
THE EFFECT OF BLENDED LEARNING TO THE STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN GRAMMAR CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Blended learning is believed to improve students' understanding in learning second language. The employment of offline and online activities is expected to give better outcome than the traditional face-to-face activities. This article presents how blended learning was applied in an English grammar class and whether it significantly improved students' achievement after the treatment. The participants involved in this research were 26 students of the the second semester students of the English Letters Department, Sanata Dharma University. A pre-experimental research was conducted by comparing the means of the participants' scores in both pre-test and post-test. The analysis figured out that there was a significant improvement, proven by the paired t-test analysis. The p -value 0.00 was less than α 0.05. This research concluded that blended learning was effective to assist the students to learn English grammar. To strengthen the findings, this research also involved pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire to understand students' responses on the use of blended learning. In the end of the semester, most students found that online activities help them comprehend and practice the materials. Students' reflective journals also revealed that blended learning was able to improve their understanding and interest in learning English grammar.

Key Words: blended learning; grammar; pre-experimental research

ABSTRAK

Blended learning dipercaya mampu meningkatkan pemahaman siswa dalam memahami bahasa asing. Penggunaan aktifitas offline dan online diharapkan mampu memberi luaran yang lebih baik dibandingkan aktifitas tatap muka secara tradisional. Artikel ini menyajikan bagaimana blended learning diterapkan dalam kelas English grammar dan mengungkapkan apakah blended learning memberikan perbedaan berarti dalam pencapaian mahasiswa sebelum dan setelah perlakuan. Partisipan yang dilibatkan dalam penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester dua dari Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Universitas Sanata Dharma. 26 partisipan dilibatkan dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian pra-eksperimen diterapkan dengan membandingkan rata-rata nilai dari peserta dalam pre-tes dan pos-tes. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan signifikan rata-rata dari kedua tes, yang ditunjukkan dengan analisis pasangan t-tes. Nilai p menunjukkan 0.00 dan lebih kecil dari α 0.05. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa blended learning efektif untuk mendampingi mahasiswa belajar English grammar. Untuk memperkuat penemuan tersebut, penelitian ini juga melibatkan pre-kuesioner dan pos-kuesioner. Pada akhir semester, sebagian besar mahasiswa menemukan bahwa aktifitas online membantu mereka memahami dan melatih materi yang mereka pelajari. Jurnal reflektif mahasiswa juga menunjukkan bahwa blended learning mampu meningkatkan kemampuan mereka belajar English Grammar.

Kata Kunci: blended learning; grammar; penelitian pra-eksperimen

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INTRODUCTION

Blended learning has been popular in language learning and teaching methodology due to the fact that this digital era enables both students and teachers to access online sources easily. It should be accepted that today's generation is familiar with technology, hence they are categorized as the net generation. Students prefer to access their phone or laptop than to save piles of papers containing information they look for. One of the advantages of having online files is that students can find out the files they have and read e-books, as an instance, more flexible in time and space. It is, then, inevitable that learning and teaching process should provide online materials and exercises to engage the students' contexts. Therefore, the use of computer assisted language learning (CALL) should be familiarized among different levels of education.

In spite of the flexibility of its implementation, CALL is believed to improve the students' autonomy. Students are close with computer and internet. It means that there is greater possibility for them to be more autonomous and responsible. It is expected that students are responsible for the courses they take and perform their language competency, including speaking and writing. To be

autonomous, the students should have willingness to change and improve learning strategies since language learning also progresses (Godwin-jones, 2011).

Students' autonomy cannot be separated from their integrative motivation to improve their language competencies. In Indonesia, the use of CALL is not yet seen as common method in teaching and learning. It results in the students' dependency on the teacher in learning materials. If this problem continues, the barrier on the students' autonomy may be cultural (Godwin-jones, 2011). Teacher-centered learning is still common to happen in Indonesia in every education level. One of the factors is the lack of sufficient facilities in certain schools. Therefore, some college students who are in the first year of college still face difficulty or inconvenience when they use computer or internet in their learning processes.

