (2010): 350-359.

²¹ V. Woltering, A. Herrler, K. Spitzer, and C. Spreckelsen, "Blended Learning Positively Affects Students' Satisfaction and the Role of the Tutor in the Problem-Based Learning Process: Results of a Mixed-Method Evaluation," *Advances in Health Science Education* 14 (2009): 725-738.

Data analysis

According to the survey to 25 students of academic reading class, the data collected from the their perceptions of utility, satisfaction and motivation on applying blended learning. The part of the topic concerns on the data analysis of students' perceptions and the forthcoming topic is followed by its discussion.

1. The Students' Perceptions of Utility

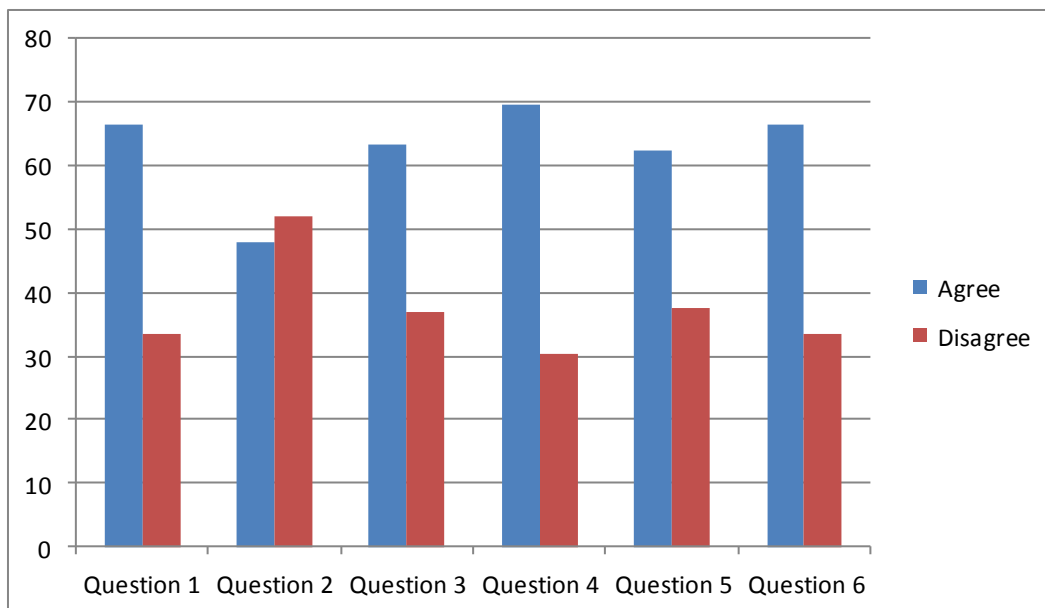
No	Items of Question	Students' Perceptions					Total
		AN	N	S	O	AA	
1	The teacher expects me to do my best	0	9	0	11	5	25
2	The teacher respects my individual way of learning	2	5	6	7	5	25
3	It is very easy to organize a group for a project	2	15	4	4	0	25
4	It is easy to work together with other students involved in a group project	1	2	15	6	1	25
5	The learning objectives are clearly stated in each lesson	1	2	10	8	4	25
6	The organization of each lesson is easy to follow	1	5	11	6	2	25

AN = Almost Never; N = Never; S = Seldom; O = Often; and AA = Almost Always

After getting the raw data from online questionnaire, the respondents' calculation is provided the following table:

No	Items of Question	Students' Perceptions					Total
		AN	N	S	O	AA	
1	The teacher expects me to do my best	2	10	18	28	25	83
2	The teacher respects my individual way of learning	2	30	12	16	0	60
3	It is very easy to organize a group for a project	1	4	45	24	5	79
4	It is easy to work together with other students involved in a group project	1	4	30	32	20	87
5	The learning objectives are clearly stated in each lesson	1	10	33	24	10	78
6	The organization of each lesson is easy to follow	2	10	18	28	25	83

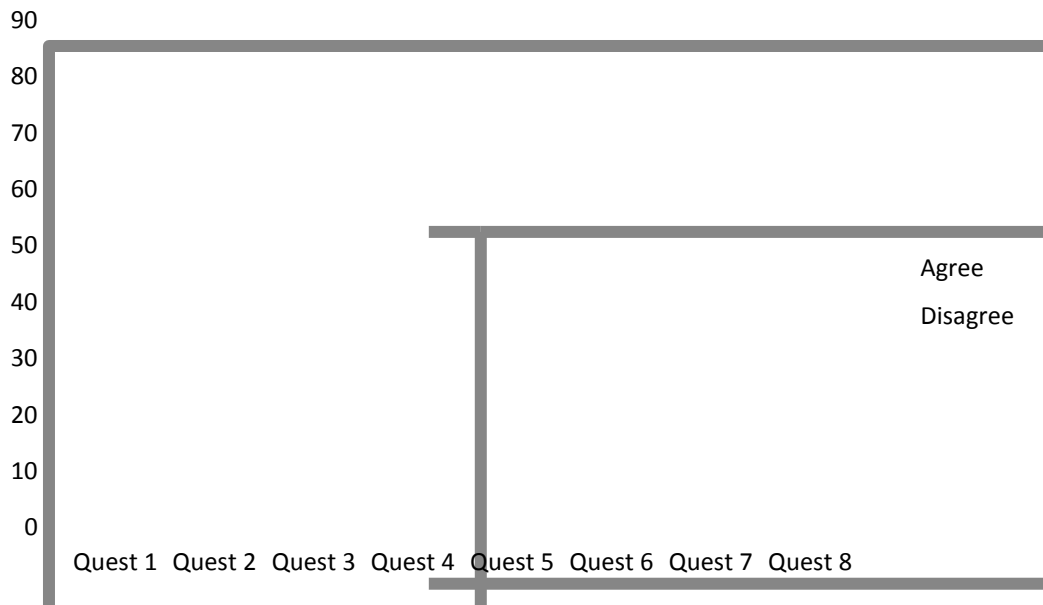
From the calculation above, it can be inferred that the highest score is 125 and the lowest score is 25. The following is the index formula to measuring students' perceptions on students' utility of blended learning.



