THE EFFECTS OF BLENDED LEARNING TO POLINES STUDENTS' ABILITY ON READING TEST IN TOEIC

Nurul Hamida, Pandiya

Accounting Department

Politeknik Negeri Semarang

Semarang, Indonesia

nurulpolines@yahoo.com

Abstract

Blended Learning is one of the uses of Information and Communication Technology in education which is becoming the trend in language teaching today. Therefore, this study aimed to find out the effects of Blended Learning on the students of Semarang State Polytechnic (POLINES) in TOEIC test. However, in this study we only focus on the students' ability in the reading comprehension section in TOEIC test. Instead of TOEFL, TOEIC test is used in this study since POLINES students must join this test as in their 5th semester for students in Diploma III (D3) program, and in their 7th semester for Diploma IV (D4) program. Moreover, TOEIC is used to measure the English proficiency in global workplaces, so it is suitable for POLINES students as they are prepared to be able to work instantly after graduate. This study involves 2 classes of experiment groups and the other 2 classes for control groups. In the beginning of the reseach, both experiment and control groups are given pre test of TOEIC. Then, the Blended Learning is implemented in the experiment classes for 3 months. Post test are given at the end of the reseacah, and it shows that the TOEIC scores of the reading comprehension section of the students in experiment group is significantly different from the students in the control groups.

Keywords: Blended Learning, Reading Coprehention , TOEIC test

INTRODUCTION

Blended Learning is a potential outcome advace technology based learning system. The charm of Blended Learning approach lies in the adaptation of technology aided learning methods in addition to the existing traditional based learning. (Khan, Asif Irsyad et al; 2012).

Semarang State Polytechnic is a tertiary vocational education, and English is only becoming one of the supporting subjects there, since the students are more exposed to ecquire the skills in which they are majoring, such as: Mechanical, Electrical Engineering, or Business Administration. However, nowadays English plays important role for graduates in winning job opportunies and it is one of the supporting elements for graduates in doing their jobs well in their workplaces. It can be seen from the increasing number of job advertisements requiring the applicants to be able to speak English. Therefore, the students with good English skills, will be easier to get jobs, and even it is also possible to compete and get jobs in other countries, or otherwise they do not have good English proficiency, then they will be difficult for them to win the job competitions with the other graduates, or

even with foreign workers are more competitive.

TOEIC is one of the standardized test used to measure the English proficiency in the job fields in the global world. As parts of the Director's policy, it is a compulsary for POLINES students to take this test before they graduates, in order to measure their English proficiency and as well as to enable them to get the job easily. However, according to data it shows that in 2018, the avarage scores of POLINES students in TOEIC is 485,87. This scores shows that POLINES students are still in the level of "Elementary Proficiency Level Plus", which actually minimumly should be in the range of 605 – 780, in one more higher level of proficiency.

Meanwhile, the avarage scores of POLINES students in the Reading Comprehension Section is 272.25, and in the Listening Section is 213.62. In order to be more focussing on the two sections of the TOEIC test. Those two sections of TOEIC test, Listening and Reading Comprehention sectiion will be studied separetly. This study only aims on how to increase POLINES students' in Reading Comprehention in TOEIC by utilazing Blended Learning. The result of this study will be very useful for both POLINES English lectures and the students. It will help the English lectures solve the problem in improving the quality of teaching reading comprehension, and for the students the result of this study will make them easier to comprehend reading texts and consequently it will enable them to increase their scores in Reading Compehention section in TOEIC test.

LITERATURE REVIEW

"In the 21st century the increase of sharing knowledge and need for implementation of information communication technologies for academic purposes are pivotal". (Syaykina, Olga Igorevna and Mikhail Grigoryevich Minin; 2018). The educational system at present is in a transition stage. However, to meet the chalanges of expansion and for catering individuals need , it is trying to adopt new technologies and exploring new paths to reach the goal of quality educational opportunities for all, at the same time due to various factors like deficient budgets, lack of facilities, advantages of face to face interaction, it is not completely ready to leave the traditional modes of knowledge transfer. (Lalima, Kiran Lata Dangwal. 2017). Many studies favour the use of Blende Learning in lanuage teaching which integrate the traditional teaching and learning process with ICT teaching and learning process have good effect on the result of language teaching. (Graham, C.R., Allen, S. & Ure, D. 2005; Melton, Bridget et al. 2009; Hocutt, R. 2001; Akkoyunlu, B., & Soylu, M. Y. 2008.)

"Reading is a complex, purposeful, interactive, comprehending, and flexible activity that takes considerable time and resources to develop." (Bojovic, M., 2010). He also argues that reading develops gradually, and efforts can improve the reading skill comprehention since it is a cognitive ability. According Chen (2006) and Hwang (2005) the learners' reading ability in Asian EFL contexts are far from satisfactory.

