

## **Students' Perception of Blended Learning in Intensive and Extensive Reading Classes at PSDKU MBD English Education Study Program of Pattimura University**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study employed a survey design that focused on gather the data about how do the students perceive blended learning during the activities in two reading classes namely, Intensive reading and extensive reading. Challenges in implementing Blended Learning in both classes are identified. In order to collect the data to achieve the objective, the researchers utilized two instruments namely questionnaire and interview. The results of the questionnaire show that students have positive opinion and good perception toward the implementation of Blended Learning Method and it was supported by the data of the interview. During the learning process, students mostly faced troubles regarding their capability to operate particular online learning application. As much as fifty one percent of the students were identified to have limited online operation skill. Lack of gadgetry and limited supporting technological tools in them. About sixty percent of these students experienced this condition. Additionally, instability of internet connection in their respected places put all the students in troublesome situation. All the students agreed that bad internet connection was the most complicated part of conducting online learning process. This current study also addresses some alternatives proposed by both students and lecturers in order to overcome the existing problems and minimize the risk of ineffective online learning, particularly in Intensive and Extensive Reading classes at English Department of PSDKU MBD.

**Keywords:** *Students' Perception, Blended Learning Method, Intensive and Extensive Reading Classes*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this era, information and communication technology (ICT) has great impacts in human life. In fact, no one can doubt that information technology is fundamental and innovative revolution that has touched human life in many aspects including teaching and learning at schools. Obviously, ICT has brought about a very big change to human life. Teaching and learning process integrated with information and communication technology that can be carried out in two models namely, e-learning and blended Learning. In this study the researchers mainly discussed about blended learning. Blended learning is a way of learning to enable students and teacher to actively join into a course which mixes both online and offline learning experiences. It combines well the online and offline experiences of learning so the

strengths of both types can be blended into a unique learning experience to achieve the educational goals. This learning method allows lecturers to continue to monitor or to encourage students to access their independent learning experience. According to Dwiyogo (2018) the purpose of Blended Learning is to provide opportunities for learners to learn independently, extended and developed throughout the life. It is to summarize that blended learning is a method used by lecturers or teachers to teach the students to learn by two ways and to develop students' independent long - life learning.

Various previous related studies that have been conducted to investigate student's perception on Blended Learning method in different case study are expected to help the researchers as their benchmark literature in writing this research. Samuel and Patrick (2015) in their research also about blended environment. It was found that the use of web-based materials for blended learning program was problematic giving that some students encountered problem with internet access and slow speed of the connectivity on the university campus. Nisa and Pria (2014) found that students hold a positive perception of blended learning course being offered in Gulf Medical University. The difference in perception among student of different course indicates that blended format offered needs modification according to course content to improve its perception. The results shows that perception of participants are differ significantly across different age categories and course of study.

Pardede (2012) in Universitas Kristen Indonesia, conducted a research about blended learning in English language teaching Reading. The lecturers agree that student do not have opportunities to practice the skill and language component they just learned in different and varied context due to the limited time they have in the classroom. Various current studies revealed that blended learning system could effectively tackle this problem. Blended learning provides English language teaching Reading Students recording devices video player, newspaper and language laboratory. A variety of activity types with group work and pair work, collaborative learning and independent learning could be employed to engage the learner's in communicative language practice. Based on the focus of each previous study above, the researcher found that the first research focused on the use of web based material for blended learning program, the second research focused on the course content in blended learning implementation, and the third research focused on blended learning in English language teaching reading. While this study focused on Student's perception on blended learning in Intensive and Extensive Reading classes.