Another challenge faced by teachers when using computer and internet in classroom is the students' motivation which results in their passivity and the teachers' loss of control (Godwin-jones, 2011). It is also suggested that effective CALL needs an instructor capable of locating optimal balance of approaches, resources, and tools to meet the needs of particular

learners in particular learning context (Donaldson & Haggstrom, 2006). The previous background motivates this research to apply blended learning in grammar class.

The term “blended learning” is regarded as a new term in relation to the development of the 21st century technology (Wright, 2017). There are some definitions of what so called blended learning. One of them argues that blended learning is applied using various multi-media applied in an ideal way to solve problems (Keshta & Harb, 2013). Blended learning combines face-to-face method and the use of computer in teaching learning process (Grgurovic, 2011). Blended learning aims at providing effective and efficient learning experience by combining learning environment which suits the students (Chansamrong, 2014).

There are two approaches in blended learning: “program overflow model” and “core-and-spoke model” (Bersin, 2004). In the first model, the teacher designs curriculum by integrating some media in the scheduled syllabus. Each step or discussion is the follow-up of the previous discussion. To measure the whole learning, a task or test is given in the end of topic discussion (Bersin, 2004). In the second approach, the instructor gives online class or web-

based course. Usually, the instructor gives particular activities such as delivering materials, interactivity, learning sources, and material assessment. In this approach a task or test may be given, yet not necessarily to be scheduled in the syllabus (Bersin, 2004).

One of the blended learning methodologies is by using moodle. Ayan (2015) mentions that moodle is one of the mostly used open source learning management systems, which can create an encouraging, informative, and always renewable language education environment. The previous statement implies that moodle is one of digital sources which can be further developed so that it suits the teaching learning purposes. In this article, moodle is provided by the university in exelsa2012.ac.id. The website can be accessed by Sanata Dharma University students by logging in the website using their student number and password. The information provided in the moodle is integrated with the academic information system supported by the university. Therefore, the students who take particular courses are automatically registered in the moodle.

The use of blended learning in various classes has been researched by previous writers. One of the research

observing blended learning is to figure out the effectiveness of blended learning and cooperative learning to teach grammar in Thailand (Chansamrong, Tubsree, & Kiratibodee, 2014). The research gives pre-test and post-test to the participants, 100 students separated in two different groups. It is revealed that there is a significant difference found in the post-test compared to pre-test. Besides giving the test, that research also gives survey to the students to know their responses towards blended learning. It concludes that blended learning suits the students' need and the teaching goals.

Similar research is done in different language skill (Camahalan & Ruley, 2014). The research also employs pre-assessment and post-assessment to the students. Post-assessment is given after a six-week-learning process. Even though the practiced language skill is writing, students' grammar competency is also important to exercise students' accuracy in writing. It is found that students' writing in the post-assessment is better than previous. Seen from students' reflection, blended learning is also appreciated by the students.

Blended learning is also observed in relation to self-regulated learning (SLR) (Dettiro & Perico, 2007). They

observe the relation between blended learning and SLR in terms of both cognitive and meta-cognitive aspects towards pre-service teachers. The research finds that blended learning offers a good opportunity to the pre-service teachers to improve their SLR. However, face-to-face meeting is still important to build the participants' motivation to follow the learning process so that the use of online learning can be exercised to sharpen their cognitive skills (Dettori & Persico, 2007). Similar research is also done by Shen and Liu (2011). The research figures out that students' SLR can be improved by understanding students' context so that blended learning can be employed more effectively (Shen & Liu, 2011).

Motivated by the elaboration of the background above, this article attempts at figuring out how students' understanding of the materials, represented in scores, are affected by the implementation of blended learning; how the students respond to the questionnaires of their experience in blended learning class; and how the students reflect their learning experience in blended learning class.

