

BLENDED LEARNING METHOD TO TEACH WRITING IN ECONOMIC COLLEGE STUDENTS

Irene Brainnita Oktarin

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Gontar Bandar Lampung
Email: irenebrainnita.ib@gmail.com

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan pesat dari Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi dapat memberikan dampak yang besar untuk meningkatkan kualitas belajar dan pendidikan, seperti internet. Pembelajaran berbasis online seharusnya telah berkembang secara optimal untuk mendukung proses belajar mengajar. Ini bias menjadi salah satu pengajaran modern bahasa asing.

Blended Learning adalah sebuah metode, kombinasi dari penggabungan pembelajaran online dengan metode tradisional atau pengajaran tatap muka yang dikembangkan dengan pendekatan fleksibel untuk menciptakan pengalaman belajar yang lebih efektif dan memungkinkan mahasiswa untuk bertukar masukan dan respon secara kelompok dan individu. Tulisan ini berisi tentang Metode Blended Learning untuk mengajar kemampuan menulis pada mahasiswa Ekonomi.

Keywords: Blended Learning, metode mengajar, kemampuan menulis

I. Introduction

Writing is one of important language skill that must be mastered by the students. Sparrt (2005: 26) says that writing is one of the four language skills that involves communicating a message (something to say) by making signs on a page. Writing is one of the most difficult skills for students to acquire. As stated by Murcia, et al. (2000: 161), writing skill is often perceived as the most difficult skill since it requires a higher level of productive language control than other skills. In the process of writing, the students should master some aspects: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanism. Each of them cannot be separated to form a good writing. They must be integrated as a whole.

The complex nature of writing has led some researchers to focus on writing skill. Khoii (2011: 494) says several reasons why more researches need to be done about the writing skill: (1) Many students have specific needs that require them to work on this skill: academic study, examination preparation, and business English are areas where the writing skill is very important. (2) Students need to take notes in lessons, therefore; this skill is worth focusing on. (3) Writing involves a different kind of mental process. There is more time to think, to reflect,

to prepare, to rehearse, to make mistakes, and to find alternatives. (4) Writing is one way of providing variety in classroom procedures, and it also makes possible individualized work in large classes. (5) Writing tends to increase retention and makes available the source for later reference. (6) Writing provides a student with physical evidence of his achievement.

Successful writing teaching is also based on the method used by the teacher. Method is important to make students interested in learning. Monotonous teaching method is considered as one of the crucial factor, they may become predictable and less interesting for their students. Using various teaching methods in the class can help the teacher to improve the students' skill in producing good writing.

The development of Information and Communication Technology era, the learning process has been moving toward the technology. It also happens in education; one of the newest technology which is being used in the teaching learning process. Internet as one of digital tools in ICT which offers many current and applicable sources of materials is assumed to be able to provide solution and give effective contribution in solving the problem in writing. Based on the technological advancement as said above, online learning should have been

being developed to optimally support the teaching learning process.

As we all know if the first lesson is teacher-centered learning where textbooks and teachers are the most important source of knowledge for the learner, the learning process has now shifted to student-centered learning where textbooks and teacher is no longer the most important source of knowledge but learners can explore science through other media such as newspapers, television, and the internet. The widely development of modern technologies information and communications can give a great impact to increase learning and education quality.

Blended Learning is a new modality of teaching combining the traditional teaching method and online learning. Blended Learning can be applied to elementary until high education. The function of this method is to create a more effective learning experience and allow students to exchange collective and individual feedback and responses. By allowing instructors to tap into more than one mode, blended learning offers a flexible continuum of various learning environments (Hinkelman, 2005: 19). The major thrust of blended instruction is to overcome the shortcomings of online instruction and utilize various instructional sequencing and delivery strategies to enhance learner satisfaction while also achieving increased learning outcomes. Azis (2013: 107) asserts that Blended learning is applied based on the principles of freedom, independence, flexibility, and currency of, compliance, mobility, and efficiency. Learning by using blended learning can be done individually or in groups, it is highly dependent on the means of study and learning habits of a person.

