



## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF BLENDED LEARNING IN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTION: A CASE STUDY OF THE STUDENTS AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF PGRI UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

Due to a scope and scale with the main focus on social presence this research is aimed at exploring social presence, students' perceptions of social presence and the implementation blended learning. The research was employed as mixed method research approach along with a questionnaire. The main objective included determination of English as Foreign language students' perception of blended learning by participants' including a total of 73 judgmental statement clauses. Also this study was helped by 17 students as the voluntary interviews. The findings of this study were derived from the results obtained through the questionnaire and interviews among students with a conclusion that most of the students strongly appreciated the blended learning of social presence in increasing interaction among members and improving writing and speaking exercise activities. However there was no big distinction in social presence between a blended learning class and a traditional face-to-face class. And among factors that affect social presence the students ranked the top three important factors including the lecturer closeness and humor and his/her feedback work. Also the list have three important ones which are shorter forum discussions and peer feedback.

**Keywords:** *Blended learning, social presence*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

English is a language of international communication and use. Because English is studied and taught not only in Indonesia but also all around the world, studying it is essential. In Indonesia, English is mandated as a foreign language for pupils to learn. From primary through collegiate levels, English is a crucial subject.

According to Fajri (2020, p. 27) an Indonesian students are being taught English with the intention of developing their ability to communicate in the language both orally and in writing. (2020, p. 27) Fajri.

As we are aware, blended learning is impossible to implement without the aid of technology. As a result, blended learning has become a reality thanks to technological advancements and improved internet access. Modern e-learning is

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combined with traditional face-to-face instruction to create blended learning.

There is a void in the literature about blended learning because it has not been generally used in higher education (Matin-Martinez, et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2020b). Continues According to Ahmad and Al Faqeeh (2011), students are now equipped to learn utilising technology.

According to Serafini (2012), focuses on the processes of coming up with plausible interpretations in relation to texts and readers' abilities to put understandings together from various angles, such as the writer's intentions, textual references, personal experiences, and the sociocultural contexts in which one reads. Meanings created throughout the analysis process are socially ingrained, condensed, incomplete, and plural.

Based on the findings of the previous research, blended learning combines online and face-to-face instruction. We know that students who participated in the study viewed bilingual instruction as having a positive impact on their learning outcomes.

Furthermore, when we connected to the institutional learning outcomes, we discovered that many of these students reported having achieved success as a

result of participating in the study. As a result, when we considered the concept of blended learning, we considered a few guiding concepts.

Students and also can alter our learning based on that also, we are thinking about the learning students and that the students require in the classroom and also for the online, and we are also thinking about how the students will be able to acquire it. As a direct consequence of the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic in Indonesia, an increasing number of universities have adopted blended learning.

As a direct consequence of this, there is a significant necessity to comprehend and develop a successful blended learning model, particularly in higher education. Even if blended learning is being utilised by an increasing number of educational institutions, PGRI University is still in the process of putting it into practise. It is essential to have a solid understanding of blended learning in order to maximise its potential. The "Community of Inquiry" (COI) structure that Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000) developed is extensively used and recognised. The Community of Inquiry incorporates both a social presence and a

teaching presence in addition to a cognitive presence.

Teachers should also use interesting strategies when teaching in class so that they could make students more comfortable effective for learning to speak. One of the strategies used in the teaching and learning process in the classroom was group discussion. It means that two people interact with each other, discuss together, exchange ideas, and work together to get good learning outcomes (La'biran 2017:2).

Considering the study's background, the writer seeks to investigate;

- 1) How do the students at English Department of PGRI University perceive social presence in their blended learning?
- 2) What elements do the students at English Department of PGRI University consider most and least important in constructing social presence in blended learning?
- 3) How to implement Blended Learning?

Due to a scope and scale with the main focus on social presence this research is aimed at exploring social presence, students' perceptions of social presence and the implementation blended learning.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### 1) Concept of Teaching

According to Safitri (2015:1) education is defined as the reciprocal process of each person man in his adjustment to nature, friends, and nature universe. Education is an organized and developmental pattern completeness of all human potential, moral, intellectual, physical (panca senses), and for his individual personality and the usefulness of his community, which is directed to collect all these activities for the purpose his life (final destination).

According to Brown (2007:8), showing someone how to do something or helping them learn how to do something, providing directions, guiding someone through the study of something, delivering knowledge, and causing someone to know or understand something are all examples of teaching. Learning and teaching are inextricably linked concepts that cannot be separated.

In addition, Brown (2007:8) states that teaching is leading and encouraging learning, making it possible for the learner to learn, and establishing the conditions necessary for learning. Your understanding of how the learner learns will serve as the basis for your educational philosophy, your

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teaching style, your strategy, methods, and instructional strategies in the classroom. The ability of a teacher to comprehend the educational processes of their students is directly proportional to the quality of that teacher's teaching.

## 2) Blended Learning

Continueing with a brief review of relevant articles and other works related to the research area. Through the literature review it can be known there are a lot of definitions of Blended learning but in this common concerns; Blended learning is the combination of traditional face to face and online learning (Graham, 2013).

### 1) Principles of Blended learning

- Blended learning focus' on effective achievement of goals
- Blended learning entails consideration of cumulative learning style frameworks
- Blended learning needs to be based on learner's class need.
- Blended learning availability to learners' knowledge acquisition desire should be present. (Ghadah Al Murshidi, 2020)

### 2) Importance of blended learning in learning English language

- Wong et al., (2020b) found more positive effects on students'

motivation and learner autonomy variables in the case of blended learning in comparison to conventional learning. Therefore, it can be concluded that blended learning is effective in English language classes by having proper technical support and required resources.