METHOD

Program overflow model offered by Bersin (2004) was adopted in this

research. Blended learning was applied by using learning management system (LMS), Moodle, provided by Sanata Dharma University website. The LMS can be accessed in <http://exelsa2012.usd.ac.id/>. LMS was chosen as the tool to employ in this research since it provides online course management which contains learning sources such as comprehensive assessment and learning sources or materials (Thorne, 2003). LMS also offers various types of learning activities such as classroom based learning, e-learning, virtual learning, technology-based training, books, and videos (Thorne, 2003). However, Naidu (2006) argues that LMS is lack of tools and capability for the development of complex cognitive and social skills (Wright, 2017, p.64). Since this research attempts at knowing how blended learning influences students' understanding of the materials, LMS is already sufficient to involve.

In order to figure out the influence of blended learning in grammar class, this research applied a pre-experimental research. The treatment applied in this research is blended learning, which involved students' activities outside classroom by using computer and internet. Experimental research is one kind of correlational (associational) research as it aims to test a relationship between or

among variables and to make predictions, which are dependent on the outcome of a strong relationship between or among variables (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 145).

Pre-test and post-test were involved to measure the individual students' achievement in the beginning and the end of the treatment. Thus, a paired t-test was applied to compare the means of the group's scores. T-test aims at knowing whether the means of the two groups are significantly different from one another. It also identifies the relationship between the treatment group and its outcomes after experiencing particular method, i.e. blended learning (Burns, 2010, p. 13).

The participants were the second semester students of the English Letters Department, Sanata Dharma University. There were 34 students registered in the observed class which was English Grammar II, but only 26 students were analyzed in the paired-test. It happened because not all students came in both tests. The students already took the pre-requisite course, English Grammar I given in the first semester. To pass the course, the students should get 56 or a C in their final score since grammar is one of the basic skills the students should master.

In Addition to comparing the students' scores in pre-test and post-

test, this research also used another instrument, questionnaire. The pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire were also distributed to the students. The questionnaire distributed used Lickert scale in which the students had to choose the options “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “neutral”, “agree” and “strongly agree”. The questions distributed in the questionnaire were adopted from Grugovic’s previous study (2011) as follows:

- *I like to work on online activities to improve my grammar skill*
- *I prefer to work on online activities for homework*
- *Working on online activities helps me with practicing grammar*
- *I can see the connection between online activities and activities done in class*

The last instrument involved in this research was students’ reflective journal. The employment of this instrument aims at knowing how the students experience the treatment. Journal writing motivates the students to depicts their interests, thinking and curiosity about their experience in their surrounding world (Al-rawahi & Al-Balushi, 2015). By writing reflective journal, this research could discover the students’ impression on the treatment, blended learning. The reflective journal

was submitted in Moodle after the given treatment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part is divided into three. The first part discusses the students’ mean score in both pre-test and post-test. In addition to discussing whether the mean difference in both pre-test and post-test is significantly different, the process of blended learning during the semester is also elaborated. The second part shows the students’ responses in the questionnaires. To find more comprehension on the students’ responses to blended learning, the third part discusses the students’ reflective journal. By employing reflective journal, the students are expected to be involved in the learning process.

The Students’ Results in Pre-test and Post-test

A paired t-test was applied in this research so that the significance difference of the individual’s achievement can be measured. The table 1 shows the result.

Table 1. The t-test Result

Group	N	Mean	t-observe	t-table	df	p
Pre-test	26	52.35	2.059	-7.43	25	8,8 E-08
Post-test	26	70				

The table 1 shows that the number of students observed in the research (N) was 26. The mean score in the pre-test was 52.35, while the mean score in the post-test was 70. The mean difference between the test was 17.5. The two-tailed significance test indicates a $t = -7.43$ with 25 degrees of freedom, which results in a two-tailed p -value $8.8 \text{ E-}08$. The number of p -value was 0.00 or less than the $\alpha = 0.05$. The p -value was statistically significant since it is less than $\alpha = 0.05$, meaning that the result rejects the null hypothesis. In conclusion, there was a significance difference between the students' score in the pre-test and post-test.

The students' achievement cannot be separated from the semester's learning process. This result is similar to the one conducted by Chansamrong, Tubsree & Kiratibodee (2014). The average result in the previous study also improves in the post-test compared to the pre-test. It suggests that blended learning is effective to assist the students to learn English Grammar. The finding of this research also supports Keshta and Harb (2013). They find that blended learning is able to enhance self-learning and students' achievement (Keshta & Harb, 2013).