"Language Testing is an indispensable element in language teaching." (Heffernnan; 2010). As for foreign or second language

learning, langugage testing is vital part of language teaching, since it measure the students' performance in the target language. Further, language tests the give learners themselves insight into how they are learning and progressing in a language program" (Brown, 2004; Hughes, 2003)

The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is produced by ETS (Educational Testing Service). As the industry leader , the TOEIC program has set the standard for assessing English Language skills needed in the workplace for more than 40 years. The TOEIC test are the most widely used around the world. The test questions are based on real life work setting in an international environment, such as: meeting, telephone conversations, etc The scores are ranging from 10 up to 990. (ETS.............)

METHODOLOGY

The samples of this study are taken using purposive random sampling method. They are the students in the second semesters. Two classes represent the students majoring in Engineering and the other two classes represent the students majoring Commerce in Semarang State Polytechnic. Therefore, this reaseach involved 4 groups, they are as follows: engineering experiment group, engineering control group, commerce experiment group and commerce control group. Each group consists of one class with 25 students.

The control groups are not given certain treatment in the language teaching, since they are used to find out the difference with the experiment group which implemented Blended Learning program during three months.

In the beginning of the study the students both in control and experiment groups are given TOEIC test as the pre test, this result shows the students' score before the experiment.

During the experiment which lasts for three months, the control groups have remain with the traditional teaching method. Meanwhile Blended Learning is implemented in the experiment groups. The experiment groups consists of one class from the students from Civil Engineering Study Program as the representative of the students majoring in Engineering, and the other one is the students from Accounting Study Program as the representative of the students majoring in Commerce. Similar with that, the control groups also consists of one class from Civil Engineering Study Program and the other one is from Accounting Study Program.

At the end of the study, both experiment and control groups are given TOEIC test again as the post test, in order to find out the effect of implemented Blended Leraning with the experiment groups.

The difference between the students's TOEIC scores in the post test and in the pre test shows whether the implementation of Blended Learning to increase the students' Reading Comprehention section in TOEIC test is effective or not.

The data in this study are analyzed using SPSS.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In order to ensure that the samples in this study are at the same level of proficiency in Reading Comprehention in TOEIC test, a complete TOEIC like test was assigned to both experiment and control groups, but only the reading comprehention section was analized. The data is analyzed using SPSS.

The experiment groups consist of two classes, with 25 students in each class, so the total samples of the experiment is 50 students. Half of them are taken from students majoring in Engineering and the other half are taken from students majoring in Commerce.

Meanwhile, the total number of the students in control group are also the same with the experiment groups.

It can be seen from table 1 that the result of the study shows that the scores of the students in the experiment and control groups in the pre test are very similar. The result of the Independent Samples Test (t-test) revealed at the p > 0,05 Level in scores for the two groups [t=0,17, p=0,986]. This data shows that the experiment groups are almost at the same level of proficiency in the reading comprehension in TOEIC test. However, their scores in Reading Comprehension in TOEIC test is not satisfactory. Therefore, it is the reason why this study is conducted.

Tabel 1.
Comparison between Pre test
of experiment and control groups

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	Sig (2-tailed)
Experiment	50	227,90	27,145	,017	,986
Control	50	227,80	30,542	,017	,986

The average scores of the students in Reading comprehention in TOEIC test is presented in the graph 1 below. The average scores of the experiment groups is 227.90; meanwhile the average of the control groups is 227.80. The difference scores between those two groups is only 0.10. Therefore, it shows that both of the experiment groups and the control groups used in this study is almost similar. It makes the result of this reseach will not be bias.
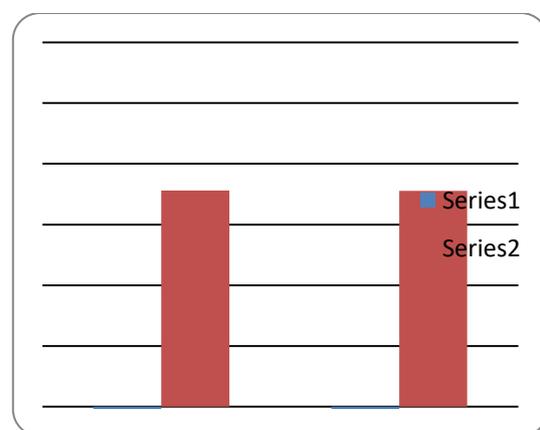

Figure 1.
Comparison between Pre test
of Experiment and Control Groups

After Blended Learning was implemented to the experiment groups for three months, post test of TOEIC like test are assigned to both experiment and control groups. It dues to find out the students performance in the Reading Comprehention after the experiment.

Descriptive anaysis and paired samples t-test were used to investigate any statistically significant differences in the result of the post test comparing with the pre test given to either experiment or control groups.

Table 2 belows presents the difference of the post test comparing to the pre test of the two

of the experiment groups. This table report statistically the result of the paired t-test of the POLINES students' score in reading comprehention in TOEIC test. The table below shows that at the p 0.05 the scores of the students's in Reading Comprehention in TOEIC test improve significantly [t = 17.966; p=0.000]. This meas that the implementation of Blended Learning causes positive effect on the students' ability in Reading Comprehention.