In general, most lecturers in PSDKU MBD still prefer to implement teacher centered approach than Blended Learning. This is because, they still have difficulties in using technology devices for teaching. As the impact, students have not been motivated to use technology for their learning needs. Whereas, for another lecturer including the lecturer who teaches Intensive and Extensive Reading subjects, Blended Learning is useful for helping them to teach. Regarding to the statements in the previous lines, the researcher is motivated to conduct a survey research design in order to collect the data about what are the challenges in implementing Blended Learning Method in Intensive and Extensive Classes. Melbourne (2012) defined Blended Learning that combines teaching and learning method from both synchronous and asynchronous online learning option. Regarding to the implementation of

Blended Learning, Maxwell (2016; Staker and Horn, 2012) mentioned eight challenges as in the following:

1. Students have difficulty independently in utilizing technology properly
2. Students are not interested using the technology
3. Lack of knowledge from students about the use of technology properly
4. Does not have enough planning time
5. Internet network connection instability or *wi-fi*
6. Lack of practical knowledge
7. Unsupported technology tools
8. Logistical barriers related to *wi-fi* internet access

From some explanations above, there are eight common challenges that the experts mentioned when applying the method. Therefore, the researchers in this study collected the data also in purpose to make sure whether or not what were found by the experts regarding the implementation of the method are similar with the findings the researchers tried to seek in Intensive and Extensive Reading Classes. As the consequences for the reading teaching process of building comprehension and good comprehension levels for the students. Hillerich (1983) clasified Reading comprehension into three levels; 1) The literal comprehension levels. The level requires the readers to recall facts that are overtly stated in the text. For example: it is recall names, things and areas. It can be concluded that in literal level, students will be able to remember or to repeat the facts that have stated clearly in the text 2) The inferential comprehension levels. This level allows the reader to suggest relevant additional information based on the text confronted and personal experience. It refers to the understanding what an author meant and what was said, developing general conclusions, inferring main idea, sequencing making judgement and predicting outcomes etc. and 3) The critical comprehension level. The level leads, to the thinking of balanced judgement of the author's style and some others aspect of the text. It has to do with evaluating or making judgement in four major areas: central issue, support, for those issue language style, and logical used to arrive at conclusion.

## **METHOD**

The research design that the researcher conducted was a survey research design. Survey research is defined as “the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions” (Check & Schutt, 2012). By survey, the researcher tried to find out students’ perception about Blended Learning and to find out the challenges in implementing Blended Learning. The researcher started the study in July 27<sup>th</sup> and finally finished in 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 at English Education Study Program, Pattimura University, PSDKU Southwest Maluku. The campus is located in Kampung Babar Street. The researchers chose campus site because it became the place for the researcher to collect research data. The population for this research was all students who had taken Intensive and Extensive Reading Subjects at the first and the second semester. To get the sample, the researcher used probability sampling through simple random sampling technique. Probability sampling is a sampling technique which gives the same chance for the whole participants to become sample. So, the total participant for the research were 37 students. In this survey, there were two instruments that the researcher applied to collect the data such as a questionnaire and an in-depth interview. The questionnaire consists of six questions. The questions related to the

challenges in implementing the method. To measure the questionnaire, the researcher applied Likert Scale that consisted of four options namely strongly agree (4), agree (3), strongly disagree (2), and disagree (1). The researchers used interview to give more explanation toward students' responses in the questionnaire. Furthermore, as the way to analyze the data through questionnaire, the researchers used the measurement formula that was proposed by Arikunto (2006) while the result of interview was analyzed and was described by the researcher in explanations. The formula for analyzing the questionnaire as in the following:

$$P = F/N \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage

F = Frequency (The number of students who answer the questions)

N = Total number of respondent

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **a. Finding**

The findings gathered through a questionnaire and an interview are explained constructively in this part started from the finding the researchers collected from Intensive Reading Class and continues to the Extensive Reading Class. Based on the finding, most students (77%) in Intensive Reading Class agree that learning Reading Comprehension Subject through Blended Learning Method is boring and difficult because students have difficulties in utilizing technology properly independently. In statement number two; most students (69%) in Intensive Reading Class agree that learn Reading Comprehension Subject through Blended Learning Method is not effective because most of them have unsupported technology tools. In statement number three; most students (100%) in Intensive Reading Class agree that learning Reading Comprehension Subject through Blended Learning Method is difficult because it depends on the stability of internet connection. In statement number four; most students (61%) in Intensive Reading Class agree that Blended Learning implementation at reading comprehension class, the students have no opportunity to develop their English skills especially at reading aspect.