The results of the students' achievement above cannot be separated

from some interventions exposed during the semester. It triggers the students' autonomy in learning second language. This finding agrees with Godwin-jones' statement that CALL is able to improve autonomous learning (2011). In this research, the first intervention exposed to the students is the use of videos and PowerPoint files uploaded in the LMS. The videos are uploaded several times based on the numbers of topic discussion in the semester. The PowerPoint files are those created by the lecturer and presented in class. Observed from the students' participation in the LMS, there is a consistency between students' achievement in end of the semester with their regularity in accessing the online materials and assignments. The table below displays the summary of the students' percentage in completing the online assignments with their final grade.

As there was not any student who got 50-55 in the post-test, the percentage in the above table is represented in 0%. The table above reveals that there is consistency between the students' completing assignments with their results in the post-test. Those who achieve higher score are the students who complete more assignments than the others. Practicing grammar online regularly is proven to improve the students'

In addition to sharing files in the LMS, the lecturer also shares the links of videos in YouTube. Below is the example of the videos.

Picture 2. The Example of Online Videos in LMS



The numbers of the videos uploaded in LMS are in line with the numbers of topic discussion during the semester. It aims at providing the students an alternative source of learning. Moreover, the students can recall what they have learnt in class. The exposure of the use of videos in LMS is welcome by the students. Besides understanding the materials, the students also practice their listening skills.

The use of online assignments is also displayed in LMS. There are some types of online assignments given to the students: fill in the blanks, multiple choice, and file upload. Below is the example of students' participation score in the online quiz.

Picture 3. The Example of Online Assignments

First name / Surname	Username	Grade	Comment	Last modified (Submission)	Last modified (Grade)	Status	Final grade
STANISLAUS DANANG BAYU AJI	164214007	90 / 100	My phone	A. Active... Tuesday, 7 March 2017, 10:28 PM	Thursday, 9 March 2017, 07:21 AM	Update	90
FELICE DOROTHY ARUS	164214008	80 / 100	White ...	A. Active... Friday, 10 March 2017, 02:56 PM	Tuesday, 14 March 2017, 12:44 PM	Update	80
INGIGTA PRAMESTI AYUNINGTYAS	164214009	100 / 100	good job!	A. Active... Tuesday, 7 March 2017, 04:42 PM	Thursday, 9 March 2017, 07:23 AM	Update	100
MARIA ANGELINA CHANDRAWATI OETAMI BARIKA	164214021	100 / 100	good job!	a. 1 While Monday, 6 March 2017, 01:13 AM	Monday, 6 March 2017, 07:55 AM	Update	100
SHIENNA LINGKAN CHRISTITA	164214019	100 / 100	good job!	A. Active Monday, 6 March 2017, 12:03 PM	Tuesday, 7 March 2017, 09:35 AM	Update	100
CHRISNA EVAN	164214024	80 / 100	passive adv	active adv Wednesday, 8 March 2017, 05:06 PM	Thursday, 9 March 2017, 07:25 AM	Update	80
STELLA FRANISKA	164214015	100 / 100	good job!	a) Active Monday, 6 March 2017, 07:10 PM	Tuesday, 7 March 2017, 09:36 AM	Update	100

The LMS used in this research is integrated with the academic information system in the university. The students' names and student numbers are already integrated when they log in to exelsa2012.usd.ac.id. The regular assignments given online are proven to help the students practice their grammar skill. By practicing regularly, the students practice their linguistic performance. Even though the students can work with their friends in the online assignments, their scores are assessed individually. This is to encourage them to be familiar with blended learning. The previous finding shows that blended learning is able to increase the students' interaction and participation, as suggested by Al Fiky (2011) (Keshta & Harb, 2013, p. 213).

The students' participation during the treatment proves that they are placed in a suitable environment which can influence their motivation.