Tabel 2.
Comparison between pre and post test of experiement groups

goup	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T value	Sig (2 tailed)
pre test	50	227,900	27,1445	-17,966	0,000
post test	50	321,400	24,8473	-17,966	0,000

The average scores of the experiment students in Reading Comprehention Section of the TOEIC like test before the experiment was conducted is only 227.900, and after the experiment is 321.400. The average increase of the scores of the students in Reading Comprehention is 93.5 as presented in the figure 2 below. This incrase probably caused by the implementation of Blended Learning during the three months.
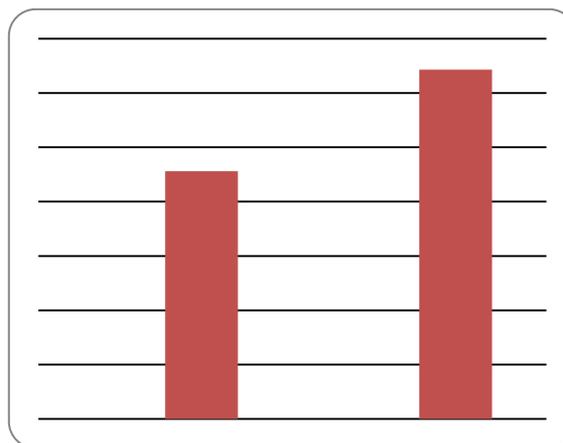

Figure 2.
Comparison between pre test and post test of experiement groups

To find out the effect of Blended Learning in the language teaching to POLINES, especially in Reading Comprehention in TOEIC test, a comparison is necessary. Comparing the post test between the experiment groups with the control groups reveals the effect of Blended Learning for improving the students' Reading Comprehension Skill.

As the result of the analysis on the control groups, which consist of one class from the students majoring in Engineering and the other one is the students majoring in Commerce, it can be seen from the table 3 below, that at the level of p > 0,05, it shows that the comparison between the post test and the pre test of the students in control groups in Reading Comprehention in TOEIC test is not significantly difference [t = -1.508; p = 0.135]. However, the table 3 below also shows that the is an increase with the post test of the control groups, it is 9.5.

Tabel 3
Comparison between
pre test and post test of control groups

group2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre Test Control	50	227,80	30,542	-1,508	,135
Post Test Control	50	237,30	32,407	-1,508	,135

Figure 3 below shows the difference between the post test and pre test of the students in the control groups. The average scores of the students in control groups in Reading Comprehention in the post test is 237.30 and their pre test is 227.80. Therefore, the difference between the post test and the pre test of the students in the control group is 9.5. This increase is not as high as the increase of the students in the experimen groups.
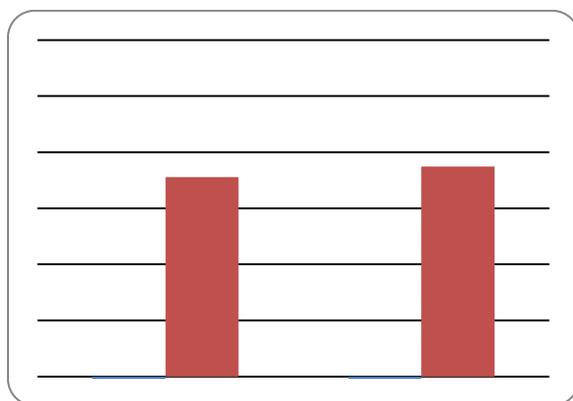

Figure 3
Comparison between
pre test and post test of control groups

The figure 4 below shows the comparison between the increase of POLINES students in experiment groups with the control groups in Reading Comprehention in TOEIC test. The experiment groups have the increase of 93.5, but the increase of the control groups is only 9.5. As it has been discussed previously, that the difference between the post test and pre test of the students in the experiment groups is significantly different, but the increase is not significantly different with the control groups.
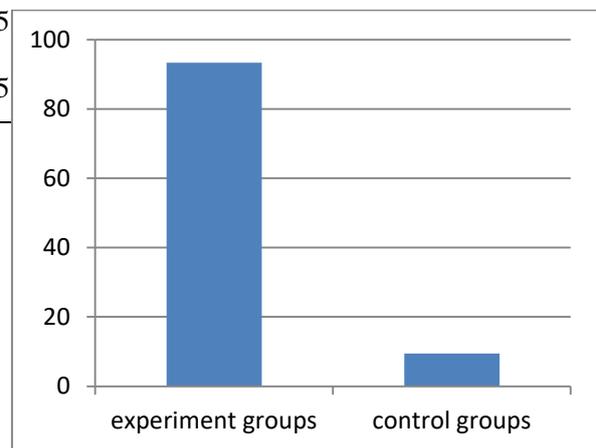

Figure 4
The Increase of Post Test
Between The Experiment and Control
Groups

CONCLUSION
The result of data analysis in this study shows that the implementation of Blended Learning can improve the students' ability in reading comprehention skill in TOEIC test, since this study reveals that there is a significant increase in the students' scores in reading comprehention section in TOEIC test.

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