In statement number five; most students (92%) in Intensive Reading Class agree students reading comprehension could improve through the implementation of blended learning. In statement number six; most students (92%) in Intensive Reading Class agree that Blended Learning can improve students' communication with the lecturer, not yet only face-to-face but also have automatic (e-mail, WhatsApp, or others online media). In order to get more data about what are the challenges of implementing Blended Learning, then the researcher used interview as the instrument also. In Intensive Reading Class, the researcher only took 3 students randomly to answer all six questions. The answer of each question by every respondent is shown in the following description including the notes of interview that had already been translated by the researchers into English.

Table 1. The Result of Interview in Intensive Reading Class

No	Questions	Interviewee		
		1	2	3
1	Is teaching and learning using Blended Learning fun and useful?	yes, because it helped students to improve their knowledge and critical thinking.	yes, because beside students could learn English by Blended Learning, they also can attain amount of information through articles so their reading skill was improved.	yes, because through Blended Learning, students were easy to access and to join the online class.
2	Is Blended Learning can help students to learn autonomously?	Yes, because it helped the students easy to learn autonomously especially in the condition of covid-19.	yes, because through Blended Learning, students were able to manage their learning schedule as well.	yes, because through Blended Learning, students were easier to learn whenever and wherever.
3	What are the platforms that are used by lecturers to teach through Blended Learning?	Google classroom, zoom meeting, and WhatsApp group.	WhatsApp group, email, zoom, google classroom.	Google classroom, WhatsApp group, YouTube, zoom.
4	Do you face certain difficulties and challenges when you are learning through Blended Learning?	yes, the problem was the instability of internet connection including data plus suddenly finished.	yes, the problem was the instability of internet connection. Students felt difficult to access google classroom to collect the assignment when this problem took place.	yes, learning through Blended Learning Method, students should access internet for participating in online class, but the problem was instability of internet connection. As the impact, students were difficult to join the class even did not join the class at all.
5	How do you overcome the difficulties and	I personally did not have solution when I faced the problem. But the	Students gave information to the lecturer that they had problems to	When the problems happened regarding to the internet connection, students

	challenges that you mentioned above?	lecturer gave the solution to collect students' assignment tomorrow or based on the time the lecturer announced.	send their assignment by google classroom because of internet connection, then the students asked the lecturer to allow them sending the assignment by WhatsApp.	looked for a certain place that support them with good internet connection.
6	According to you, is Blended Learning more effective to help you improve your reading comprehension skill?	It is effective, because through Blended Learning students could learn autonomously in order to improve their knowledge in this pandemic situation.	It is effective, because students had opportunity to read anything including the non-printed reading texts to improve their reading comprehension. Besides that, students also felt free to learn and to search materials in internet. They are freely to decide when and where they should learn.	It is effective, because through Blended Learning, students had numbers of sources, for example, article, YouTube channel, online magazine etc.

Regarding the challenges students faced during online learning, there was a main problem that influences another condition to become a problem too. It was the instability of internet connection. So, sometimes the online class was badly interrupted and not effective. In order to answer research question number one in Extensive Reading Class, the researcher used the similar questionnaire instrument used to collect the data in Intensive Reading Class too. The number of statements is eleven. The result of each statement is explained through the following descriptions.

The findings reveal that, most students (62%) in Extensive Reading Class disagree that learning Reading Comprehension Subject through Blended Learning Method is boring and difficult because students have difficulty independently in utilizing technology properly. In statement number two; most students (63%) in Extensive Reading Class agree that learn Reading Comprehension Subject through Blended Learning Method is not effective because most of them have unsupported technology tools. In statement number three; most students (75%) in Extensive Reading Class agree that learn Reading Comprehension Subject through Blended Learning Method is difficult because it depends on the stability of internet

connection. In statement number four; most students (75%) in Extensive Reading Class agree that Blended Learning implementation at reading comprehension class, the students have no opportunity to develop their English skills especially at reading aspect. In statement number five; most students (88%) in Extensive Reading Class agree students reading comprehension could improve through the implementation of blended learning. In statement number six; most students (92%) in Extensive Reading Class agree that Blended Learning can improve students' communication with the lecturer, not yet only face-to-face but also have automatic (e-mail, WhatsApp, or other online media).

