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Blended Learning Model in Learning Listening and Speaking for Professional Context: Students' Perception

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' perceptions of the blended learning approach when it comes to learning the topic of Listening and Speaking for Professional Context (LSPC) in the second semester at UKI Toraja's English department. The descriptive qualitative method used in this study. The second semester students of UKI Toraja's English Department served as the subjects of this investigation. Data for this study were gathered through interviews and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman models. The results of this study indicated that the majority of students had a positive perception toward the implementation of the blended learning model in the second semester of the UKI Toraja English Education study program's listening and speaking for professional context courses.

Keywords: Students' Perception, Blended Learning Method, Listening and Speaking for Professional Context

INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 was defined by the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, which stunned the world. On January 30, 2020, the WHO designated the COVID-19 outbreak a worldwide health emergency. COVID-19 has afflicted the majority of countries, including Indonesia. COVID-19's other facets have impacted other facets of our existence. The event emphasized the importance of maintaining physical and social distance in order to halt the spread of COVID-19. The Indonesian government's rule on preventing COVID-19 transmission within the learning unit makes appeals to educational institutions to continue receiving education. This policy aims to halt the spread of COVID-19. Education is a difficulty in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It is distinct from the conventional teaching and learning processes. Teaching English in this day leads to difficulty for teachers and students alike in adapting to this unique circumstance in which teaching and learning are accomplished through the use of a variety of learning modalities. Online and hybrid learning are the optimal strategies for combating the spread of COVID-19. Both of these teaching methods are novel learning models that are being adopted in Indonesian schools and institutions. Both teachers and students must adjust to the new mode of instruction.

Online learning is a method of instruction that does not require face-to-face interaction and is not carried in a traditional classroom setting, but rather in a virtual world and through the use of an internet network. Online education can help pupils develop independent study habits and is not constrained by space or time constraints. Blended learning is defined as a technique or system of instruction that incorporates both face-to-face and computer-mediated instruction or web-based learning procedures. During the COVID-19 epidemic, the English Department at UKI Toraja utilized blended learning methods in its teaching and learning processes.

Numerous researchers have undertaken study on blended learning approaches. Kusuma discovered that students' perceptions of mixed learning implementation were favorable [1]. Following that, Shamad performed a study on teachers' attitudes about blended learning in Islamic education in Indonesia [2]. Alkhaleel, on the other hand,

discovered various benefits of blended learning methods in education [3]. The purpose of this study is to ascertain students' attitudes on the use of blended learning to teach listening and speaking in a professional context. Another feature discovered in this research is students' perceptions of a subject being studied at UKI Toraja's English Department.

A blended learning model is a method of instruction that incorporates a variety of educational strategies and technologies. By merging the characteristics and functions of well-known learning and teaching methodologies, this learning model seeks to give a more effective educational experience [4], [5]. According to Valiathan, blended learning refers to education that combines a variety of event-based activities, such as face-to-face classrooms, live e-learning, and self-paced study [6]. Santosh discusses six (6) different types of blended learning approaches, including face-to-face driver, rotation, flix, online lab, self-blended, and online driver [7]. Hopkyns identified six reasons for implementing the blended learning model: pedagogical richness, knowledge access, social engagement, personal agency, cost effectiveness, and ease of revision [8]. The blended learning model has several advantages, which can be summarized as follows: a) it provides a more personalized learning experience; b) it supports and encourages independent and collaborative learning; c) it increases students' engagement in learning; d) it accommodates a variety of learning styles; e) it provides an area for target language practice outside of the classroom; and f) it provides a less stressful practice environment for target language. Blended Learning's Achilles' Heel: a) Difficult to use if the facilities and infrastructure do not support it, b) Inconsistent student-owned learning facilities, c) Slow Internet connectivity will impede the training process, and d) Teachers should design engaging online classes.

Listening is a method of communication in which two or more people cooperate to hear or obtain and comprehend information from a speaker. By providing this feedback, the speaker typically feels more at ease and thus communicates more freely, openly, and honestly. Speaking means using words in a consistent manner, offering words, knowing and being able to utilize a language, expressing oneself in words, and making a speech. Additionally, speaking is an interactive process of meaning building that entails data production, reception, and processing. Professional Contexts is a capstone unit in which students apply their knowledge, talents, and experience to a learning environment. Possessing effective and excellent English communication abilities might aid someone in supporting someone in a certain situation. Listening and speaking are critical skills for success in a professional setting.

Perception is the entire process through which the conscious human mind draws information from its environment [10]. Perception can be defined as the process of comprehending the stimuli gained from detecting objects, events, and relationships between symptoms, which is then processed by the brain's cognition process. As such, perception begins with perception.

METHODS

In this research, the researchers applied a descriptive qualitative method. The researcher selected 10 respondents from the 2nd semester students of English Department at UKI Toraja as the subject of this research. The data of this research was collected by interview and analyzed by Miles and Huberman model, which involves three steps: Data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.
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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the interview, the researcher found that there were various responses from the respondents. The following are students' perspectives on how the blended learning model can assist them in enhancing their ability to listen and speak in a professional context:

Positive Perception

The researcher found several responses which go to the positive perception category. Those responses are as follows.

1) Lecturers who employ a blended learning style can assist students in acquiring useful insights on their own.
2) The blended learning strategy used by lecturers to accommodate students' learning personalities during the online learning process.
3) When teachers employ a blended learning strategy with their online students, they can help them learn independently and collaboratively.

4) A blended learning paradigm can help students become more engaged in their studies.
5) A blended learning strategy is adaptable to the diverse learning styles of pupils.
6) With a blended learning paradigm, there may be an opportunity to practice your target language outside of the classroom.
7) A mixed learning technique might make it less burdensome to practice the target language.
8) A blended learning paradigm enables students to study at any time or location that is convenient for them.
9) A mixed learning approach can assist students in developing critical and necessary abilities for the twenty-first century.

Based on this finding, it can be said that the students of English Departments of UKI Toraja had a positive perception on the use of blended learning models in the teaching of Listening and Speaking for Professional Context courses. In other words, they enjoy learning the course through the implementation of a blended learning model.

Negative Perception

As a model of teaching, blended learning arises not only positive perception, as has been explained above, but also negative perception. The were several responses of the respondents that has arisen the negative perception on the use of blended learning model in learning Listening and Speaking for Professional Context, they are:

1) When blended learning is employed in conjunction with online learning, issues can develop due to the incompatibility of hardware-online tools.
2) The challenges associated with implementing the blended learning paradigm are that the facilities and infrastructure do not support the online learning process.
3) Disruptions in the internet and limits in educational facilities, particularly for pupils living in remote areas, provide difficulties.
4) A blended learning model's implementation can be harmed by irrelevant web information.

The Blended Learning that is implemented to teach Listening and Speaking Skills for Professional Purposes at UKI Toraja's English Department contains strengths and limitations consistent with Marsh's thesis, which argues that the Blended Learning Model has nine strengths and one flaw [11]. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Kusuma's earlier study. They mentioned in their research findings that their respondents have a favorable opinion of the blended learning model for English learning and that implementing the blended learning model has various benefits. This suggests that prior research and this study both discovered students' favorable attitudes regarding the blended learning model's application in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

According to the research findings, students' impressions of the application of the Blended Learning Model in Learning Listening and Speaking for Professional Context by the second semester students of English department of UKI Toraja are both positive and negative perceptions. The majority of perceptions are positive perception. As a reference for the lecturer and students, the results of this study indicate that the Blended Learning Model is one of the models that could be applied to learning during the pandemic COVID-19 or the new normal age.

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