THE USE OF BLENDED LEARNING IN PROMOTING ENGLISH SKILLS: THE CASE AT STATE ISLAMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 01 KUDUS

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ABSTRACT

English is approved as foreign language in Indonesian learner by distributing some aspect accepted there especially in culture. It involves Indonesian learner to explore it in globalization era. This causes the learner motivated that studying English is very important. So it is needed a new learning style to enrich reading, writing, listening and speaking skills by utilizing technology. It is blended learning that becomes one of the ways to improve English skills for the students. This research attempts at describing the use of blended learning in promote English skills at State Islamic Senior High School 01 Kudus. This is qualitative research. The data were collected by observing English teaching and learning using blended learning system and interviewing one of English teachers and five students at State Islamic Senior High School 01 Kudus. The result shows that the English teacher applied blended learning around two years. It is the combination between face-to-face classroom settings and using technology such as smartphone and computers of school. Students were asked to follow the teaching and learning English by using some applications, form and connecting the internet. The benefits and challenges will be faced in the teaching and learning activities. However, the students are more interested in promoting English skills by using blended learning.

Keywords: Blended Learning, English Skills, State Islamic Senior High School

Introduction

English is approved as foreign language in Indonesian learner by distributing some aspect accepted there. In line with Wahyuningsih that English plays several aspect comprising culture, socio-culture, psychology, economy, dialects, and so on. So those can involve Indonesian learner to follow the culture (Wahyuningsih, n.d.). Following the culture causes the learner motivated that how important studying English and promoting its skills. They include reading, listening, speaking and writing. It will be acquired by the learners if the English skills’ learning is designed with new environment following the globalization era.

Following the development of technology in the industrial era, it should be participated by using technology for the media or resources of learning. Technology becomes a center tool in business and industrial settings. Wrahatnolo and Munoto
reported that technology in 21st centuries is growing rapidly in the development of business and industry. Pitrik and Mallich (2004, p. 190) revealed that technology can employ to take over a significant part of knowledge transfer at the level of intellect by providing space for active participation and meaningful interactions both in real and virtual communications. It conducts for learner’s life in business and industry sectors to capture wider knowledge by obvious and cyber communications.

Besides, technology should give many advantages for learner in promoting English skills. According to Sharma and Barrett (2010, p. 1), learning can happen when the learner takes advantages of the learning opportunities offered by mobile technology. They are mobile phone (such as the Blackberry, I-phone or Google Android), smartphone, PDAs, netbook/notebook/laptop, tablet PCs, mp3 player, eBook reader (such as Amazon’s Kindle and Sony’s eBook reader). So, learning assimilates between directly delivering in the classroom and using technology. It’s called as blended learning.

Blended learning becomes an easy system to empower English skills include reading, writing, listening and speaking. Pereira et. al. (2007, p. 965) showed that blended learning is more effective than traditional teaching for teaching human anatomy. The materials are designed to respond students’ expectation involving their progresses. Garrison and Kanuka (2004, p. 104) described that blended learning is adopted in campus-based higher education institution and used to assess and evaluate the learning. It explores more meaningful learning experiences for the students.

Blended learning is a learning style, combining between face-to-face learning in the classroom and using technology as a second version to teach English. Stacey and Gerbic (2008, p. 965) described the convergence of face-to-face setting and Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) based setting. In line with Singh (2003, p. 52-53), blended learning mixes various event-based activities including face-to-face classrooms, live e-learning and self-paced learning. Horn and Staker(2012, p. 3) defined that blended learning facilitates the students to learn something at least in the classroom and online delivery so they can control over time, place, path or pace. So, the students can learn their materials everywhere without limited place, time and place.

For developing teaching learning system and the students will accept English learning exactly, so the English teacher of the ten grade students of State Islamic Senior High School apply blended learning to promote their English skills. The writer attempts to identify the use of blended learning to promote students’ English skills and analyze the process of blended learning applied for the ten grade students.
of State Islamic Senior High School. The purpose of writer is to identify how is the development of the students’ English skill when they get blended learning system as a new English learning environment for them.

Method

This research methodology fell in the descriptive qualitative research. In order to gather data, the writer observed and interview one of the English teacher and five students at State Islamic Senior High School 01 Kudus. In addition, an observation was also conducted to see and analyze the students’ English skill, this observation was crucial to explore student’s interested in promoting English skill.

Results

The research result shows that One of the English teachers at State Islamic Senior High School 01 Kudus, Umar applied blended learning by combining face-to-face teaching setting and utilizing technology by using smartphone and computers of school to teach the students around two years (M. Umar, personal communication. 2019, September 18). This aims to improve English skills among the students of State Islamic Senior High School 01 Kudus.

Discussion

There are four skills that be used in blended learning process. Umar applied Weblog in reading skill with the link: http://sites.google.com/view/bahasainggrisasyik. It contains the meaningful materials based on syllabus and competencies for the students of State Islamic Senior High School 01 Kudus. The materials on power point design, You-tube video and assignments given to the students are also available there. Umar also gave some assignments of reading skill for the students in Google Form. (M. Umar, personal communication. 2019, September 18).

Umar asked the students to print out an example of application forms such as registration, check in hotel or hospital and paying tax to improve writing skill. The students had to fill out the form in accordance with their selves’ data. Besides, Umar also asked the students to fill out the application form using Google Form. Further, Umar used Exam Test application in Play Store and the students had to download it. The materials would be uploaded there. Umar gave shorten link and code to the students for answering the questions (M. Umar, personal communication. 2019, September 18).

Umar used Speech to Text application to empower students’ listening skill (M. Umar, personal communication. 2019, September 18). The students were asked to record their sounds in its application. The students practiced it repeatedly so its
application could save their voices and assess their records. The last skill is speaking skill which the students were asked to make a video, share it to the teacher or upload it into You-Tube. WhatsApp group was also used by the teacher and students for making interactions, asking some questions related to the materials and assessing the other friends’ videos (M. Umar, personal communication. 2019, September 18). So, the students will get more information, self-confidence to enhance English skills.

One of some benefits of blended learning is the students will not be bored. Further, they can learn English in the classroom and use technology such a mobile phone, computers of school and internet (Khoirin Nisatun Nazilah, personal communication 2019, September 17). In line with Hayati (personal communication. 2019, September 17), the students can take advantages of internet and fill out the application form in Google Form. In addition, Umar could make a management time from giving some materials and assignments by technology and make the students interested in learning English (M. Umar, personal communication. 2019, September 18). So, it takes time efficiency and the teacher does not spend much times and powers to teach the students.

The obstacle of blended learning process in English learning is the students cannot maximize using smartphone because of forbidding in carrying their smartphone into the school. Poor connection of net-work became the big reason in using technology in blended learning (Eka Kurnia Putri Apriliana, personal communication. 2019, September 17). In addition, Cahyani had not enough chance to use smartphone in English learning because she stayed in cottage (personal communication. 2019, September 17). Nazilah (personal communication 2019, September 17) faced the obstacle of blended learning that is the students cannot control themselves in using smartphone in the class. It conducts the students to abuse a smartphone for useless things. The solutions for surmounting those constraints in learning English are the students make management time of doing assignments from the teacher in traditional learning system in the class and concern using smartphone, internet or computers of school in learning English.

Conclusion

According to the explanation above, it can be concluded that blended learning is a learning system modifying face-to-face environment and using technology such as smartphone, internet, English application and computers of school to promote English skills. Although giving the benefits and constrains for the students, blended learning makes the students interested in English skills.

References


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