In order to get the answer of the second question of interview instrument in Extensive Reading Class, the researcher conducted an interview with the four students in this class by using the similar questions that the researcher had given to the students in Intensive Reading Class. The answer of each question by every respondent is shown in the following description including the notes of interview that had already translated by the researcher into English.

Table 3. The Result of Interview in Extensive Reading Class

No	Questions	Interviewee			
		1	2	3	4
1	Is teaching and learning using Blended Learning is fun and useful?	yes, because through Blended Learning students were easily to learn, more relax, and they were able to maximize their times to learn as well.	yes, because now we are in 4.0 era, so we should adapt with the development of digital era. Therefore, either students or lecturer needed to transform technology when teaching and learning.	yes, because learning English through online and offline ways were enjoyable and not boring. Students were more creative in learning and developed their selves.	yes, because it was enjoyable but, in another side, it was difficult one. Enjoyable means when the lecturer taught them, the students were easy to access in google to answer the questions or did tasks. Difficult means bad internet connection.
2	Can Blended Learning help students to learn autonomously?	yes, because when students got the homework assignment from lecturer, they directly and	yes, because there was no limit for students to search and find sources to learn and to do assignment in	yes, because through Blended Learning helped students to do their assignments independentl	yes, because through online learning, students would be motivated to do their assignment in case they were limited by the

		independently did the assignment and sent it through email or another platform.	the internet. Besides that, students directly received the lesson and listened the explanation by the lecturer.	y, and if there were assignments gave by the lecturer in offline way, students would do by themselves.	time to collect the assignment.
3	What are the platforms that are used by lecturer to teach through Blended Learning?	Zoom meeting, google classroom, google meet, WhatsApp group.	WhatsApp group, google classroom, zoom meeting.	Google classroom, zoom meeting, WhatsApp group.	Google classroom, zoom meeting, WhatsApp group.
4	do you face the certain difficulties and challenges when you are learning through Blended Learning?	yes, in face-to-face meeting, most students got problem to come to campus when they did not their own vehicles and they looked for public transportation . And in online learning, the problem was about the instability of internet connection. Students could not access	yes, because most students did not have data plus. They also had problems related to the availability of some facilities such Wi-Fi, laptop and Android HP.	yes, the difficulty was the students could not join the class because of internet connection, whereas the challenge was how to join if the students had no enough money to buy data plus for this need.	yes, in offline class, students and lecturer had good interaction and communication. When students did not understand, they could directly ask the lecturer to give more explanation, but in online class, most students difficult to do it. In reality, the lecturer only sent the assignment and then students had to do and sent back to the lecturer.



		internet as well.			
5	How do you solve the difficulties and challenges that you mentioned above?	To solve the problem during online was the students asked to join their friends by using the same facilities. And to solve problem during offline, they were willing to walk to campus although it took times.	To solve the problem of the availability of internet connection, the students would search for the good place where they could join the class with good connection. But, when they could not join, they would study together with classmates who joined the class.	To solve the problem of the availability of internet connection, the students would search for the good place where they could join the class with good connection. The next solution was the students asked their classmates for making group discussion.	To solve the problem regarding to the communication between lecturer and students, the students would initiative to ask the lecturer if they did not understand. The lecturer also sometimes gave some minutes to ask for clarification.
6	According to you, is Blended Learning more effective to help you improving your reading comprehension skill?	It is effective because, students had opportunity to enhance their vocabulary and reading comprehension from many and different online sources.	It is effective because, the lecturer always provided soft textbook for students to read and practice and students had large space to read wherever and whenever.	It is effective because, students could manage their times to learn, and tried to become autonomous learners.	It is effective because, students could learn through two ways. They had opportunity to read more and developed their reading comprehension, including the students could search for online sources to practice reading and to complete the assignment.

