

**The Implementation of Blended Learning Approach in Teaching English as a
Foreign Language Classroom at SMA Islam Athirah Bone**

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how SMA Islam Athirah Bone teacher and students respond to the blended learning process in EFL classroom and how the perceptions of teacher and students regarding the implementation of blended learning approach in EFL classroom at SMA Islam Athirah Bone. This study used descriptive qualitative research design. The two instruments were observation and in- depth interviews designed to identify students' and teacher's perceptions on the implementation of blended learning approach and the process of the implementation of blended learning approach in EFL classroom. Additional data were gathered from document or artifact analysis such as video recordings and photographs from online tool screenshot. Participants included four EFL students who had joined in blended learning approach since June 2018 and one teacher who had implemented blended learning approach since June 2018. The observations were conducted in onsite and online ways. The interview was conducted lasted 40 minutes with twenty questions guide. The researcher conducted all interviews and the observation in the last semester of academic year of 2018/2019. Results revealed that teacher and students had positive point of views on blended learning process, such as flexible to use of online tools, trigger to be autonomous, increasing teacher and students interaction, increasing mastery

of the lesson, motivate the students engagement in learning process ,etc. Thus, it can be concluded that blended learning approach is good way and suitable to be implemented in EFL classroom.

Keywords: *blended learning approach, qualitative study, perception*

INTRODUCTION

Face-to-face learning has been the norm for centuries. Since kindergarten we have learned from face-to-face teaching. We have all listened to lectures; contributed to discussions; participated in classroom, lab, and work activities (Yelon, 2006). Face-to-face provides useful opportunities for deep engagement over problems related to student learning. But, in recent years the information and communication technology (ICT) has developed. The development of computer technology and the Internet has become the trend in language learning and teaching.

As people who take in charge in teaching, EFL teachers must adapt to the revolution of information and communication technology (ICT). EFL teachers must become like a bridge who help students to go through different steps during the learning of English as a foreign language and get them aware of the importance of the resources around them to learn English as foreign language. EFL teachers have to start to use online materials in their teaching programs.

Traditional or face-to-face learning and online learning are two important approaches in teaching pedagogy (Chou & Chou, 2011). As an educational technology, Blended Learning is described as a combination of instructional modalities, especially face-to-face and online learning (Tayebinik, n.d., 2012) . The use of Blended learning, a mixture of face-to-face (FTF) and online learning (Synchronous and Asynchronous), which has gained its popularity in the educational context, especially in the sphere English language teaching, due to its effectiveness in promoting learners' language proficiency (Husnawadi, 2008). With blended learning, teachers can use online resources in their daily classroom activities to engage students and help them become more active and more effective learners (Al Zumor, Al Refaai, Bader Eddin, & Aziz Al-Rahman, 2013) .

Based on the researcher survey, mostly the EFL teachers use traditional style of learning or face-to-face learning only to teach English as a foreign language and rarely using online learning in teaching English as a foreign language.

Akkoyunlu and Soyly examined students' view on blended learning environment and discovered that students enjoyed participating in a blended learning environment through which face-to-face classes supplemented with online classes (Akkoyunlu & Soyly, 2016). Besides that, Blended learning (BL) can increase the options for greater quality and quantity of interaction in a learning environment (Obari, 2012). That is why it is important for the teachers to

blend the face-to-face and online learning in teaching English for a foreign language for better teaching.

It is undeniable that the development of technology shifts the way of teaching and learning process. The EFL students in this era mostly follow the trend of the development Information and communication technology (ICT). It becomes a challenge for EFL teacher to teach the EFL students by using their comfort zone learning as face-to-face without denying the development information and communication technology (ICT). That is why it becomes urgent to conduct this research which focuses on the implementation of Blended learning approach in teaching English as a foreign language and the opinion both of teacher and students after the implementation of Blended learning approach. The researcher had formulated three research questions as follow:

1. How is the process of implementation of blended learning approach in teaching English as a Foreign Language classroom at SMA Islam Athirah Bone ?
2. What are the EFL students' perceptions toward the use of Blended Learning Approach in their classroom ?
3. What are the EFL teacher's perceptions toward the implementation of blended learning approach in teaching English as a Foreign Language at SMA Islam Athirah Bone ?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Studies

Rosilaine de Fa'tima Wardenski[‡], et al., (2012) in their research was to analyze first-year UFRJ medical students' perceptions about the implementation of a blended learning (BL) experience in their Biochemistry I course. Most of the students reported that access to resources in the modules provided a more in-depth approach to Biochemistry education and greater study autonomy. Students suggested that the VLEs could be better used for promoting greater communication among participants.

Ying and Yang, (2017) found that the end of implementation a Blended Learning Initiative in an attempt to provide better learning support and greater flexibility to their students, learners were also able to review and pace their own learning.