Blended learning can be considered as leading trend in university education whose potential has not been fully exploited yet. This paper is focused on economic college students, assuming that in the nearest future, graduates of blended learning will be recruited by many corporations as accounting staff, a profile or at least several desirable qualities of an "accounting" graduate can be denoted such as conscientiousness, independence and creativity. Moreover, a graduate will be required to

continue education and self-education in order to maintain competence at a sufficiently high level (Kasperowicz, 2011).

Based on the explanation above, in this paper the writer will explain briefly about Blended Learning as one of teaching method to teach writing in Economic college students and also will explain the advantages of Blended Learning as a teaching method.

II. LITERATURE

2.1 Teaching Writing: What, Why, and How?

Writing is important because through writing students can share their ideas, experiences, and knowledges with other people. Beside that writing activities can give the students chance to express their feeling and thinking. As stated by Nunan (2003: 88) writing is the process of thinking to invent ideas, thinking about how to express into good writing, and arranging the ideas into statement and paragraph clearly. It means that writing is one of activities that are productive and expressive. So, writing skill does not come automatically, but it must go through training and practice regularly. Based on some experts, it can be concluded that there are five basic stages in teaching writing. They are planning, outlining, drafting, editing, and re-writing.

1) Planning or Prewriting

In this stage the students is stimulated to think carefully and organized their ideas about a topic for their writing before they begin writing.

2) Outlining

In this stage students just write the points which are going to be written and developed by them.

3) Drafting

At the drafting stage, students are focused on the fluency of writing and are not focused on grammatical accuracy or the neatness of the draft.

4) Editing

It is a process to improve global content and organization of ideas so that the result of students' writing is clearer to read.

- 5) **Rewriting**
At this stage, students prepare the final draft for evaluation by the teacher. They check their grammar, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation.

2.1 Reasons for using Blended Learning in Economic college students

Many researcher was conducted a research about Blended Learning. Many new results have founded by the researcher and also the reason for using Blended Learning method in teaching. The writer will classify the reasons as follow:

- a. **Blended Learning to develop student's intrinsic motivation**
By conducting Blended Learning, students can be more active, be part of a more interesting learning environment, and develop intrinsic motivation for learning English. Sucaromana (2013) compared the results of blended learning with face-to-face learning among university students studying English as a foreign language. The result showed that the students who were taught using blended learning had significantly higher levels of intrinsic motivation for learning English and a better attitude towards English as a subject, as well as greater satisfaction with the learning climate than the students who were taught using face-to-face learning.
- b. **Blended Learning to enrich learning environment**
Aiming to train students to write academic English more competently and largely depending on the method. This course had employed various computer and Internet-related approaches to involve, motivate and inspire the students to be actively engaged in various stages of academic English writing. Based on the problem, Liu (2013) evaluates blended learning in this AEW course in terms of course design, material development and presentation, assignment submission and grading, student involvement, teacher reflection, and student evaluation. Results showed that the students highly

appreciated and benefited from the blended learning employed in the course in varying ways. It helped increase student-student and student-teacher interactions, reduce or even eliminate communication anxiety, motivate them to become (more) independent and autonomous learners, and enhance their academic English writing ability, and so on.

- c. **Blended Learning to build Self-regulated strategies**
Ting and Chao (2013) analyzed vocational college students' self-regulated strategies for blended learning. It investigated whether there are any differences in self-regulated learning strategies among students with gender and achievement variables. The results showed that the students obtained their highest scores in metacognitive and the lowest in cognitive strategies.

2.2 Procedures of Blended Learning method in teaching writing

According to Huang, Ma, and Zhang (2008: 7-9), the four main components in the whole procedures of an activity based blended learning model are: (1) Leading-in; (2) Planning; (3) Acting; and (4) Reviewing. Leading in is the starting point of the activity. The main objective is to demonstrate the task to learners. Planning is aimed at defining the task by learners themselves through using their knowledge. Acting is purposed to deal with an actual task or problem by completing task-related requirements. Reviewing is performed to have newly constructed knowledge transferred to learners' future learning through sharing their work with their peers and the instructor.

Eydelman in Tomlinson and Whittaker (2011: 45) explains the procedures of Blended Learning are:

- a) During the weekly face-to-face sessions, for the duration students and teacher discuss a variety of materials, the selection of which is made based on their interests and taking into account their learning needs.