Motivation is a key of learning success since the students can control their learning processes (Orhan, 2007, p. 391). The motivation is shown by their participation of the given assignments. The students have become autonomous as they have duty to complete the assignment. They consciously participate the tasks in blended learning class to achieve their goal. This research found that the most of the participants have been in self-regulated learning. Self-regulated learning requires an active and conscious control of the learners' activity in terms of metacognition, motivation and behavior individually and socially (Dettori, 2007).

Students' Responses in the Questionnaires

The questionnaires were given both in the beginning and in the end of the semester. It aims at figuring out how the students show their experience in blended learning class. Similar to

comparing the students' scores in the pre-test and post-test, there are also differences in the students' responses in blended learning class. The table below shows the students' responses in the questionnaires.

The first statement to respond in the questionnaire is "I like to work on online activities to improve my grammar skill". In the pre-questionnaire, most of the students choose "neutral", presented in 50%. On the other hand, in the post-questionnaire there are 53% of the students choose "agree". This finding reveals that after experiencing blended learning class, the students' learning style changes. Seen from the option "agree", there is 13% increase of those who enjoy the online activities to improve their grammar skill. The number is satisfying as the students show their interest in the class.

Table 3. Students' Responses in the Questionnaires

NO	SDA		DA		N		A		SA	
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2
1	0%	0%	3%	5%	50%	32%	40%	53%	7%	9%
2	0%	0%	12%	20%	35%	20%	28%	42%	25%	18%
3	0%	0%	9%	7%	35%	40%	41%	33%	15%	20%
4	0%	0%	3%	5%	42%	38%	48%	40%	9%	20%

No: Number of statement in the questionnaire, SDA: strongly disagree, DA: disagree, N: neutral, A: agree, SA: strongly agree, Q1: questionnaire given in the beginning of the semester, Q2: questionnaire given in the end of the semester.

The result of the questionnaire above suggests that students can find the advantage of being involved in the blended learning environment as they can develop their autonomy. By practicing online, the students can save time and be motivated (Keshta & Harb, 2013). The students have found their motivation to achieve the goal in class. The positive outcomes shown by the students cannot be separated from their engagement of the learning environment. It is undeniable that computer and internet become the students' part of life. Consequently, students' positive effect on learning outcomes is reflected after they experience a blended learning class (Moreno, 2012).

The second statement in the questionnaire is "I prefer to work on online activities for homework". In the beginning of the semester, there were 35% of the students choosing "neutral", whereas in the end of the semester there were 42% of the students choosing "agree". The dominating students who choose the option also changes. In the beginning of the semester, most of the students do not show exact interest to work online activities for their homework. However, in the end of the semester, the majority of the students like the online activities

for their homework. It shows that the students enjoy their learning process.

In spite of the fact that the students found their motivation in learning, students become accustomed to use internet and computer to do their homework. Students have created their learning styles suitable to their life. Their completing work outside classroom reflects their autonomy. Students have developed their strategies in order to chase their individual learnings (Godwin-jones, 2011). The goal they set to learn grammar is enhanced by practicing individually outside classroom. Their autonomy is represented through their position, time and place in which they are doing the tasks which refer to the atmosphere different from classroom (Ayan, 2015).

The third statement in the questionnaire is "Working on online activities helps me with practicing grammar". The important difference observed in this statement is the number of students who choose "disagree" and "strongly agree". The percentage of the students choosing "disagree" decreases, while it increases in the option "strongly agree". In the beginning of the semester, the students show that in the previous semester, they do not find any benefits to practice grammar online. It is totally different

from their responses in the end of the semester. Students who choose “strongly agree” show their high interest in the online activities in relation to their grammar skill.

The result of the questionnaire above indicates that students give positive value to blended learning. This case cannot be separated from the quality of dialogue and relationship between the teacher and students (Ayan, 2015) when negotiating the employment of blended learning in class. Despite the lack of facilities faced by the students, the teacher provided online materials and assignments in the website provided by the university. Thus, students have more access to be involved in blended learning environment.