2. The Students' Perceptions of Satisfaction

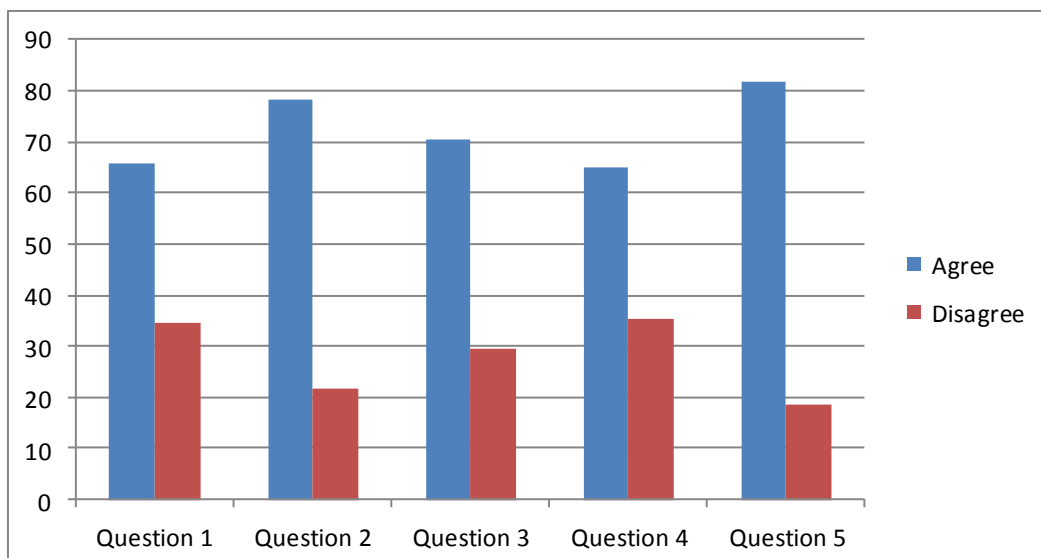
No	Items of Question	Students' Perceptions					Total
		AN	N	S	O	AA	
1	The blended learning environment held my interest throughout the course	1	8	10	5	1	25
2	I felt bored with this course when we got to the end of semester	1	9	10	2	3	25
3	The structure of the blended learning environment keeps me focused on what is to be learned	0	6	15	4	0	25
4	Expectations of assignments are clearly stated	3	2	12	4	4	25
5	Activities are planned carefully	0	1	6	13	5	25
6	Using blended learning meet my learning goals	0	3	11	10	1	25
7	Using blended learning allows me explore my own areas of interest	0	1	12	12	0	25
8	Using blended learning makes me able to interact with other students and the teacher asynchronously	2	1	11	10	1	25

After the calculating the maximum frequency and index formula to measure students' satisfaction of blended learning implementation.



3. The Students' Perceptions of Motivation

No	Items of question	Students' Perceptions					Total
		AN	N	S	O	AA	
1	I decide when I want to learn	1	3	11	8	2	25
2	In this blended learning environment, i have to be self-disciplined	0	1	5	14	5	25
3	I have the freedom to ask my teacher what I do not understand	0	5	5	12	3	25
4	I am regularly asked to evaluate my own work	1	3	10	11	0	25
5	I was supported by a positive attitude from my classmates	0	0	4	15	6	25



The present study reported the similar perceptions with some previous researches which stated that blended learning raised. First, the utility of blended learning achieved good response from students in terms of the a high degree of utility, motivation and satisfaction is perceived from blended learning, which could lead students to have a positive attitude towards learning.²² Another same report is also highlighted by (Mitchell & Forer, 2010)²³ that the role of e-learning activities can complement even replace the role of applying the traditional modes of learning in digital era.

CONCLUSION

According to the present study, a significant value of agreement of utility, satisfaction and motivation is perceived from blended learning. This learning environment then lead students to have got positive response, feedback and attitude toward learning activities. Furthermore, the conclusions dramatically indicate that blended learning reinforces students' understanding of the concept active learning, problem-based learning, self-regulated learning and learning community. Also, the present study suggests that blended learning nowadays is part of digital learning to be familiarized by the educators for promoting the flexibility and excellent access of education.

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²² López-Pérez, Pérez-López, & Rodríguez-Ariza, "Blended Learning in Higher Education: Students' Perceptions and Their Relation to Outcomes," 818-826.

²³ Mitchell, & Forer, "Blended Learning: The Perceptions of First-Year Geography Students," 77-89.

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