- Wong et al., (2020b) noted that blended learning particularly helped students with speaking and listening skills.

### 3) The importance of social presence

So what are some roles of social presence according to Tu Mcisaac (2002) a high level of social presence can raise the level of interaction and it can also have an impact on Learners performance and satisfaction with the instructor this is by Richardson and Swan in the research in 2003 because it can reduce the distance and serve as a platform for better communication between teacher and student as well as student and student interaction in higher education, means that social presence can improve the performance of the students and similarly between social presence and the writing performance of the students

- 4) Perceived Usefulness of blended learning
- Perceived usefulness is an individual belief that a technology will make their work better” (Echeng at al., 2016)
  - Students get more benefit out of collaborative learning activities via online systems rather than working alone (Ndumbaro, 2018).
  - Perception of lecturer are also important during the implementation of blended learning.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The research was employed as mixed method research approach along with a questionnaire. The main objective included determination of English as Foreign language students’ perception of blended learning by participants’ including a total of 73 judgmental statement clauses. Also this study was helped by 17 students as the voluntary interviews.

The data collection workable group in the research comprised of English language learners who voluntarily presented themselves for Method procedural participation and learning at fourth and sixth semester students of English language teaching at the university

identified within in the semester of 2022-2023 academic year.

Judgmental statement clauses held expression for determination of learners’ views in 5 headings. With research methods to find out the answers for the three research questions, the researcher employed a combination of a survey questionnaire with three sets of questions including 17 likert type items and follow up interviews with volunteers from each class the participants were 73 students studying Introduction to English literature. For all the student’ have internet access and experience in blended learning.

#### Population

The population in this research is all the students of English study program. The total number of population is 73 students that are distributed into one class. The population of this research is shown in Table :

No	Class/level	Number
1.	4A	36
2.	6A	37
Total		73

#### Sample

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009:90), a sample is a group in research study on which information is obtained.

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Sample is representative of the population partially or researched. The research sample is called when we intend to generalize the results of research sample. According (Arikunto,2013:174). While, Sugiyono (2014:118) states that sample is part of the number and characteristics of which are owned by the population.

The writer in this study used the participants for 73 students studying in English Department. All students have internet access and experience in blended learning.

**Data Analysis****a. Students' perception of social presence from interviews**

- 1) 73 % of the students thought blended learning slightly increase their interaction with their lecturer. "The online learning improves the interactions a lot especially during Covid 19 pandemic". The online component makes them feel less stressed to express their idea because: "I feel less shy", "I do not have to show my face", "I am not afraid to make mistakes".
- 2) 27% thought that the interactions level in blended learning did not change compared to a traditional face-to-face class. "Interactions depends a lot on students'

characters", "some students a more confident in online learning, but the others are more active in face-to-face classroom".

**b. Students' perceptions of social presence**

With the several questions on the questionnaires;

1. I am satisfied with the fact the lecturer prior to the first class meeting, introducing the course and guiding me how to use m-learning system and other related tools as google Meet. Students' were strongly satisfied when receiving an email from the lecturer. "The information helped me to be ready and well prepared for the course".
2. I am satisfied with the content of the orientation given by my lecturer. Other students highlighted the role of the orientation session. This session gave them the clues about their lecturer teaching style or personalities as well as some clues about the first personality.
3. I am satisfied with my lecturer encourages us to have information on m-learning. "When they received then I feel more active in a face-to-face learning environment and for some students they say the same in

both learning mode as for the techniques that the lecturer used to enhance social presence”.

4. My lecturer interacts with me more in blended learning. “firstly students were strongly satisfied when they received the email from the lecturer before well prepared for the course our secondly some other students highlighted the row of the orientation session because this session gave them the clues about their lecturers’ teaching styles or personalities as well as some Clues number three talking personalities as well as some clues about”.
5. I am satisfied my lecturer responds to my messages/email/whats-app. Form written response from the lecturer to the students message like whats app and emails most of the students highly values that fact and some of them said that what-apps and email was appropriate for academic environment.
6. My lecturer gives me feedback on my speaking and writing activities. “The total number of student consider that the feedback from their lecturer was remarkably effective improving their writing and speaking skills one student in the interview

explained that the feedback from the lecturer reviews”.

7. and the last technique from the lecturer was the friendliness and humor of the lecturer himself/herself most of the student interestingly agree that this was very important in connecting the class together because when lecturer is funny humorous and close enough their friendliness and closeness my smiling or giving them compliments more active.

In the interview, they explained that the online component makes the students feel less stressed to express the idea because they felt let shine, they didn't have to show their face, or they were not afraid to make mistakes. Despite this, 27% of the students thought that the interaction level and Blended learning actually remained the same when compared to a traditional face-to-face because some students explain that the interaction actually depends a lot on students' characters so that they could have a more positive or negative experience. Blended

#### **4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The study noted that online learning discussion format allowed more students to feel more comfortable asking awkward questions. However, other



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students thought that the lack of social interactions in the online discussions affected their understanding and learning as well as difficulty in participating in the online discussions due to the lack of face-to-face interaction during the discussions.

**5. CONCLUSION**

Along with perceived simplicity of use, perceived usefulness of blended learning proved to be the most influential factor in creating intents to utilise blended and online learning among lecturers and students for the purpose of learning English Language. Individual students' success was highly revealed in blended learning encounters when related to either complete online or face to face learning encounters.

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