The different finding is found in the students’ option is also found in the last statement “I can see the connection between online activities and activities done in class”. In the beginning of the semester, most of the students choose the option “agree”, shown in 48%. The dominant students, in the end of the semester, also choose the same option. However, there is a difference in the options “disagree” and “strongly agree” which increase in the end of the semester. This finding shows that students still can see the connection between activities done in class and the

online one. Before attending the blended learning class, some students already practice online themselves. It is good that, as digital natives, the students should be able to use the online materials autonomously. The ease of browsing online materials gives them a lot of opportunities to develop their competencies.

Students’ Reflective Journal

From the activity, the students are assigned to write their opinions related to the activities offered in the LMS. Below are some examples of students’ reflection.

- *I can **learn** the material from the video before class so that I won't be confused when it is taught in the class. I also can watch the videos to make me **remember** the materials.*
- *In the videos, the speaker tells the materials in a simple way, and it only gives the **important points** about grammar.*
- *The use of videos always **helps** me in understanding more about the lesson. They are very helpful.*
- *There is no point if I just study based on the regular class activities. I will forget the lesson. But, the online materials help me to **improve** my knowledge. It gives me, in another method, **more** explanation.*
- *For me the use of videos is very **helpful** since it can make me **understand** the materials better.*

Observing the students' language choice, the reflective journal shows that the students show positive responses to the use of blended learning in grammar class. The verbs such as *learn*, *help*, and *improve* infer that the students conduct particular actions in their learning process. The given materials provided online are proven to motivate the students exercise their grammar skill. The actions done by the students affect their cognition shown by the verbs *understand* and *remember*. Moreover, the use of adjective *helpful* also displays clear relation between the students' regular activities in the LMS and their understanding of the materials. The previous conclusion is also strengthened by the students' results in the post-test.

The second activity is giving online assignments. The given assignments vary: filling in the blanks, uploading single file, and taking multiple choice assignments. Those assignments were given in the end of each topic discussion. To motivate the students' regularity of online practices, the assignments weigh the same as the test scores. By applying that strategy, the students are motivated to access the LMS regularly. In doing the assignments, the students are also allowed to discuss the assignments with their friends even though the

assignments scores are given individually.

- *It's **good** for we could be more **active** when we are in our home.*
- *I think the use of videos and online assignment in Grammar class are really **nice**. Those things **help** me to understand the material better.*
- *I think that it's really **helpful** in learning the materials. Specially the online assignments, it can also **help** my score.*
- *It's very **useful** because we don't have to study just from the lecturer in class, but because it's online assignments we can access it wherever we want.*
- *The online material **helps** me add more understanding of the material given, I can learn more **efficiently** and can play it over and over again if I still have not properly studied it.*

The students' language choice in the above journals shows that the students appreciate the assignments. The previous fact is proven by the use of some positive adjectives such as *active*, *nice*, *helpful*, and *useful*. Those adjectives reveal that the students show their interest and excitement when they are given the online assignments. Besides showing their interest, students show their appreciation by the verb *help* and the adverb *efficiently*. The students' reflective journal also emphasizes the students' responses in the questionnaires.

The elaboration presented in the above paragraphs infers that the participants can improve their understanding in grammar by means of blended learning. The uploaded videos in the LMS are useful to enhance the students' understanding of the materials. To increase their participation and learning comprehension, the videos which are uploaded before the class is also effective to apply. In line with Wright's research, the videos should be preceded by pre-online-lesson and class explanation. Post-online-lesson is also necessary to follow up the students' understanding. By doing so, teachers can spend time to discuss students' questions and rule clarification (Wright, 2017).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Blended learning is suitable to implement in courses related to language skills, particularly grammar. The regular activities given online are proven to help the students exercise their understanding of the given materials, seen from the results in both pre-test and post-test. There is also consistency between the students' achievement in the post-test with the students' completion of the online assignments. The exposures given in the LMS are proven to motivate the

students to practice their grammar ability. Moreover, the uploaded videos also become another learning resource for the students. Referring to the students' reflective journals, students show their appreciation to blended learning by choosing positive adjectives in their journals. On the other hand, the use of verbs in the journal also reveal the students' practice and access to the online activities. This article suggests that blended learning be applied in other courses related to language skills. Thorough interview and wider survey are also needed to enrich the present findings. The use of discourse analysis is highly suggested.

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