- b) The students are offered a series of activities and exercises to help them to improve different aspects of writing and the language. Their choice is conditioned by the course syllabus and at the beginning of the course many decisions are based on error analysis of the students' work made by the teacher.
- c) During the face-to-face sessions students do brainstorming and prepare their essay's outline. In addition, depending on time availability, the students are asked to work on their own to free write on the topic of their essay and then discuss what they have written with their peers.
- d) This work then continues to the online, which students can access from home during the week. In that website the students post their works in progress or completed ones.
- e) The students are asked to post their works in the online at least one day before a face-to-face session to leave their peers some time for commenting on their work. In general, they are asked to comment on at least one other person's work so as to not overwhelm them with the amount of work and to encourage them to do it.
- f) After that the students should revise their essay drafts based on the comments of their peers and the teacher.

From the models of blended learning teaching procedures above, the writer suggests the procedures of blended learning in teaching writing. They are:

- a) Teacher and students discuss the materials and topic that will be written.
- b) Teacher asks the students to make pairs.
- c) Teacher explains about process to do their writing.
- d) Teacher asks the students to written essay and discuss with their peers about their writing.
- e) This work then continues to the online (facebook group), teacher asks the students to join facebook group making by the teacher.

- f) Teacher asks the students to post their works in facebook group, the progress or completed ones.
- g) Teacher and students' peer give comment in the students' writing.
- h) Teacher asks the students to revise their works based on the comments of their peers and teacher.

2.3 Advantages of Blended Learning method

Azizan (2010: 460) explains some benefits of blended learning:

- a) Enhancing Social Interaction, Communication and Collaboration.

It is a key tool for building and sharing cultural understanding on a global basis. In addition, the interaction between learners and instructor, as well as learners with other learners may build online communities and learning practices where knowledge, ideas, experience and learning products are exchanged and valued.

- b) Offering Flexibility and Efficiency

Blended learning combines offline and online learning where the online learning refers to the use of Internet in the learning activities. While an offline learning happens in a more traditional classroom setting. The Internet provides flexibility and efficiency in teaching and learning activities. The teaching and learning session can be conducted via video or teleconference where learners can attend the class session via online.

- c) Extending the Reach and Mobility

With the increasing use of mobile and wireless technologies, the time and place for learning can take place anywhere at anytime. The blending of delivery mechanisms, instructional approaches, technologies, and learning situations, will evolve to support learning which is individualized yet collaborative and interactive, that is timely and directed toward a specific need yet part of a lifelong learning journey, and that is complex and yet ubiquitous and seamlessly integrated into the learning landscape. Thus, it is possible that such technologies are able to make learning more

easily accessible and promotes rich, interactive learning experience.

d) Optimizing Development Cost and Time

Blended learning combines different delivery modes that balance out and optimize the learning program development and deployment costs and time. Internet is a tool to deliver online learning supports a greater range of learning styles and individual differences in learning at a minimum cost.

Shen and Liu (2011: 1100) also state some advantages of blended learning:

- a) Students can have more choice and control over their study but under the guidance and instruction of their instructors at the same time, which will undoubtedly cultivate the creative and initiative spirits of students.
- b) Students can use of the abundant materials on the Internet and have a better understanding of the substantive materials with the help of professors in a face-to-face classroom.
- c) Students can have a greater opportunity to interact with each other and with their professor and thus form a stronger sense of community.
- d) Students in a blended learning context would perform better than those take mere face-to-face classes or online classes.

III. Conclusions

This paper has attempted to show how Blended Learning can be a teaching method in teaching writing in Economic college students. It suggests some reasons, procedures, and advantages to use Blended Learning as a teaching method in teaching writing. Moreover, it shows the importance of using Blended Learning in Economic college students. Some researcher showed the result of the research about Blended Learning, almost of their research indicates that Blended Learning brings many positive impacts in teaching and learning process. By using Blended Learning, it can enrich the learning environment and the students can stimulate their positive activity such as develop their intrinsic motivation, build self-

regulated strategies, and encourage their creativity.

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