Regarding the challenges students faced during online learning, there were some problems took place. Those problems were: 1) instability of internet connection, 2) the internet quota was run out, 3) most students do not have supported facilities for example laptop etc, 4) transportation to campus during offline class, and 5) students lack good communication with the lecturer during online class". In this reality, besides students had solution, the lecturer also assisted them by giving some alternative, such as; 1) the students could join to learn with their classmates who have supporting facilities, 2) the students walked to campus, 3) students who had bad internet connection looked for the place that serves good internet connection, 4) students would study together, and 5) students would ask for more explanation because their own initiative or because the lecturer gave times to ask". In question number six "It can be concluded that, applying Blended Learning in Reading Class was effective, because of some reasons; 1) students could develop their autonomous learning, 2) students freely to decide time and the place to learn, 3) students had large space to learn in internet, and 4) students had numbers of learning sources especially reading sources in internet".

#### b. Discussion

As it has been presented on finding, the result of two instruments of data collection namely questionnaire and interview showed that students in Intensive and Extensive Reading Classes had positive perception toward Blended Learning implementation. Furthermore, there are six statements in questionnaire that give information to this research about the challenges that students faced through the implementation of the Blended Learning Method. According to Maxwell (2016) and Staker and Horn (2012) that there are 8 challenges during the implementation of Blended Learning Method. Some of them were faced by the students in Intensive and Extensive Reading Classes when the researchers conducted the study. So, in this part, the researchers explain one by one chronologically. In statement number 2, most students (89%) agreed that to success the process in Blended Learning Method, the lecturer needed to provide textbook that is sued to support the online and offline learning. It means that there is a challenge for teacher to prepare certain and appropriate textbooks for supporting him or her to teach in online and offline ways as well. In statement number 6, most students (51%) agreed that Blended Learning Method is useful but it is also boring and difficult, because in class not all students could understand how to operate the technology (certain platform) properly by themselves. In statement number 7, most students (64%) agreed that sometimes Blended Learning Method is not effective regarding to the unsupported technology tools that students did not have at the time. Furthermore, in statement number 8, most students (100%) agreed that in online class especially, the process of learning could run well depends on the stability of internet connection. Due to this view, the students agreed that it was difficult, they had trouble to join the class when this happened. While, in statement number 9, most students (70%) agreed that they had limited time or they had no enough opportunity to develop their reading comprehension skill even though they had enough time to read and to do their assignment. As the conclusion, those results above show that Blended Learning Method has benefits for teaching and learning even though there are some challenges that must be faced by students for most learning activities.

Additionally, in this part, the researchers also describe the result of interview. The interview consisted of 6 questions and total students who became the representative of each

class participated in this interview were 7 students. To all students, learning by Blended Learning Method is enjoyable and useful because; 1) it can help them improve their knowledge and their critical thinking, 2) it provides opportunity for students to read as many references as they can, 3) it helps the students to access easily the materials in online way, 4) it is relax for students to learn, 5) it is used as the need for 4.0 era to apply technologies in the classroom, 6) it is creative and not boring, and 7) it is enjoyable but sometimes difficult. Nevertheless, this method is useful for students but the students also had difficulty and face challenges when they learned by the method, such as; 1) bad internet connection, 2) unaware of limited internet quota, 3) students difficult to go to campus for joining offline class because of limited public transportation, 4) there was no supported technology tools for online class, and 5) ineffective communication between lecturer and students.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter above, it can be concluded that the respondents of this study gave their positive perception on Blended Learning Method implementation in Intensive and Extensive Reading Classes. Students showed their positive judgement based on their learning experience in teaching and learning process through online and offline ways. Even though, the students also faced some troubles that became challenge for them to learn through this method. Some students were not able to operate any application properly, some students did not have supported technology tools such laptop, or HP-android, and bad internet connection that did not support well the students when they were in online class. Hopefully, the lecturers will concern to these serious troubles. Therefore, it is suggested for the lecturer who teaches not only Reading Subject but also other subjects by using Blended Learning Method to consider the troubles, obstacles that students have in order to encourage the students to keep learning either in online or in offline way. In addition, it is expected that when teaching, the lecturer needs to give more detail explanation for students and giving them the opportunity to ask if they do not really understand. This is important, so the students could develop their autonomy in learning to learn and to do their homework assignment as well as they can.

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