Robertson and Adamson, (2017) have explored the viability of using e-mail in facilitating topical discussions via e-mail exchanges among six ESL writing classes of 198 students in a private university in Manila, during the first semester of the academic year 2014-2015. Data from student reflections, interviews, survey and focus group discussions revealed that despite some motivational and technology-related limitations, using e-mail in the classroom may help develop students' interest and confidence in writing, enhance their technological and social skills, develop learners' autonomy, and improve students' attitudes towards English language learning.

Some Pertinent Ideas

Blended Learning

According to Graham, Allen, and Ure, (2010), there are three most commonly definitions of blended learning : (1) Combining instructional modalities (or delivery media), (2) Combining instructional methods, (3) Combining online and face-to-face instruction.

Perception

According to Sincero, (2013), Perception involves many attributes, but the three most recognized features of perception include constancy, grouping, and articular concern to know how people perceive things around them, how people communicate with each other, and how people learn.

METHOD

Design

This study used qualitative research design. Qualitative research is collecting, analyzing, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual (no numerical) data in order to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest (Gay and Mills, 2015). This design produced narrative data to describe about the process regarding implementation of blended learning approach in EFL classroom.

Research Site and Participants

The study undertook at SMA Islam Athirah Bone as a research site. There were 21 students in a class who joined in blended learning process and one teacher who implemented Blended Learning approach in teaching English as a Foreign Language in EFL class, but only one teacher and four students became the participants of this research. For this study, the researcher employed the purposive sampling method for the selection of participants. Purposive sampling refers to intentionally chosen sample according to the need of the study.

Instrument and Procedure of Collecting Data

The data were collected through classroom observation and interview. And the researcher got additional data from document or artifact analysis such as video recordings and photographs from online tool screenshot. The researcher conducted onsite observation by using video recording about three times and online observation by website classroom about a week to find out the process of blended learning approach in EFL classroom. In the last semester, the researcher did in-depth interview for interviewing the participants. The researcher did focus group interview for the students and individual interview for the teacher to find out the teacher's and the students' perceptions regarding the implementation of blended learning approach in EFL classroom.

Data Analysis

In this study, after collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the data through the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2014) which consist of three steps, those are Data Condensation, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing and Verification

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. The process of implementation of blended learning approach in teaching English as a Foreign Language classroom at SMA Islam Athirah Bone

In this research, the researcher had done the onsite observation and online observation. This research found that the teacher of SMA Islam Athirah Bone implemented the blended learning model in his class as a cycle, which started in the class (face-to-face), followed by online task or online activities on Google classroom, and ended in the class again to follow up the online tasks or online activities. It can be proved by the teacher instructions in face to face class to ask the students doing the PPT project by watching some videos online and then the best PPT would present it in front of the friends for the next meeting in the school.

Based on that cycle, the online learning and online activities were conducted to support the face to face learning in the school. The EFL teacher at SMA Islam Athirah Bone had implemented Flipped-classroom model. Flipped-classroom model is one of the Blended learning models that were identified by Staker and Horn. Staker and Horn (2012) stated that The Flipped Classroom model is one in which the rotation occurs between the school for face-to-face teacher-guided practice (or projects) and the home or other off-site location for online content and instruction. It is supported by the face to face activities on the first day, the teacher began the study by reminding the students about the last lesson and next he introduced the lesson today also the project for the students that he already sent on Google classroom. The teacher asked the students to bring their laptop and joined in the online classroom then explained the instructions how to do the tasks, the due date of the online task and some video links for supporting the online tasks. Before the time was up, the teacher reminded the students for continued the project or online task in the dormitory if the students had not had enough time at the class.

2. EFL students' perception toward the use of Blended Learning Approach in their classroom

To find out the students' perceptions toward the use of Blended Learning Approach in their classroom, the researcher interviewed four students. the interview guide questions cover the usage of online tools, the advantages of blended learning approach, and the interaction in blended learning approach. Based on that interview were found that the student had positive perceptions about the implementation of blended learning approach, such as:

a. Bring the students to new experiences,

One of the student stated that blended learning activity was very good to use. She liked it because it was something new for her. She said that:

“ I like the method of Sir Adi because He have many cara ... method to teach us like there is game, make a PPT, and we ... then there is a google classroom. It's very good. It's new for us and then I like.”

b. Support the face to face learning activities,

The usage of online tools also was used by students not for only sending the assignment, but it also used to do the assesment or the evaluation from the teacher. It related with the another student's answer when the researcher asked about the example of online activities, he said :

"we make tugas PPT or video and we share what we study in that video".

c. Make the flexibility of place and time,

Blended learning approach was flexible for the students, when the students were asked about the place and the time to access the online tools that they used to study online or finished their tasks, all of participants had similar opinion. All of participants said that they could continue to finish their online assignment in the dormitory. They said that:

"In the class but if we not finish in the class, we can continue in the dorm"

d. Trigger the students becoming active students,

Blended learning can trigger the student to be more active in face to face learning with the teacher beside that the student can get more knowledge about the technology.

" if we face to face with a teacher , it can melatih our mental and then we can brave because we can langsung bertanya with our teacher and then if face to face kita langsung tau where is our kekurangan and then with online menurut saya kita bisa tau teknologi"

e. Increasing mastery of the lesson,

Positive opinion about the implementation of blended learning comes from another student who stated that the mastery of the material or lesson was better when combining face to face and online learning:

" kalau misalnya face to face itu kan secara langsung jadi biasanya itu face to face kan berlangsung di kelas itu waktunya kan ada terbatas jadi disitu dimaksimalkan pembelajaran jadi nanti bisa dikombain antara face to face dengan online. Maksudnya setelah belajar face to face dengan Sir Adi di asrama bisa di cari lagi materi – materi penunjang di online. Jadi semakin mantap materinya."

f. Trigger the students becoming autonomous learners

The students could become an autonomous student because they could get the information about their lesson by theirselves. It deals with one of the students who said that he liked online learning because no one could cheat and he could study by himself:

"I like too because study online ... how to say ... no menyontek"

" ... and belajar sendiri "

g. Motivate the students engagement in learning process

In the process of face to face learning and online learning, the students and the teacher have to make a good interaction among them:

"we can communication with teacher in the class and he can know my ability"

"I like online because if we study with online. We can meet some tentor and then we can study very well because many teacher can teach us"

3. EFL teacher's perceptions of Blended Learning Approach in teaching EFL classroom

To find out the teacher's perceptions of Blended Learning Approach in teaching EFL classroom, the researcher interviewed one teacher who had implemented blended learning approach in his class. The teacher's perceptions identified this research cover the usage of online tools, the advantages of blended learning approach, the interaction in blended learning approach, the assessment in blended learning approach, and the challenges on blended learning approach.

This research found some teacher's positive perceptions about the implementation of blended learning approach such as:

a. Flexibility of time and pace

Blended learning could make the students could explore the material because they did not limited by time. The teacher stated that:

" The students have much time to search the materials because they do not limited by the time "

b. Considering for students' need

Blended learning made teacher could consider the students' need in online learning and students' capability. It supported with the teacher's statement: " they can explore more about the material that they dont understand, **they can use another media to search if they dont understand** "

c. Trigger to be autonomous students

The teacher opined that blended learning could make the students more independent and more responsible in doing their tasks.

"..... So, the students need to know how to apply the internet, how to upgrade google classroom...."

d. Increase teacher and students interaction

The teacher was asked about how he could build the good interaction among the students in face to face learning and online learning. In the face to face learning the teacher directly spoke to the student and explained about what students asked to him but in online learning, the teacher using the forum chat in google classroom:

*"we have interaction by using chat with the student. So, the students ask me about their problem and I give them some explanations about the problem by using, I usually the email, so, I give the comment on my project in the google classroom for example. So, i directly give their the score and they ask what they get the score. **They can ask me about aa how do the best project.** So, after we get some interaction, and talking about the project. So this directly they know they want to do"*

e. Interesting test

In blended learning, the teacher was asked about how he gave assignment and test to the student after implemented the blended learning approach in the class. The teacher used two ways to test the students. He gave face to face test with paper and also online test in website.

“I use two kind of tests. The first is I use directly by the paper, paper based test. The second , I use online. so, the students can directly see the score when they have submitted the answer. And I put the score in simdik. The students can do it by online in the dormitory or their home then check their score there”

f. Increase capability in using ICT

In implementing blended learning approach, the teacher faced some challenges. The teacher felt the challenge in teaching blended learning especially in applying the technology. He has to know more than the student before teaching them, because of that it increased for both the teacher’s and the students’ capability in using ICT.

“For the teacher, the teacher need to know that how to access google classroom before the student know. The teacher has to know how to access the school website, they need to now the setting the material in the internet and for this one espically when they using aa online learning but when they using classroom”

CONCLUSION

1. The process of blended learning approach at SMA Islam Athirah Bone used Flipped-classroom model which were started in the class (face-to-face), followed by online learning, and ended in the class again.
2. The students’ perceptions about the implementation of blended learning approach have positive results. Blended learning approach brings new experiences in learning process to the students, motivates to be an active students and tiggers to be an autonomous students.
3. The teacher’s perceptions about the implementation of blended learning approach have positive results. Blended learning approach is suitable to be done by the teacher in this era. The teacher knows what the students’ need in learning process.

SUGGESTION

1. It is suggested to the students to be more active in using media technology to study.
2. It is advisable for all of the teachers to increase the knowledge about ICT and how to use ICT well in teaching and learning.
3. Since this research only described the perceptions of students and teacher in blended learning approach of senior high school students, it is suggested for further research should examine perception of blended learning approach in perspective of parents or staff school administration.

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Google classroom website for online learning in EFL classroom


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